FORGING NEW PARTNERSHIPS: COAST SALISH COMMUNITIES AND MUSEUMS

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

The Faculty of Graduate Studies

(Anthropology)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

September 2009

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, much has been written about the changing relationships between museum professionals and First Nations. However, most of these accounts have been authored by the former group, while First Nations perspectives are conveyed through second hand accounts or less frequently the writings of indigenous scholars and artists. This thesis explores another type of viewpoint by presenting perspectives shared by individuals living and working in Coast Salish communities in Canada and the United States. The intent is to gain a clearer picture of something that has been referred to as the “democratization of the museum” by Canadian museum professionals such as Duncan Cameron (1982). Has access to museums and their resources dramatically increased? Is this reflected in current museum practice, exhibits, and public programs?

To better understand the current status of community and museum partnerships I explore what drives Coast Salish communities to participate in museum representations (and other public commemorations). I also discuss some of the legal implications such representations have for establishing or defending aboriginal rights and title. From this vantage point I proceed to explore specific museum projects and partnerships, analysing the diverse experiences of those Coast Salish individuals who were invited and then chose to participate in this research project. A critique of museums results, but it is presented with the intent of providing a moment of reflexivity – an opportunity to re-evaluate current museum and community interactions, so that we can take another step forward on the path to equal partnership.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people made this research possible, some by contributing their words, others by acts of encouragement – all of them through the generous gift of their time. First I raise my hands to the friends and colleagues who allowed me to interview them: Leona Sparrow, Rose Point, Larry Grant, Deborah Jacobs, Sonny McHalsie, Herb Joe Sr., Geraldine Manson, Mary Lou Slaughter, Shaun Peterson, Victor Guerin, Debra Sparrow, Vivian Campbell, Aaron Nelson Moody, Terry Point, and Heather Johnson Jock. I have done my best to convey your experiences in a manner that respects your intentions and experiences. There were many other people from the Coast Salish world who assisted my research, indirectly or with intent, and I thank them also.

I also extend my appreciation to those individuals who contributed directly to my education and changed the way I look at the world – Sue Rowley, Bruce G. Miller, Charlotte Townsend Gault, the late Michael Ames, Julie Cruikshank, Peter Seixas, Pam Brown, Jennifer Kramer, and Charles Menzies. I personally thank Barbara Brotherton, Curator of Native Art at SAM for including me on the advisory council for S’abadeb. This was a significant learning experience for me, and I am grateful for the opportunity. I also acknowledge Mrs. Cordula Paetzold for the fellowships I received in her name through the First Nations House of Learning, without this support I would not have completed this degree.

Finally, I recognise my family – my husband Michael and daughter Emma who left me to my own devices for countless weekends so I could write, and for their many acts large and small that helped along the way. I also acknowledge my parents, Linda and Dieter Waetzold – the ones who first introduced me to museums.
Chapter One: Representing the Other in the 21st Century

Decisions about how cultures are presented reflect deeper judgments of power and authority and can, indeed, resolve themselves into claims about what a nation is or ought to be as well as how citizens should relate to one another (Karp and Levine 1991:2).

Museums have begun to see source communities as an important audience for exhibitions, and to consider how museum representations are perceived by and affect source community members. In some parts of the world this shift has occurred in the context of changing relations of power, so that source community members have come to be defined as authorities on their own cultures and material heritage (Peers and Brown 2003:1).

For more than a century, museums have represented indigenous peoples while silencing their voices. Only recently have indigenous peoples begun to intercede in those representations. What has brought about this transformation in museum practice? Why do First Nations in Canada and the United States now want to work with museums and other cultural institutions? As an indigenous scholar, I pose the question whether this change reflects a new willingness on the part of curatorial staff to include source communities, or have community members found something in museums that serves their own needs? In this thesis I explore these questions by examining the types of relationships that have formed between Coast Salish communities and museums. In the process I offer a critique of museums by examining how Coast Salish culture is represented through museum exhibits and public programs.

My intent is to provide a mechanism for communities to share what they have learned through their work with museums. For those who are new to the process, I hope this research will be helpful for defining future goals and processes. For those more experienced in working with museums, I hope that revisiting past steps provides an opportunity to reflect upon current relationships – possibly suggesting new directions. For those working in cultural centres, and other community initiated cultural programs, I
hope it serves as a reminder of the limitations of following museum models of representation and preservation too closely.

Beginning in the 1970s museum professionals, and other academics engaged in humanistic studies, started to question long-standing assumptions about their authority to represent other peoples, recognising that such endeavours could hardly be viewed as scientific or objective in nature (Nason 1971; Spivak 1987; Price 1989; Karp and Levine 1991; Kahn 2000). While some argued for the inclusion of native voices, a form of multi-vocality that equally recognised the viewpoints of both the academic “expert” and those of his or her “subject” (Ames 1992; Phillips and Steiner 1998), others sought the means to facilitate indigenous voices, highlighting these alternative viewpoints, in professional practices and writings (Graburn 1976; Karp and Levine 1991; Cruikshank 1990; Peers and Brown 2003). Increasingly this has been accomplished by presenting interview transcripts in their entirety, or with minimal editing, to ensure that context does not alter a speaker’s original intent (see Spradley 1969; Pennier 1972; Sparrow 1976; Hilbert 1980; Bennett and Rowley 2003; Reid 2004; Arnett 2007).

This new introspection has also resulted in a growing body of literature concerning ethnographic collections and the politics of representation, which is seen by many as the foundations of a new critical museology (Cameron 1982, 1992; Pearce 1989; Inglis and Abbott 1991; Karp and Levine 1991; Ames 1992; Henry 1995; Doxtator 1996; Cruikshank 1998; McMaster 1998; Phillips and Steiner 1998; Butler 1999; McLoughlin 1999; Peers and Brown 2003). In these writings museum professionals, and other academics, critique long-standing museum traditions and probe the importance of objects as sites of memory, and as integral components of living cultures. Many of these authors
also discuss museums as sites of contested representations, recognising their ideological nature and their legacy as implements of colonial power (Clifford 1988; Price 1989; Ames 1992; Barringer and Flynn 1998; Phillips and Steiner 1998; Butler 1999; Hendry 2005; Shelton 2007). They suggest that museums with ethnographic collections are taking steps away from their roots, as institutions of colonialism, towards establishing a greater relevance for the communities that they represent – and sometimes serve. Protocol agreements, memoranda of understanding, the creation of advisory councils, and collaborative exhibits, are just some of the ways museums in Canada and the United States have tried to accommodate change.

In Canada, many of these changes follow in the wake of the controversy that accompanied the 1988 Glenbow Museum exhibit “The Spirit Sings.” While actual protest centred upon the practices of the exhibit’s sponsor, rather than the content of the exhibit itself – which was celebratory in nature (Harrison 1995), the result was the formation of a joint Task Force by the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations (Nicks and Hill 1992). In 1992, the Task Force released a report detailing several recommendations for making Canadian museums more inclusive as well as sensitive to the aspirations of First Nations people. Ultimately, it was left to museums to determine whether or not they would follow any, or all, of the report’s recommendations. Museum professionals have reported that this document has revolutionised how they do business (Nicks 1992; Pettipas 1993; Conaty 2003; Bolton 2005). During my research Coast Salish community members concurred that positive changes were occurring in museum practice. However, some still reported experiencing
difficulties in dealings with smaller museums, or larger ones located outside of their immediate area.

It is difficult to measure the effectiveness of the Task Force Report, especially when similar changes in museum practice have been occurring in the United States and other nations suggesting a global rather than national phenomenon (Karp and Levine 1991; Kahn 2000; Peers and Brown 2003). However, in Canada many museums still look to the report for guidance in establishing or improving their relationships with local First Nations (Pettipas 1993; Bolton 2005). Only a few have reported moving beyond its recommendations to address the needs of specific communities (Ames 1999; Phillips 2003; Conaty 2003). In the Task Force Report a ten year review of progress was recommended (Nicks and Hill 1992), but at present effectiveness has only been addressed through a limited number of case studies (Pettipas 1993; Bolton 2005) and a symposium hosted by the Alberta College of Art and Design and the Glenbow Museum in March of 2008 titled, Legacies and Futures: Beyond the Spirit Sings. Curatorial writings are another place where, to some extent, the effectiveness of the Task Force Report is revealed, as Canadian museum professionals share their experiences working with First Nations and implementing new protocols (Holm and Pokotylo 1997; Cruikshank 1998; Ames 1999; Conaty 2003).

The Glenbow Museum’s Ethnology Department, for example, has implemented a number of new policies and procedures since the 1990s aimed at changing the institution’s relationship with local Nitsitapiisinni (Blackfoot peoples). Senior Ethnology Curator, Gerald Conaty, who worked with community members on the permanent exhibit, Nitsitapiisinni: Our Way of Life, notes that: “as the Blackfoot became more
frequent visitors at Glenbow, their sense of ownership in the project and in the museum grew” (2003:231). However, viewpoints like this still reflect the experiences of individual museum professionals, and as such continue to tell only one side of the story. How do indigenous people, themselves, feel about the work they do in museums? How much of an active role do they actually play in exhibiting themselves? Currently, there is an absence of voice regarding indigenous perspectives on this issue. Indigenous artists and scholars have begun to discuss these, and other, types of representational issues (Sarris 1993; Callison 1995; McMaster 1998; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). However, their perspectives often represent a specialised segment of the indigenous community, since many are writing as members of the same academic communities they are critiquing – as university based scholars, visiting artists, or museum curators.

In this thesis I consider another type of indigenous perspective by focusing on the experiences of Coast Salish band and tribal employees who fulfill the role of museum liaison for their respective communities. Their experiences are diverse – some of those featured have university degrees, some have completed museum internships, while others engage with museums as cultural experts or artists. Some individuals fulfill more than one of these roles.

To acknowledge that differing perspectives exist, not only between communities but within them, I selected one community for in-depth study. At Musqueam, I explored the experiences of several community members who are regularly consulted by museums (and others in their community) for their cultural and/or professional expertise to gain more detailed insights into why community members elect to work with museums.
Throughout the overall process, the impetus behind the growing involvement of indigenous communities in museum work is also considered.

For this research representatives were consulted from Coast Salish communities in Canada and the United States. Those who participated reported a diversity of experiences, in some areas they identified similar priorities while in others their expectations and aspirations diverged. This is to be expected since their shared Coast Salish identity is in many ways an anthropological and linguistic construct. Historian Alexandra Harmon notes:

If there is one element of an ethnic identity, it is a collective history. Other characteristics – race, biological lineage, territorial concentration, language, religion, economic specialisation, or unique customs – may set an ethnic group apart, but none is an essential “building block of ethnicity.” Every ethnic group, however, relies on depiction of a common past to express and foster the idea that it consists of a single people with a distinct role in historical events (2007:30).

She goes on to suggest that there “does not appear to be a unitary Coast Salish ethnic group” (30). Today, some groups (or individual members) choose instead to express themselves through their local identities, with histories that tie them to specific places, thereby dispelling with the broader regional identity invoked by the term Coast Salish. They do not subscribe to the belief that they are unified with their neighbours under the umbrella of collective history. Harmon adds:

Nevertheless, the notion of a single, inclusive Coast Salish history is not outlandish. On the contrary, anthropologists’ concept of a Coast Salish people was inspired not only by linguistic similarities, but also by evidence of past and persisting commonalities and connections of other sorts. The concept points to a useful way of framing a history – one that may be superior in some respects to the standard political frameworks (2007:30).
It is also useful to consider that identity is a two-sided coin, it is not just about how we perceive ourselves, but also how we are perceived by others. What is of interest here is whether one side of the coin is given more attention than the other, and why?

Coast Salish community members still report participating in museum exhibits designed using a top-down approach, with curators deciding the content and format of exhibits. In 2002, for example, community liaisons from Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, and Tsleil-Waututh were asked by the Vancouver Museum to partner on exhibits for the Joye Walley Learning Centre (JWLC) – an expansion project that would house education galleries and public programming space. Despite initial assurances that they would be involved in all aspects of the exhibit, First Nations liaisons were not asked for contributions until the museum and its graphic designers had completed a storyline and gallery plan for the space. At this point, I was hired by the museum as a First Nations Program Developer and tasked with obtaining content for an untitled “First Nations Unit.”

Problems arose when the selected theme, City Building, was revealed to the partner communities. The liaisons viewed the notion of City Building as “a painful one.” One representative commented that it evoked and celebrated colonialism, while another observed that First Nations culture was being “ghettoised” to a separate unit rather than being integrated throughout the entire space. All three wanted their histories to be included throughout the JWLC – especially in the unit that spoke to immigration stories, since this provided an opportunity to talk about how community members had been displaced from the city, including the very site upon which the Vancouver Museum now sits, to accommodate newcomers.
The liaisons felt the *JWLC*’s existing storyline was contrary to their earlier negotiations with the museum, at which staff had agreed First Nations history would be included as a continuous, unbroken thread throughout all of the museum’s history galleries. This type of representation would convey to visitors the vibrancy of local First Nations communities – raising awareness of their present day status without denying the antiquity of their cultures. Because the museum did not share the same concept of partnership as the community liaisons, staff found themselves in the position of revisiting exhibit storylines in an effort to address expressed concerns. This was challenging for staff members who viewed the *City Building* storyline as a “strong one” and the resulting changes as “weakening” what they were trying to achieve. The need to revisit design concepts also impacted the project’s budget and timelines, creating stress and tension amidst museum staff – myself included as the bearer of this bad news.

Community involvement in the above scenario was restricted to filling in the blanks; it was reactive rather than creative. This type of participation cannot be considered truly collaborative, as the power relationship between the key players was not balanced. This thesis will, therefore, also explore some of the strategies that Coast Salish museum liaisons undertake to compensate for these imbalances where and when they do occur.
Understanding Museum Consultation

To better understand how museum professionals work with First Nations and other source communities requires a clearer sense of their original intentions. Museum professionals and other academics often speak of their “collaborations” and “partnerships” with source communities, but some tend to be careless or imprecise when it comes to conveying how they define these terms. In the academic literature, at conferences, and in day to day business, the language of consultation is broadly applied to a diversity of encounters. This is partnered with a reticence to discuss situations where working relationships broke down. Success stories abound, while failures are omitted. Knowledge of both is required if museum professionals want to critically examine their practices, and redefine their working relationships with source communities (see Holm and Pokotylo 1997; Kahn 2000).

In my personal experience, difficulties most often arise when museum staff and their First Nations counterparts enter a project with different expectations as to how and when consultation will occur. For example, use of the term “partnership” implies a different level of commitment than use of the term “consultation.” The former suggests a more intensive working relationship – one with a sense of equality in decision making, while the latter evokes a scenario of intermittent exchanges where advice may be given and followed at the discretion of the instigator. To attain a true partnership requires a significant investment of time, the blending of creative ideas and professional knowledge from both parties, and a commitment that extends beyond a single project or event. I suggest that it involves an ongoing relationship, spanning multiple projects, because it takes time to build trust, identify a suitable process, and attain the types of insights (on
both sides) that enables new forms of exhibits and story telling to emerge. Similarly, if museums are to be relevant to the various local communities comprising their audience (indigenous, settler, and/or recent immigrants), engagement must be ongoing and not an isolated event.

When it comes to cultural representations, as opposed to artistic ones, establishing a partnership requires the involvement of multiple individuals from a single source community. This enables museum professionals to recognise divergent viewpoints and experiences within a source community – gender, age, occupation, and education (traditional or westernised), while coming to terms with their own personal cultural expectations. Native American author Greg Sarris explores this idea in detail his book, “Keeping Slug Woman Alive (1993),” demonstrating that those engaged in the act of translation – museum exhibitors, collectors, autobiographers, and anthropologists, filter what they observe, collect, and document through the lens of their own cultural experiences. Claims to objectivity, concern for authentic versions of stories (myths), the ethnographic present, and other methodological ploys are normalising mechanisms that reorganise experiences of culture contact. The narrator, translator, and reader, all bring their respective cultural frameworks into the process of storytelling, each modifying the act of interpretation in response to their expectations of the other participants (Sarris 1993). The same is true within source communities, since individual members must negotiate obligations determined by family memberships, community traditions, and individual life experiences.

Working with multiple source communities adds another level of complexity to this scenario, since it likewise cannot be assumed that the experiences of different
communities are uniform. Nor should it be assumed they will have the same expectations of a working relationship, whether it is labelled a “partnership” or “community consultation.” I have observed several occasions where experienced museum liaisons had different expectations than those embarking on a museum initiative for the first time, since their expectations were coloured by past negotiations and outcomes. They not only expected a seat at the table, but they also wanted to participate in each stage of project development – from grant applications to timelines, venue selection, fundraising, research, storyline development, installation, public programming and marketing.

Problems arise when time is not allocated for discussion of how “partners” will work together, to detail expectations, and outline protocols for conflict resolution if, and when, it arises. Similarly, museums that respond with a formulaic process for consultation often quickly discover that one size does not fit all – communities have different histories and circumstances, and their aspirations for museum projects will be influenced by those factors.

Therefore, to avoid confusion, in this thesis the term “consultation” is used to refer to all scenarios where museum professionals invited communities to participate in a predetermined museum exhibit or public program through the mechanism of an advisory council or by attendance at planning sessions. A “collaborative” relationship is one that goes beyond information sharing, where source communities (or individual artists) are able to affect final outcomes of a project. In this scenario, collaboration extends beyond providing interpretation (words and images) for a selected theme to encompass control over determining what is suitable for display and the appropriate ways of showing it. The term “partnership” is used to describe an ongoing collaborative relationship between an
institution and a community – one involving regular interactions between the two parties, where community members do more than respond to museum initiatives, but are able to instigate projects and assist with determining future museum mandates. The key difference between the two forms of consultation discussed is the extent of the involvement, namely length of time involved and level of authority. The latter referring to who exerts control over final decision making on cultural representations – museum staff or community members?

This need for clarity is not restricted to the museum world, but has implications for aboriginal law as well. The recent legal case *Haida Nation vs. British Columbia (Minister of Forests)* set a precedent in the area or resource rights by distinguishing three levels of community involvement – consultation, deep consultation, and accommodation. These have been summarised as follows:

‘**Consultation**’ in its least technical definition is talking together for mutual understanding… While precise requirements may vary with the circumstances, **deep consultation** may entail:
- the opportunity to make submissions for consideration
- formal participation in the decision-making process
- written reasons to show that Aboriginal concerns were considered and to reveal the impact that they had on the decision.

The list is neither exhaustive, nor mandatory for every case…

The issue of **accommodation** arises where the consultation process discloses a strong case supporting the asserted aboriginal right and the consequences of the proposed government decision may adversely affect the right in a significant way… Accommodation requires a process of seeking compromise in **an attempt to harmonize** the conflicting interests of the Crown and First Nation (Barr and Schnuerer 2005:4).

In the above case of law, the duty to consult was not extended to the private sector, but remained with the crown – the entity responsible for “sovereignty lands.”
For museums the issue of consultation is more discretionary in nature – with the exception of specific circumstances, such as repatriation, covered by legislation in the United States. For this reason, it is not uncommon to still see examples of consultation where there is little depth to the process. I have heard a variety of terms used to describe such processes, including: “faux collaboration”, “no collaboration”, “ignored collaboration”, and “information sharing.” Whatever the label applied, the reality is that an imbalance of power remains – in many institutions museum staff still determine how much input source communities will have in representing their cultures, how much they will be able to retain control over collections, and whether they will be able to access the funding awarded for exhibits and public programmes. This will be demonstrated by specific examples throughout this thesis.

**Research Methods:**

This thesis, like many other scholarly works, draws upon a number of sources. These include my personal professional experiences, relevant academic literature, archival research undertaken at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, and most importantly transcribed interviews conducted with other Coast Salish community members using the methods of in-person expert interviews, a focus group, emailed correspondence, tape-recorded telephone interviews, and participant observation.

In order to present a case study that would reflect events occurring throughout the Coast Salish world, individuals were selected from communities located in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, on adjacent Vancouver Island, and in Washington State. Community members assigned the role of museum liaison, when such a position existed,
were selected for these expert interviews whenever possible. In many instances, those contacted were already known to me through previous projects done on behalf of local cultural institutions such as the UBC Museum of Anthropology, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Vancouver Museum, the West Vancouver Museum, the Seattle Art Museum, and the Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre. Due to the realities of day to day life I was unable to interview everyone I had planned to consult. One representative from Vancouver Island was hospitalised before I could contact her, and sadly later passed away. Thus, I adapted my research strategy by interviewing other cultural experts (such as artists) referred to me by these friends and acquaintances, and by supplementing information from other published sources (books and newspapers).

The community of Musqueam was selected for in-depth examination, because of its longstanding and well-documented relationship with the UBC Museum of Anthropology. At Musqueam, I conducted an interview with the community’s museum liaison, Leona Sparrow – who is also the Director of Treaty, Lands and Resources, on August 2, 2006. This was followed by a focus group on August 16, 2006. This focus group coincided with a number of cultural incidents, including several deaths in the community of Qu’wutsun’ and a last minute fisheries opening, resulting in low attendance. In addition to these special circumstances, a few invited people chose not to attend because they are not interested in museums, or they did not want to become research subjects since it is not relevant to their daily lives. To compensate, I later conducted individual interviews with some of those who could not attend, but expressed a willingness to participate, and with other cultural experts and artists from the Musqueam community selected with the guidance of Leona Sparrow.
Expert interviews were also conducted with museum liaisons and cultural experts from the following communities: Skwxwú7mesh Nation, Stó:lō Nation, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Duwamish Tribe, Puyallup Tribe and the Jamestown S’Klallam. Interview questions dealt with the following types of information: (1) the projects each community or representative had participated in, (2) the institutions with whom they had worked, (3) how and when relationships were established, (4) the key messages they wanted to convey, and (5) perceptions on the success of the final product.

Due to distance, community representatives outside of the Greater Vancouver area were interviewed via email correspondence or by telephone. The majority of interviews were conducted in person, in English, and were tape recorded and transcribed (with the informed consent of the participants.) Once an interview was transcribed, a copy was returned to the speaker for editing and final approval. Recurring themes, and excerpts that address my research questions, were drawn from interview transcripts to inform my research. Participant’s names accompany quotations used in this thesis with their consent.

Information obtained through interviews was further supplemented by fieldnotes and minutes taken at meetings hosted by the UBC Museum of Anthropology, the Vancouver Museum, the West Vancouver Museum, and the Seattle Art Museum, which were attended by representatives from these, and several other communities, including: Songhees, Qu’wutsun’, Tsleil-Waututh, Holmalco, Snohomish, Nisqually, T’souke, Kuper Island, and Upper Skagit. Comments made during these sessions are presented anonymously, since some of this information was collected before I began this research.
project. However, in all instances participants were aware that a record (written or audio) was being made of the meeting.

Observations made during my participation on the planning committee for the Seattle Art Museum exhibit, *S’abadeb –The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists*, also provides an ongoing thread of discussion throughout my research. Overall discussion in this thesis centres upon museum projects and cultural displays occurring between the years 1970 and 2008, since those were the ones discussed by participants.

In writing this thesis, I have reflected upon several of the museum projects I personally participated in over the last decade. I have attempted to incorporate those experiences without writing a gossipy “tell all” tale. I have enjoyed many of these encounters, but at other times have found myself in a position of tension when community expectations and museum expectations were incompatible. As a person with Coast Salish ancestry (Klahoose), I have previously been told by museum co-workers that I have been described as a “distant relative” by some of the communities I’ve worked with – close enough to understand their needs, but not close enough to take sides when disagreements arose between neighbouring communities. This acknowledgement brings with it a set of expectations as to how I will conduct business with those same communities, and in one instance required that I choose between pleasing museum staff or honouring what I felt were my obligations to their “partner communities.” Because feelings of family and community were invoked, the choice was not difficult, although for several years after I was disenchanted with museums. In many ways those feelings of conflict spurred me to conduct the research presented within these pages.
Anthropological writing has a history of imposing categories upon people, their cultures, and their material possessions. Those of us familiar with ethnographies are also familiar with blanket statements that begin with “the Kwakiutl…” or “the Coast Salish…” This is a writing device that brings uniformity to what is, in reality, a diversity of experience (see Harmon 2007). It also impedes recognition of shifting group identities. The longevity of these labels combined with colonial instruments such as political borders and legal concepts of ownership are obstacles I struggle to avoid in my own writing. However, this research was conducted using anthropological qualitative methods, so in the end I chose to employ the use of tables and charts for presenting “data” and as a means of comparative analysis. Tables are used not to create discrete categories, but to highlight differences in behaviour.

Ultimately, this thesis presents the experiences and opinions of those individuals who agreed to work with museums and other academic institutions. Other community members decide not to share their knowledge with museum workers and researchers, and not everyone I invited to participate responded to the invitation. For this reason, this thesis should not be interpreted as a blanket representation speaking for all “Coast Salish” communities or their members. As with any society, experiences and opinions vary widely from individual to individual. The stories of those who decide to engage provides a powerful testimonial to the types of relationships occurring today and allows for contemplation of the future of collaborative work between museums and First Peoples. Many of those assigned to act as museum liaisons have been educated within university communities, in addition to their cultural communities. Others have worked for many years alongside university trained scholars – archaeologists, anthropologists, historians,
lawyers, and others. These experiences sometimes set them apart from others in their communities. They are strong in their cultures, but they have also become skilled diplomats and negotiators. One representative stated it is not a “choice” to participate in museum exhibits, since the reality is that if they do not speak for themselves the result will be that someone else speaks for them.

A common theme throughout my interviews was recognition of the positive, although sometimes difficult, changes that have occurred in many cultural institutions in recent decades, and the patience that has been required on the part of community members to first guide museum staff onto the correct path, and then ensure that they stay on it. Many feel their partnerships are just now gathering strength. Snítlewet í Síyamía, Skwxwú7mesh Nation Director of Education, expresses hope for the future by saying:

I do believe that cultural institutions’ museum practitioners are on the cutting edge of building a new kind of relationship with First Nations people. They are changing the mindset. You can see it in the young curators. They really believe in the voice of the people and that the people own their own experiences.
(Deborah Jacobs, Interviewed June 12, 2006)

Participants

Many people participated in this research project and their words are featured throughout this thesis. To acknowledge their expertise, in the following pages, I present a brief biographical sketch of each of those people. They are listed in the order they were interviewed.

Snítlewet í Síyamía (Deborah Jacobs) is Director of Education for the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, the governance structure representing Squamish speaking people from 24 communities in British Columbia. She is a university trained educator, a writer, and an
exhibited photographer. For her, community museum consultation is viewed as public education, and thus falls under the mandate of her department. She has liaised with numerous museums and cultural institutions on behalf of the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, including: the Burke Museum, the Royal British Columbia Museum, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Vancouver Museum, the West Vancouver Museum and Archives, and the North Vancouver Museum and Archives.

_T’xwelátse (Herb Joe Sr.)_ is a former Chief of the Tzeachten First Nation who now works for the Stó:lō Nation in their Family and Children Service Program as a traditional councillor. This position entails being responsible for culturally appropriate programming and service delivery. He is also a member of House of Respect Care-Taking Committee (the Stó:lō Repatriation Committee). For almost two decades _T’xwelátse_ led his extended family in a repatriation effort to return their ancestor, stone _T’xwelátse_, from the Burke Museum in Washington State. The claim was successfully resolved in October of 2006, and after 114 years stone _T’xwelátse_ returned home.

_Naxaxalhts’i (Sonny McHalsie)_ is a member of the Shxw’ówhámél First Nation who has worked for the Stó:lō Nation for more than 20 years. He is currently the Co-Director of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. _Naxaxalhts’i_ is a published oral historian, who contributed to the widely acclaimed, “_A Stó:lō Coast Salish Historical Atlas (2001)._” Most recently he contributed to “_Be of Good Mind: Essays on the Coast Salish_” edited by his friend Bruce G. Miller (2007). Among colleagues and friends, he is renowned for place name tours, which he leads up the Fraser River by boat.
**Leona M. Sparrow** is currently the Director of Treaty, Lands and Resources for the Musqueam Indian Band. She previously served two terms as an elected council member. She is also a practicing lawyer, with a Master of Arts in anthropology, and is a former member of the UBC Senate. Ms. Sparrow represents Musqueam on a number of diverse initiatives, including museum consultation projects. She was recently appointed to the Advisory Board of the UBC Museum of Anthropology.

**Rose N. Point** is a Musqueam Elder of Stó:lô and Nlaka’pamux descent. In her early years she attended St. Mary’s Indian Residential School. After graduating she married Dominic Point and began a family at Musqueam. In 1966 she started the first preschool on the reserve, and in later years served the band as their Education Coordinator. She is currently the Elder Advisor for the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT).

**Larry Grant** is a Musqueam Elder and an Adjunct Professor in the UBC First Nations Languages Program. He also currently serves as the Elder in Residence for the UBC First Nations House of Learning. Larry is a descendent of the famous Musqueam warrior, Capilano, and has the prerogative to wear a Sxwaxw mask. He frequently represents Musqueam at public events, such as museum openings, academic conferences, and community consultation initiatives.

**Debra Sparrow** is a master weaver from Musqueam, who began weaving in the mid 1980s. She also works as a cultural educator, and has co-developed two school programs at the UBC Museum of Anthropology including the popular *Musqueam Museum School*. 
Her weavings are exhibited in a number of venues, including the Vancouver Airport (YVR) International Arrivals Terminal, the Glenbow Museum, the UBC Museum of Anthropology, and the Burke Museum. Debra is also a jewellery and clothing designer. Her clothing is made from her commercial blanket line, produced by the Kanata Blanket company.

**Terry Point** is project manager for the Musqueam Ecosystem Conservation Society. He is a university student, employed by his band as a cultural researcher and educator. He has previously held internship positions at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, and is currently assisting with community consultation for the new Coast Salish exhibits in the *Multiversity Gallery* (formerly Visible Storage). Terry often leads groups of schoolchildren on walking tours of Musqueam Creek on behalf of the Musqueam Museum School. He also represents Musqueam at archaeological investigations held both on and off reserve.

**Victor Guerin** is the former Coordinator of the Musqueam Language and Culture program and is a trained language instructor. He has consulted on several museum projects, providing translations, and community research. In the 1980s he worked on several projects with ethnobotanist / anthropologist David Rozen, which inspired him to change career paths and begin working with community elders to study and preserve the *hə̓ḿəmiʔəm* language.
Vivian Campbell is a master weaver and educator from the community of Musqueam. She co-teaches the Musqueam Museum School with Debra Sparrow, and often conducts workshops on cedar bark weaving for museums, schools, and other cultural institutions such as the UBC Laboratory of Archaeology. She is a former graduate of the UBC Museum of Anthropology’s Native Youth Program.

Tawx’sin yexwulla / Poolxtun (Aaron Nelson Moody) is a Skwxwú7mesh artist and educator. He has worked with community groups and students for the last 12 years sharing traditional teachings here in Canada, Japan and Scotland, and recently carved the entrance doors for Canada House pavilion, located in Torino, Italy for the 2006 Olympic Games. He does storytelling, and drumming and singing, drum making, carving and jewellery. (Bio from his website: http://web.mac.com/aaron_nelson_moody)

Shla’dai’ (Mary Lou Slaughter) is a Native American Master Basket Weaver and a Duwamish Tradition Keeper. She is a direct descendant of See’yahl (Chief Seattle) and his eldest daughter Ki’ki’so’bloo (Princess Angeline), some of whose baskets are in the collections of the Burke Museum of Natural History, in Seattle, Washington. Shl’daï’ is an Enrolled Member of the Duwamish Tribe, Seattle's First People. Her work has been exhibited by the Stonington Gallery, the Seattle Art Museum, the Museum of History and Industry, the Duwamish Longhouse, and the Renton Museum.
**Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson)**, a member of the Puyullap Tribe, is a contemporary artist whose work has been showcased at a number of museums and galleries. These include: the Burke Museum, Stonington Gallery, The Legacy Ltd. Gallery, Tacoma Art Museum, White River Valley Museum, Seattle Art Museum, Museum of Art and Design in New York, and the Washington State History Museum. His involvement with these projects has occurred on several levels – as a consultant, participating artist, or guest curator.

**Geraldine Manson** is the Cultural and Language Elders Coordinator and an Elected Council Member for the Snuneymuxw First Nation. She is a graduate of the Royal British Columbia Museums’ *Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program*, and a Board Member of the Nanaimo District Museum. As a representative of her nation she has been consulted by several regional museums, including: the Seattle Art Museum, the Royal British Columbia Museum, the Gabriola Island Museum and the UBC Museum of Anthropology.

**Heather Johnson Jock** is currently serving her second term on the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Council. Her profile on the Jamestown S’Klallam website notes: She is a past Chair of the Jamestown Community Network Board, and is the current Chair of the JKT Art Board, Inc. Heather is also currently employed with the Boeing Corporation, and serves as a Board Member for the non-profit Potlatch Fund in Seattle (www.jamestowntribe.org). She does Salish weaving, cedar weaving, and design, and recently represented her community as an advisor for the Seattle Art Museum’s *S’abadeb* exhibit.
Defining the Coast Salish World:

Ethnographic writing requires the researcher to define the people (and place) of study as part of the process of translating cultural experiences for the reader, an individual who may or may not be familiar with the region and its inhabitants. It is an extremely difficult task to put boundaries on a group of people – in this instance the “Coast Salish,” that includes all of the places and things that are important to them. For some members of the community the resulting narrative may seem acceptable, for others it will no doubt seem misguided, or wrong. A diversity of opinion will always exist, regardless of the culture and regardless of the time of representation – this is the inherent reality of meta-narratives.

Today, we still see representations of indigenous history that invoke the origin stories of western science, employing terms such as “migration” and “ice-free corridors.” These are not the origin stories of the people themselves, but those of the academic “experts” who purport to represent them. The docudrama, Canada: A People’s History, is a prime example of this type of selective storytelling – one that reached a wide audience with translations into multiple languages: English, French, Chinese, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, and Russian. In this series, aspects of First Nation’s cultural traditions were employed in the service of creating a historical account that served the interests of others – primarily a unifying narrative for a country that prides itself on multiculturalism.

The opening chapter, which covered almost 17,000 years of indigenous history, employed a diversity of oral traditions accompanied by a multitude of images of sacred geography presented in a manner that endorsed Euro-centric categories of knowledge and
historical reconstruction. These included images of a Nitsitapiisinni medicine wheel and a “Coast Salish” Flood Story. They were used to promote an understanding of indigenous history that privileged archaeological reconstruction and “science” over the oral histories and knowledge frameworks of the diverse native peoples represented. Cultural traditions were appropriated and presented in anecdotal fashion to construct a single narrative – one in which Canada’s First Nations were seen as the first of many waves of immigrants to enter the “New World” (see Dick 2003). This master narrative stands in stark contrast to the multitude of creation stories, and other oral traditions, by which we define ourselves, and ultimately denies our existence as indigenous people thereby opening the road to continued alienation of our lands and resources. In reality, indigenous histories tie people to specific places, whether they are origin stories about the “First People who fell from the Sky” or “Transformation Stories” about how the world came to be as it now is (see Jenness 1955:10; Hill-Tout 1978:58; Carlson 1997:56; Marshall 1999:9).

Sometimes even the terms used to identify First Nations are foreign to the people, themselves, or employ inaccurate script – translation errors that alter the names used to identify us to others. For example, Linguist Patricia Shaw notes: “The place name ‘Musqueam’ is itself an Anglicization of the indigenous designation $x^w məθkʷəýəm$, which refers to the place (indicated by the locative prefix $x^w$) where the $məθkʷəý$, a plant which was plentiful along the shoreline used to grow” (2001:42). The anglicised place name has become synonymous with the people who reside there, although traditionally their ancestors dwelt in a number of village sites throughout the region. It was only during the
historic period, that this particular village became the primary settlement of these 
*hə̓n̑q̓əmi̓n̑əm* speaking people.

Today many Coast Salish nations are reclaiming control over their identities. The Burrard Band has reclaimed its identity as the Tsleil-Waututh, while the peoples of Cowichan and Nanaimo now publicly identify themselves as the Quw’utsun’ and Snuneymuxw respectively. Despite such changes the name “Coast Salish” still lingers, and though it speaks to external perceptions has now become so pervasive that it may have internal as well as external validation.

“Coast Salish” is a generic term used to describe the numerous bands and tribes indigenous to the southern region of the Pacific Northwest (see Appendix B for a more comprehensive list). The term “Salish” has even broader applications encompassing people from the interior, who dwell in the arid lands located east of the Cascade and Coastal Mountain ranges of Washington State and British Columbia. “Interior Salish” people are found as far east as Montana, and it is their early encounters with members of the Lewis and Clark expedition that has led to the widespread usage of the term “Salish” to describe them as well as a multitude of indigenous communities residing to the west (Salish-Pend d’Oreille Culture Committee et al. 2005: xi-xiii). Members of the Flathead or Bitterroot Salish of Montana explain the origin of the term, noting:

> In our own language, we call ourselves the Séliš (pronounced Séh-lish). *Salish* is the common English rendition of the word (Salish-Pend d’Oreille Culture Committee et al. 2005:xiii).

Since they were the first people to be encountered by early explorers arriving from the east, such as the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805, the anglicized term “Salish” spread
west as early European travellers continued to encounter other indigenous peoples speaking similar dialects and languages.

The broadly applied misnomer gathered strength in the next century as practitioners of the discipline of Linguistics began to employ the term “Salish” as the means to discuss a shared linguistic heritage – identifying a Proto-Salish language thought to date back more than six millennia (Kroeber 1955:100). The term was also adopted by anthropologists, who used it as a means to discuss cultural traits held in common and contiguous religious beliefs (Adamson 1934; Barnett 1955; Amoss 1978; Suttles 1987). Today, academics are beginning to employ differently nuanced frameworks for studying the “Salish” and other indigenous peoples, recognising the interwoven nature of language and culture – specifically that language is a vessel that carries culture forward.

The diversity of languages and dialects present within the Salish language family speaks to the antiquity, and cultural complexity, of its constituent communities (Thompson and Kinkade 1990). Linguist Patricia Shaw notes that:

Traditionally, language diversity – across dialects, indeed across different languages – was an integral component of everyday life, actively nurtured through the social interactions of intermarriage, trade, potlatching, war, etc. People from one band or region readily recognized dialectal features from other locales. Dialect was, and continues to be, an important marker of distinct local identity. However, with the diminution of active use of ancestral language in each individual community, and with the concomitant ascendancy of English, opportunities for fluent familiarization with distinctive features of neighbouring dialects have decreased. The farther apart communities are, the more distinctive their dialects are likely to be (2001:50).

Although fluent language speakers are now a rarity, other forms of cultural exchange continue between Coast Salish communities to this day with a fluidity that has led some to adopt the metaphor of a “Salish Sea” to describe the reality – although ironically this
concept has also arisen from a non-indigenous source (Barsh 2003). Water does, however, provide an ideal metaphor for describing the territories of the Coast Salish, since rivers, inlets and coastal shorelines were (and continue to be) integral for travel, subsistence, and ceremonial life throughout this vast region.

Coast Salish territory is geographically expansive ranging from the central coast of British Columbia to the Columbia River, the boundary between Washington State and Oregon. Its northern margins include the long isolated communities of the Nuxalk situated at Bella Coola, and resume further south at Bute Inlet, the traditional territory of the Holmalco. Johnstone Strait marks the northern boundary on adjacent Vancouver Island, where the Island Comox made their home before the southern incursion of the Lekwiltok peoples at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Kennedy and Bouchard 1983). Below the Holmalco, on the mainland of British Columbia, are the traditional territories of the Klahoose, Sliammon, and Sechelt peoples. The Holmalco, Klahoose and Sliammon once spoke dialects of the Comox language, while Pentlatch and Sechelt were spoken by their relatives to the south and southwest (Shaw 2001:54).

The territories of the Central Coast Salish encompass Howe Sound, Burrard Inlet, Indian Arm, the Fraser River, and south-eastern Vancouver Island, encompassing the many small islands sandwiched in between. Numerous groups inhabit these regions including the Skwxwú7mesh, Tsleil-Waututh, Musqueam, Tsawwassen, Kwikwetlem, Katzie, Stó:lō, Snuneymuxw, Qu’wutsun’, Songhish and Saanich peoples, to name just a few. Three distinct languages (Squamish, Halkomelem, and Straits Salish) with several local dialects were spoken by the peoples of this region (see Suttles 1987).
Southern Coast Salish territory covers most of Washington State, with the exclusion of the territories of the Makah and Quileute peoples in the north-western corner of the state and those of Interior Salish peoples to the south-east. Proximity to water remains a central feature, with the Strait of Juan de Fuca marking the northern margins, Puget Sound occupying the centre of the region, and the Columbia River denoting its southernmost boundary. The Nooksack, Lummi, Skagit, Tulalip, Samish, Puyallup, and Snohomish are some of the tribes encountered as one journeys south towards the city of Seattle, the homeland of the Duwamish people. Several Salishan languages are spoken throughout this region, including S’Klallam, Twana, Lushootseed, Quinault, Chehalis, Cowlitz and Tillamook (Suttles 1987; Thompson and Kinkade 1990).

Interconnected through overlapping ties of marriage and ceremonial exchange, shared political and natural resource concerns, Coast Salish communities on both sides of the Canadian and US border continue to interact and influence one another (see Amoss 1978; Miller 1996). Although the people referred to as the “Coast Salish” have many traits in common, a great degree of cultural diversity also exists throughout their territories. This is most evident in the people’s material culture and religious life. Ownership of special prerogatives, such as the sxwayxwey masks found at Musqueam (and in other Central Coast Salish communities), and the spirit canoe ceremony used by Puget Sound peoples, such as the Snoqualmie, are two well documented examples (Jenness 1955; Suttles 1987; Marr 1997; Miller 2000). In other places, cultural variance may reflect differential access to resources or the influences of neighbouring peoples (see Amoss 1978; Elmendorf 1993; Kennedy and Bouchard 1983).
Although the territories of the “Coast Salish” are far reaching, marriages that create networks of extended families throughout the entire region provide unification, compensating for a lack of proximity (see McHalsie 2001:32-33). These marriages also bring family belongings, such as intellectual property and treasured heirlooms, into new communities – or sometimes back to originating communities. They are one of the mechanisms that ensure important events will be witnessed by neighbouring peoples, both near and distant, since extended families are the infrastructure of Coast Salish society (Miller 2007:18-21).

The linguistic terms used to construct Coast Salish genealogies reflect bilateral descent. Relations are acknowledged through the use of specific terms which identify six generations of a person’s lineage (Suttles 1987). Knowledge of one’s own history is considered part of a good upbringing and enables members of different communities to quickly establish shared connections through identification of extended family members or friends held in common. Thus, through a brief discussion of our respective lineages, I was quickly identified as a “cousin” by a previously unknown delegate from Vancouver Island while attending an exhibit planning session at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) in 2007. Common relatives and friends are an important aspect of a person’s Coast Salish identity. This is one reason why past assimilation strategies attempted to sever the link between children and their parents and grandparents (see Carlson 1997:100-104).

Coast Salish identities are also entwined with those of the locales that comprise the respective traditional territories of community members. Histories are “written in the earth,” as well as upon it:
It is written in the earth. The evidence is everywhere that we have lived in the land. Anywhere that we open the earth we find the remains of people that lived here before. As we open the earth so are unveiled the messages from the past, from our ancestors, so the strength comes forward…

(Introduction label from Written in the Earth exhibit, MOA, 1996)

Transformation stories, flood stories, and in some instances origin stories, demonstrate the interconnectivity of a broader “Coast Salish” world, while illuminating the individuality of local landscapes. As Keith Basso so eloquently demonstrated for the Western Apache in his book, Wisdom Sits in Places (1996), landscape rather than chronology is more important for relating, recognising and understanding, and then sharing indigenous history. Oral traditions recount events that occurred at specific places, while the actions and consequences discussed speak to cultural values that provide guidance for future generations – the importance of hard work and humility, respect for the natural world, and the consequences for selfishness or laziness. The emphasis on chronology, so prevalent in westernised accounts of history, is absent from these versions. Space rather than time is the organising principle – a concept that will be explored in more depth in the next chapter.

Distinctive Art Traditions

One of the ways the Coast Salish are distinguished from neighbouring peoples is through their material culture, particularly their use of a technique known as block engraving and the employment of naturalistic rather than stylized forms of representation (Kew 1980). Recognisably Salish art traditions have been found in archaeological contexts dating back several millennia, in objects made of bone, stone, wood and wool,
and are thought to have been influential to the development of Northern Northwest Coast design traditions. Art Historian, Steven C. Brown, notes:

Surprisingly, the 1000-2000 year old objects from the northern region recovered to date appear much more similar in style to the southern or Coast Salish design traditions than they do to the northern design conventions of the historic period. The 3000 – 4000 year old artefacts from the Coast Salish area bear a great deal in common with historic period objects from that region, and remained essentially unchanged over that period of time (2005:9).

There is some irony in this finding since early scholars to our region viewed Coast Salish culture as derivative of that of our northern neighbours, whose artistic traditions they more widely promoted and celebrated (Jonaitis 1995:152).

This notion was so widely ingrained, that it influenced collecting policies at major museums. The Burke Museum, for example, declined to purchase the Skagit River Atlatl when it was offered for sale in the 1950s, believing it must be a forgery rather than of local origin. The atlatl, which was dredged from the mouth of the Skagit River in 1936, sat in storage for more than a decade before being offered for sale (MOA accession file).

Since radiocarbon dating was not yet available, museum professionals had no way of confirming the antiquity of the piece. Dr. Charles Borden, whose archaeological excavations later contributed to the revision of opinions concerning the antiquity of Coast Salish cultural traditions, argued persuasively for its inclusion into the collection of the UBC Museum of Anthropology where it now resides (MOA accession file). The atlatl was later dated using radiocarbon dating, and confirmed to be approximately 1700 years old (Fladmark 1986:83). Subsequent archaeological investigations have firmly established it within a Salish Art tradition featuring highly engraved objects, known as the Marpole Culture Phase (Holm 1990; Mitchell 1990; Matson and Coupland 1995).
In recent years, archaeological findings have offered many insights into the longevity of Coast Salish artistic traditions. Weavings, basketry, and highly engraved or sculptured objects of wood, bone, antler and stone, found preserved have demonstrated continuity to historical objects residing in native communities, museums, and private collections today. Many of these artistic traditions (and sometimes the related ceremonial practices) underwent a decline in the early twentieth century (Suttles 1955; Wells 1969; Kew 1980; Feder 1983; Miller 2000), only to experience a resurgence beginning in the mid 1960s with the revival of Salish weaving at Sardis, BC (Anderson 1971; Amoss 1978; Gustafson 1980; Bierwert 1982; Johnson and Bernick 1986; Baird 1997; Roy 2002; Blanchard and Davenport 2005; Brotherton 2006).
During the mid-twentieth century, many “Coast Salish” artists adopted northern style traditions to ensure a livelihood for themselves and their families. It has only been since the 1960s that Coast Salish art has begun to find appreciation, and success, in the commercial art world through the efforts of entities such as the Salish Weavers Guild and artists including: Simon Charlie of Cowichan, Stan Greene of Semiahmoo and Chehalis, Floyd Joseph of Skwxwú7mesh, Susan Point of Musqueam, Marvin Oliver of Quinault, and Ron Hilbert of the Upper Skagit and Tulalip tribes. While the works of these individual artists may differ in materials and methods employed, their work follows a longstanding precedent within the Coast Salish world for hired professional artists and other paid specialists.

Museums and Coast Salish Peoples

The white people came and we were called savages, heathens – and for some of them it's still there. It’s in the back of their minds. Once they come to recognise that we had a civilization, we had our own technology, we had our own science, we had our own social structure, that we had our own doctors, we had our own herbalists, and our own specialists, we had our own people who looked after the dying, our own people who did the burying, we had our own midwives. We call them midwives, them that looked after the childbirth. And the person who looked after the mother and the baby at first, like guardians. And once they recognise that from birth to death things happened – that is a civilization. Once the anthropologists and the museums recognise that we had a civilization, then I would say the museums have come a step forward.

(N. Rose Point, Musqueam Elder, Interviewed August 16, 2006)

In the remaining chapters I will examine how “Coast Salish” memory and identity is invoked through work done in consultation with (and sometimes in equal partnership with) museums. The next chapter, Perspectives on Indigenous Memory and Identity, provides a theoretical framework for understanding the role museums play for Coast
Salish communities today by exploring topics such as social memory, the politics of representation, the role of commemoration in the creation of national identities, and cultural revitalisation and resistance to hegemonies. Coast Salish memory and identity is placed within the context of the need to create national commemorations to establish the legitimacy of re-emerging governance structures – hybrids of traditional and westernised political organization schemes, which have arisen in response to colonialism and to facilitate a return to self-governance. The perceived need for the pedagogical tools provided by museums, and cultural centres, to reach younger generations, and visitors from outside of the community, is explored as part of this discussion.

*Museums and Social Justice* is examined in Chapter 3, providing the reader with a historical overview to complement the theoretical discussion presented in the preceding chapter. Changes in media and technology occurring in the post-war years are identified as contributors to a more global perspective amongst the general public and a rising awareness of social inequality. Subsequent legal advances for aboriginal rights and title in Canada and the United States are shown to be concurrent with, but sometimes independent of, the emergence of changing attitudes among museum professionals as indigenous peoples began to demand recognition for their personal rights and freedoms in a number of political arenas. Public recognition is shown to be a key factor in obtaining and then protecting aboriginal rights and title.

Chapter 4, *Gathering Strength*, discusses early collecting practices on the Northwest Coast and then provides an overview of recent Coast Salish museum projects and public commemorations. This chapter also explores how Coast Salish culture is represented in some of these exhibits, and whether the location (museum or gallery)
impacts the themes selected for exhibition, and the consultation processes through which Coast Salish community members are subsequently included/excluded.

An in-depth look at the Canadian community of Musqueam follows in Chapter 5, *Returning to the Beginning*, where the humble origins of the now strong partnership between the UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA) and Musqueam is discussed. The writings of historian Susan Roy (1999, 2002, 2007) have demonstrated that, for more than a century, Musqueam leadership has recognised the need to publicly display their culture as a means to legitimise their aboriginal rights and title. Archival research reveals that their efforts to include the Museum of Anthropology in their commemorative activity began in the 1950s, but didn’t gather strength until the 1980s. Complementing this historical overview, Chapter 6 examines *Creating Public Identity at Musqueam* by presenting some of the experiences of individual community members, and then highlighting issues that affect them when working with museums today.

The experiences of the Musqueam community are then compared and contrasted to those of other Canadian Coast Salish communities in Chapter 7, *Canadian Communities and their Museum Relations*. The five principle recommendations of the 1992 *Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples* are used as a framework for discussing the inclusiveness of museums. Proximity or distance to the urban centres of Vancouver and Victoria is also considered to determine whether the size and locality of the community and the venue change the types of messages conveyed and the nature of collaborative activity. In Chapter 8, *Alternative Routes: Coast Salish Representation in the United States*, the discussion is extended to include information received from community members living south of the border. The experiences of American Coast
Salish people, shaped by differing colonial histories, treaties and laws, is compared to the Canadian perspectives provided in the previous chapter to determine whether the processes and key messages being conveyed are the same or different as a result.

In *Final Thoughts: Coast Salish Memory and Identity at the end of the Twentieth Century* I place Coast Salish commemorative practices into the context of those of re-emerging nations, concurrently seeking public recognition and the means to establish cohesive social identities for their members. The continued relevancy of museums for creating national commemorations for Coast Salish and other First Nations communities is discussed in relation to the advent of First Nations cultural centres.
Chapter Two: Perspectives on Indigenous Memory and Identity

Oral tradition and material culture anchor people to place despite histories of movement and displacement (Cruikshank and Argounova 2000:98).

My concern is not simply that the current narratives reduce the complexity of aboriginal life. Because these have become public, and sometimes legal, representations, an even greater concern is that communities will be stuck with these in later years when the political issues have shifted and new representations are needed (Bruce G. Miller 2001:16).

The subject of memory – as embodied by oral traditions, ritual activity and cultural performance, has become pervasive in the social sciences in the last few decades as academics re-examine its very nature and delve into the mystery of how memory works (Connerton 1989; Klein 1998). Writings on the topic are moving away from concern with factual accuracy to exploring how the present influences our perceptions of the past (see Gordillo 2002; Healy 1997; Lowenthal 1985). Memory is recognised as being both individual and social in nature, with the two aspects forever irrevocably entwined. It is now widely acknowledged that our social memories establish the cultural frameworks from which we perceive and experience the past in the present (Fentress and Wickham 1992). This has provided new perspectives for those seeking to understand the lives of indigenous people and other ethnic minorities (Connerton 1989; Cruikshank 1990; Basso 1996; Cruikshank and Argounova 2000; Gordillo 2002; Yelvington 2002; Bennett and Rowley 2003). Many researchers now acknowledge that the act of representation is imbued with authority (Comaroff and Comaroff 1981; Clifford 1988; Friedmand 1992), and that ethnographies, in particular, are especially problematic when authors write about cultures whose language they do not speak and whose people they have observed for only short periods of time (Clifford 1988).
Indigenous people are sometimes described as people without history, as those “prevented from identifying themselves for others” (Friedman 1992:837). In such writings “history” is equated with hegemony, “memory” the subaltern or disenfranchised. Indigenous people, peasant societies and other ethnic minorities, are often characterised as experiencing the past only through living memory (Nora 1989). The problem with such viewpoints is they invoke the concept of authenticity, while suggesting indigenous people, their languages and cultures, exist within a bubble – safe from outside influences, a scenario we know to be far from true. Such thinking underscores the complexity of contemporary indigenous life by implicitly arguing that those who adopt historical devises and commemorative activity have relinquished living memory (Nora 1989:15), and consequently it may be inferred “authentic” culture. For indigenous people, and others “without history”, to adopt historical practices, such as the establishment of museums and monuments, the creation of written histories and documentary films, and the compilation of archives, is generally equated with a loss – otherwise there would be no need to preserve. However, others remind us that forgetting is prerequisite to remembering – it is integral to the creation of memory (Lowenthal 1985; Connerton 1989).

French historian Pierre Nora argues the balance between memory and history has been disrupted recently by the growth of industrialisation, democratisation, and globalisation. A growing preoccupation with sites of memory (archives, museums, memorials and other commemorations) is given as evidence that the western world no longer lives within real memory – as embodied by social action and custom rather than documentation. He suggests:
Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer […] History, because it is an intellectual and secular production, calls for analysis and criticism. Memory installs remembrance within the sacred; history, always prosaic, releases it again. Memory is blind to all but the group it binds – which is to say, as Maurice Halbwachs has said, the there are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual. History, on the other hand belongs to everyone and no one, whence its claim to universal authority. Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things. Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative (Nora 1989:8-9).

To counter this argument it could be reasoned that both history and memory are social processes, although history also functions as a pedagogical and political tool. It has been well demonstrated that memory exists, supporting or countering official written histories, regardless of efforts to quiet it (Trouillot 1995; Siebert 1996; Leydesdorff et al, 1996; Gordillo 2002). To adopt the devices of historical reconstruction, therefore, cannot require the relinquishment of living memory in any society – although certain forms of government or historical circumstance may act to silence it (Jelin 1998).

More recently, scholars have correlated the growing preoccupation with commemorating the past to the creation of memory and identity (Connerton 1989; Gillis 1994; Healy 1997; Casey 2000; Cruikshank and Argounova 2000). They note that sites of commemoration provide anchors that tie communities and nations to specific events, creating new social memories that can include younger people, not just those who experienced or recall the event(s) in question. Some have tied the onset of this phenomenon to nation building (Gillis 1994; Healy 1997; Nuttall 2001).
Historian John Gillis (1994), for example, notes that because identities and memories are “things we think with,” they are political, social and historical in nature. He argues that commemorative activity is a physical manifestation of political and social identity, one requiring co-ordination with an end result that appears consensual despite the conflicts and negotiations occurring along the way. Gillis identifies three phases of commemoration that occurred within the Western world: pre-national, national and post-national. Although this framework was formulated to discuss the histories of western nations, indigenous histories have been entwined with those of the Western world for several centuries, for this reason I employ it as a starting point for examining recent First Nations commemorative activity.

Gillis describes pre-national commemorations (before the late 1700s) as belonging to the elite, suggesting common people lived with the past as part of their daily lives – incorporated as tradition and ritual activity, they had no need to commemorate it. For them, daily events and past events were viewed through the same lens of understanding. It was only the elite who needed to celebrate the great achievements of themselves and their ancestors through public monuments and celebrations. Family crypts, portraits and genealogies, private collections of oddities and antiquities, exemplify the types of pre-national commemorative activities restricted to the elite during the pre-national period.

Gillis (1994) suggests that national commemorations appeared after the American and French revolutions and were intended for the public, whether they initially accepted them or not. In many instances the past was evoked in new ways, appropriated to give legitimacy to the present regime of power. He notes national commemorations
appear at “those times and places where there is a perceived or constructed break with the past” (1994:8). Thus forgetting plays an especially pivotal role in this commemorative process.

A prime example of this type of commemorative activity is seen in the transformation of the private collections of the elite into public museums and galleries at the end of the French revolution; an activity that was combined with the creation of new symbols of national identity – flags, currency, and other emblems of the nation state. These transformations signalled a shift in political power, as much as a shift from private to public ownership. In her writings, museum scholar Eileen Hooper-Greenhill discusses how collections were reorganized, and transformed, following the French revolution to emerge as important political tools. She notes that: “the public museum emerged as one of the campaigns of the state to direct the population into activities which would, without the people being aware of it, transform the population into a useful resource for the state” (1992:168). Collections were used to illustrate the inequality of the previous regime, while highlighting the equality and democratic leanings of the new. As time passed these forms of commemorative activity became less about appropriating and reinterpreting the past, and more about tradition. Culture becomes one of the primary mechanisms by which the state reproduces and reaffirms its ideology (Althusser 1971:143).

Gillis observes that by the 1960s national commemorations were losing momentum in the western world, and what has followed is a period where individuals, themselves, have become responsible for memory work (see also Nora 1989). This is why, in the post-national period, commemoration has become more local and personal. Today, we see this phenomena everywhere as individuals are obsessed with preserving
the past – family belongings are revealed as priceless treasures on the *Antiques Roadshow*, archival quality scrapbooking has become a widespread North American hobby, and computer software is widely available for those looking to document their genealogies. For commemorative sites such as museums, we have seen a transformation in representational strategies away from meta-narratives about the past to the adoption of methodologies that employ multi-vocality and highlight individual life histories. The intent is no longer to unite the population, and thereby give validity to the nation state, but to recognise the diversity that exists within it.

The strengthening of local memory and identity is also viewed by some as a consequence of globalisation (see Miller 2001:43). To understand how indigenous memory and identity is created, and renewed, we must also recognise the effects of colonialism on indigenous commemorative activity and the links between commemorative activity and the growing claims for self-governance emerging from North American indigenous communities. While the Western world may have entered a post-national period of commemoration (although the ongoing emergence of new museums and interpretative sites suggests some overlap with his former category), the types of commemorative activity occurring today in indigenous societies share traits in common with those described by Gillis as typical of *national commemorations*. They occur where colonialism interrupted transmission of cultural knowledge, including memories of the past. A key difference in recent First Nations national commemorations is that they are not about appropriating culture or history, but reclaiming it.
First Nations Commemorations

Indigenous commemorative activity takes many forms – repatriation, documentary film making, development of education curricula and resources such as museum exhibits, cultural centres and tribal archives. Some aspects of this commemorative activity are new, while others have been transformed, which is why I characterise it as a form of national commemorative activity. The U’mista Cultural Society film, “A Strict Law Bids Us Dance (1975),” provides a good example since it educates Kwakw̱aka’wakw community members about the history of the Potlatch while addressing the damages caused by the Potlatch Ban (see Morris 1994). Played for visitors to the U’mista Cultural Centre, and distributed for sale on DVD, its message extends far beyond the Kwakw̱aka’wakw community to find a more global audience.

The need to preserve the past, while educating new generations and outsiders, is also a driving force behind the emergence of tribal museums and cultural centres throughout the United States and Canada (see Fortney 2001; Simpson 2001; McMaster 1998; Hendry 2005). For federally unrecognised tribes in Washington State, such as the Duwamish Tribe, the establishment of a cultural centre provides an anchor for an uprooted community. Shla’dai’ (Mary Lou Slaughter), a direct descendant of Si’ahl (Chief Seattle), master basket weaver and a Tradition Keeper for the Duwamish Tribe elaborates:

The Duwamish Tribe broke ground on June 23, 2007 for a long house and cultural center. We will have a presence in the area for the first time in 150 years! This is a tremendous achievement for our tribe. The first and foremost thing will be to have a place we can call our own! To teach our children the customs of our people and share with others. There will also be a money maker; such as canoe rides on the Duwamish river, Potlatches, story telling, etc...
(Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007)
For recognised Coast Salish communities, with established treaty rights, or those now pursuing treaties or reconciliation in the contemporary political arena, cultural centres are also seen as marketing tools for raising a positive profile of the community and may tie into other economic activities such as ecotourism and hospitality ventures.

Figure 2: The Duwamish Longhouse floor, featuring an inlayed basketry design by Shla'dai', was pieced together by Duwamish youth.

Photograph Courtesy of Mary Lou Slaughter, 2008.

Acting as sites of memory creation by bringing community members together for special events and holidays, cultural centres integrate into aspects of daily life – providing places to showcase emerging artists, employment opportunities, education programming, and cultural spaces that can enhance holistic health and wellness programs. The result is that the young (and disenfranchised) can experience their own
culture at these commemorative sites, and through engagements with Elders and other culture experts create new social memories to carry cultural teachings forward.

Lack of space and funding for such endeavours is identified as the main obstacle for many nations, including Musqueam and Snuneymuxw, who are seeking to establish a place to house community heritage materials and their reclaimed belongings, be they cultural objects, archival materials, or spoken languages. Recognising the ongoing need for such facilities, these two nations have, in the mean time, chosen to establish close working relationships with the institutions nearest to their respective communities – the UBC Museum of Anthropology and the Nanaimo District Museum. Through persistent action and diplomacy, these nations have shaped and influenced the priorities and daily practices of their partner institutions, ranging from exhibit planning, design and construction, to the development and delivery of public programming, and Board membership. The national commemorative work of these communities has thus extended beyond the borders of their current reserves, although it remains within the confines of their traditional ones. This speaks to their strength as negotiators and educators, and their skill at making others aware of “borders of difference” (Giroux 1992).

For other Coast Salish communities, such as the Stó:lō Nation, repatriation is seen as being a necessary first step in self-representation and other associated forms of commemorative activity. While representatives of the Stó:lō Nation view its inclusion in museum exhibits and research projects in a positive manner, they perceive self-representation as requiring the physical ownership of material culture. It is something that must arise from within their Nation, and with this in mind, they have established the
House of Respect Care-Taking Committee (also referred to as the Stó:lō Repatriation Committee) to undertake museum liaison work on behalf of constituent communities.

Naxaxalhts’i (Sonny McHalsie), a member of this repatriation committee and Cultural Advisor and Co-Director of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, suggests that reclaiming the Nation’s cultural heritage materials will be key to shifting current power relationships. He notes that:

…a museum institution, they have their own projects that kind of come up, and then depending on what the theme of the project is, if there’s a First Nations component to it, then they’ll try to contact us and work along with us. And I’d like to see that kind of flip around. I mean now, because we don’t have all of this – all of the materials, I mean most of the materials we have are all sitting in other museums, we don’t have our own. So I’m sure that once that happens [through repatriation], it will be a lot easier for us to take the lead role in calling the various museums, and establishing a working relationship with them so that we could get access to some of the [academic] fields that they have there, so that we could do various exhibits as well (Sonny McHalsie, Interviewed July 27, 2006).

At present, Naxaxalhts’i notes that the Stó:lō Nation generally reacts to opportunities for collaboration posed by staff from other cultural institutions, such as the Chilliwack Museum and the UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA), when they arise rather than developing their own initiatives. He states:

I think it’s because they [museums] pretty well have everything. We don’t have everything that we need. Like right now, I’m sure if we thought about it, there’s probably some kind of an exhibit that we can do. A limited exhibit, but I’m sure that there’d be other objects out there at various museums that we would probably have to try and make arrangements to borrow, to do our own, you know? So I think that’s why they have that role, but eventually though I want to see us actually taking more of a lead role in that. But the only way we can do that is by getting our own building, getting our own exhibit area, and having plans put in place as to what sort of exhibits that we want… Right now whenever there’s an opportunity we try to contribute, because it’s important for us to make sure that people know who the First Nations people are, and what our culture and history is about. So it’s something that we do right away if somebody calls. (Sonny McHalsie, Interviewed July 27, 2006)
The situation is slowly changing for Stó:lō Nation as evidenced by their companion exhibit to the publication, *A Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, created for the Chilliwack Museum in 2002, and the exhibit, *We Have to Learn to Live Together in a Good Way*, which accompanied the visit of stone *T’xwelátse* to the Chilliwack Museum in 2007. Stone *T’xwelátse* later visited the UBC Museum of Anthropology in 2008. Both of these visits were arranged at the request of *T’xwelátse* (Herb Joe Sr.), and other members of the family, to provide an opportunity for Stó:lō community members to talk publicly about repatriation and its significance to their daily lives and cultural practices.

**Figure 3:** A Stó:lō Interpreter shares the history of the Transformer Stone at Xá:ytem located near Mission, B.C.

![Photograph by Sharon Fortney, 2001.](image)

Material culture often plays a different role in displays and interpretative programming offered by First Nations (Clifford 1991), including the Stó:lō Nation, who
place the focus less on the aesthetic qualities of the object and more on its role within a broader cultural framework (Fortney 2001). In the two facilities currently operated by the Stó:lō Nation – Xá:ytem Longhouse Intrepretative Centre and Shxwt’a:selhawtxw (the House of Long Ago and Today), emphasis is placed upon visitor experience and education. Hands on activities and demonstrations are the primary method of display. Features of the local landscape, and making a personal connection with community members, are as important to interpretation as viewing the collections housed within the two repositories (Fortney 2001). In these two venues, spoken language renders life to the objects in ways that written texts, such as object labels, can only hint at.

**Vessels for Reclaiming Culture**

Museums, including cultural centres, are sites of memory creation. These institutions, like the people who work within them, are never neutral spaces (Rickard 2002). They represent how we currently understand the past, and inform our views of contemporary society, thus they are highly political sites. It has been suggested that exhibits, public performances, and the other commemorative activities undertaken within their walls demonstrate the role culture plays in reaffirming the ideologies of nation states (Duncan and Wallach 1978). Political theorist Louis Althusser lists culture and education among the apparatus used by states to reproduce their ideologies, noting:

Ideological State Apparatus function massively and predominantly *by ideology*, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic. (There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus). Thus schools and Churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection, etc., to ‘discipline’ not only their shepherds, but also their flocks. The same is true of the Family […] The same is true of cultural IS Apparatus (censorship, among other things), etc. (1971:145).
First Nations and other indigenous peoples have long recognised the dominance imposed by museums and other colonial tools of suppression and forced assimilation, but have only recently begun to exercise some control over how they are represented in these venues (Deloria Jr. 1969; Nason 1971; McMaster 1998; McMaster and Martin 1992).

Since the 1960s, they have begun transforming these institutions into vehicles for presenting their own cultural identities (Simpson 2001), and thereby, it could be argued resisting state ideology. When First Nations develop museum-like repositories within their own communities, those involved frequently choose a different name for the space, such as: Cultural Centre, Heritage Centre, or House of Treasures. These names reflect a difference in intent. Cultural centres are first and foremost places for people to gather and culture to be shared. They are as much about the future as they are about the past. They are sites where communities can tell their own stories (in their own languages). They are places where celebrations are held, manifested through cultural performance – singing, dancing, storytelling, and conversation. Objects enhance these cultural activities, but are not always required for them. When I visited Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump in southern Alberta during the mid-1990s, for example, I was told by staff that their interpretative displays contained “only five real artefacts.” Instead, contemporary cultural objects such as drums, props such as archaeological tools, and manufactured items such as replica stones, plants, and berries were used to create interpretative displays. First Nations staff, a video presentation, and sound recordings were the primary means by which culture was shared. Visitors were also able to experience this cultural site by walking outdoors to view the cliff and surrounding...
landscape (see Hendry 2005:57-58). During the summer, they are able to attend a large Pow Wow held on the nearby plains.

Cultural centres differ from museums in another significant way – their operating budgets and sources of funding. In Canada, public museums have core funding provided by government agencies – federal, provincial, and/or municipal. They supplement this funding with grant monies for specific activities: collections management, exhibits or public programmes. Cultural centres are also eligible for these types of grants, but unlike museums do not receive core funding from government sources. This means that they are especially dependent upon receiving grants from entities, such as the Department of Canadian Heritage’s *Museums Assistance Program*. This is especially problematic for cultural centres located in rural areas, since they sometimes encounter difficulties attracting and retaining staff with the skills necessary to compete for, and obtain, these types of grants (Fortney 2001).

Recently, cultural representations and language programs for First Nations have become a focal point within neo-liberal policy, yet many communities still struggle to address their basic needs – adequate housing, clean drinking water, and healthcare. In 2001, when I visited the *Secwepemc Museum and Heritage Park* operated by the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society (SCES), which serves the 17 Bands comprising the Secwepemc Nation, I spoke with Chief Bonnie Leonard of the Kamloops Indian Band. She stated:

“I would like to see the Museum in a new building. The roof of the building that it’s in now leaks, and although the Museum is in the basement it could be a threat to the artefacts.” She also indicated that the Kamloops Indian Band could not afford to provide the SCES with any more additional free space since the competing issues in their community are the basic needs of their band members – adequate shelter and clean drinking water. She add[ed] that the Kamloops Indian
Band most recently needed to install a water treatment plant for their community, and agree[d] with the assessment that the Museum [was] a luxury item by comparison (Fortney 2001:60).

By using government policy to focus public attention on issues of representation and cultural revitalization, inequalities in the economic and social circumstances of First Nations are obscured. On the surface it may appear that First Nations, and other source communities, have entered a post-colonial era, but we must consider the source of such messages. “At question here is the issue of who speaks, under what conditions, for whom, and how knowledge is constructed and translated within and between different communities located within asymmetrical relations of power” (Giroux 1992:26).

Museum funding provides one small window from which we can view current inequalities. Previous research demonstrated that cultural centres in British Columbia, were very dependent upon funding allocated through government agencies, such as the Department of Canadian Heritage (Fortney 2001). When the criteria for funding, and the process for allocating funds is determined by government agencies, the state retains control over what is deemed acceptable for public consumption. Projects that do not fit their criteria will go unfunded, their messages unnoticed.

Museums as sites of memory, and cultural history, are used to legitimise hegemonies. Historian Carol Duncan notes that Western nations have:

long known that public art museums are important, even necessary fixtures, of a well-furnished state. This knowledge has recently spread to other parts of the world. Lately, both traditional monarchs in so-called underdeveloped nations and Third World military despots have become enthralled with them (1991:88).

To this list we can add indigenous peoples, who as peoples of the so-called fourth world exist within the confines of Western nations and must, therefore, navigate through the political arenas of these hegemonies in their struggle for self-determination – be it
recognition of existing rights, obligations detailed in treaties, or those highlighted by ongoing negotiations.

For the individuals involved, participation in museum work can bring the satisfaction of sharing cultural experience with others while creating a more positive community profile, one that counterbalances negative stereotypes common in the media and forms of popular culture. Puyallup Artist Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson) notes that he feels a responsibility to ensure cultural portrayals are done in an accurate and respectful manner, so through his involvement he speaks to:

Most of all, everyone. I believe Native is as important as the non-Native viewer. The fact remains that there are so many Natives who grow up outside of the culture, and time periods portrayed in the museum setting, that a burden of living up to something has damaged the self worth of many. The meaning of what it is to ‘be Indian’ in the 21st century needs to change through the people themselves, not a film like “Dances with Wolves,” as appealing as that may have been. An honest look at the contemporary Native world is something everyone needs to take a look into (Interviewed October 22, 2007).

The expressed motivations of individual community members may vary, but reaction to stereotypes and the legacies of the colonial histories of both Canada and the United States cannot be ignored as a motivating factor. Reclaiming the past is one means by which indigenous communities are now gathering strength.

Thus to re-emerging (and new) nations, museums are an important pedagogical tool. It is within this framework the shifting relationships between museums and indigenous peoples must be considered, as representation of indigenous identities shifts away from passive representation, in which elite groups of scholars (and other self-proclaimed experts) determine how indigenous peoples are publicly represented, to active voice – whereby indigenous peoples represent their histories and cultures in their own words (and with growing frequency in their own languages).
In the past, museums represented the identities of indigenous peoples, first as curiosities, later as scientific specimens within imperial archives that signified the far reaching control of colonising powers such as: England, France and Germany (see Ames 1992; Barringer and Flynn 1998; Healy 1997; Richards 1992). Since the 1960s there has been a notable change in the attitudes of anthropologists and other museum practitioners, as evidenced by changes in institutional policies to address First Nations and other source community aspirations (Karp and Levine 1991, 1992; Ames 1992, 1999; Peers and Brown 2003). Vine Deloria Jr. reflects:

we can now make choices we could not make before. There are some things, however, that cannot change because they are the foundations of the relationship. Anthropology carries with it some incredibly heavy baggage. It is, and continues to be, a deeply colonial academic discipline, founded in the days when it was doctrine that the coloured races of the world would be enslaved by Europeans, and the tribal peoples would vanish from the planet. When we stop to think about it, we live in a society so rich and so structured that we have the luxury of paying six-figure salaries to individuals who know a little bit about the pottery patterns of a small group of ancient people, who know something of a language of an Indian tribe, or who specialise in ledger-book drawings or plant knowledge of remote groups of desert-dwelling tribal peoples. We still seem to find it more valuable to have an Anglo know these things and be certified to teach them to other Anglos in an almost infinite chain of generations of scholars than to change the configuration of the academic enterprise and move on to more significant endeavours (1997:211).

Despite this inherent imbalance change has been occurring, and many First Nations have begun to embrace museums, schools, and other public sites of memory and commemoration. To understand this change of attitude we must look to the events that provoked this epiphany, especially political activism and demands for civil liberties and social justice – a theme that will be developed in more detail in the next chapter.
Coast Salish Memory and Identity

“The sxwoxwiyam and the stories of Xexá:ls, the Transformers, there’s the sqwélqwel and that’s like our own true history, the family histories. When I talk about where my grandfather fished or where he picked berries or where my great grandmother gathered cedar roots or whatever, that’s my sqwélqwel. That’s the part of me that I take care of from the family perspective, where as sxwoxwiyam is more general, it’s what everyone learns. It connects us all, because Xexá:ls travelled through each of our territories and transformed some of our ancestors into stone, or some of our ancestors into sturgeon, or the black bear, things like that…”

Naxaxalhts’i (Sonny McHalsie), Co-Director, Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, Interviewed July 27, 2006

There is a growing body of literature concerning the memory and identity of indigenous peoples, challenging the assumption that memory is concerned only with the past, by demonstrating how memory plays a prominent role in the present, and thereby guides future action (Basso 1996; Bennett and Rowley 2003; Clifford 1998; Connerton 1989; Cruikshank and Argounova 2000; Friedman 1992; Gordillo 2002; Marr 1996; Muratorio 1991; Nuttall 2001; Roy 2002; Sarris 1993; Trouillot 1995; Yelvington 2002). Memory is no longer viewed as static and unchanging, nor restricted to individuals, but as a social act that carries culture forward. Concern for chronology and factual accuracy is now viewed by many scholars as less important than what these social memories can tell us about the people who share them and how they view their place in the larger world.

To understand contemporary Coast Salish identity we must see it as being equally entwined with knowledge of local places and past events. Although some of these landscapes may have been irrevocably changed, they still anchor Coast Salish identities in the contemporary world, through histories and memories that are spatially rather than chronologically driven. This does not mean that oral traditions have no underlying chronology, but rather that this is not the driving force behind Coast Salish knowledge of the past. Members of the Stó:lō Nation, for example, differentiate between family history
(sqwélqwel) and broader cultural knowledge (sxwoxwxiyam) – the former being a form of private knowledge and the latter more communal in nature (see Carlson 1997, 2001). For those outside of the community, it may at times be difficult to distinguish between the two types of knowledge since both include narratives scholars would classify as oral tradition.

To understand oral traditions it is sometimes necessary to provide a framework for understanding – a translation or gloss that brings a sense of order to the experience. Coast Salish narratives, like those of many other indigenous peoples, often defy the application of a clear linear chronology. Despite this difficulty, anthropologist William W. Elmendorf identified three distinct chronological periods while researching Twana oral traditions – the mythic, semi-mythic and semi-historic. Mythic tales, he suggests: “have their setting in a prehuman period, the sa’bu, before the changing of the world” (Elmendorf 1993:iii). It was during this period that, in some communities, the first people fell from the sky. This was also the time when people and animals could change their shapes to assume either animal or human form – this was often accomplished by donning or removing their animal skins (see Adamson 1934; Hill-Tout 1978; Elmendorf 1993; Kennedy and Bouchard 1983; Marshall 1999 for other examples).

Elmendorf notes that a semi-mythic period followed where humans and animals began to acquire their separate identities. These changes were often brought about through the efforts of supernatural figures known as the Transformers, who travelled throughout the Salish world bringing order to the landscape (see Bierwert 1999; Carlson 1997; Hill-Tout 1978 for examples). Semi-historic tales, by contrast, “concern almost exclusively human characters, although these are usually anonymous, they sometimes
deal with historically known peoples” (Elmendorf 1993:iii), and thus include the categories of family history and gossip.

All of these types of narratives while situated in the past, continue to shape Coast Salish identify in the contemporary world. They provide the foundation of an indigenous epistemology – one where history is understood spatially, as opposed to chronologically as is the case on in the western world. Coast Salish oral narratives chronicle past events, but they are very much about the present, providing rationales and consequences for specific cultural behaviours, thereby simultaneously defining and reinforcing a moral code. They don’t just speak to the past, they tell us how to live in the present, and provide metaphors for adapting to new circumstances. In doing so they write Coast Salish history on local landscapes, linking specific groups of people to specific places, thereby getting to the very root of what it means to be “indigenous.”

Because oral narratives are more than objects to be collected, translated, classified, and displayed, they cannot be adopted piecemeal into another knowledge framework. To do so is to miss recognising the underlying truth – that with their unification they are an alternative knowledge framework (Cruikshank 1998:53). What does this mean within a museum context? Recognition of difference requires museum visitors to confront the unfamiliar – something that jars their worldview. This cannot be accomplished by arranging cultural objects – material possessions and oral narratives, within the westernised frameworks of art or functionality.

This difficulty became apparent during recent discussions held at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) during June and August of 2007, for the exhibit: S’abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists. Community members from both sides of the border
suggested the exhibit storyline should focus on flood stories, the travels of the transformers and the legacy of the gifts they created for us, as well as local narratives that highlight specific places within the territories of participating tribes and nations. The importance of tribal canoe journeys, and our identity as water people, was another theme invoking local landscapes deemed central to constructing contemporary Coast Salish identity. These themes continued to reappear throughout the course of these early planning sessions, despite efforts by museum staff to redirect discussion to agenda topics dealing with object selection and interpretative technology.

Rather than seeing oral traditions as the framework for understanding Coast Salish material culture, museum staff seemed to view it as supplementary to the exhibit storyline – another object to be displayed. Frequently at these meetings, we were advised that “nothing is written in stone” and that everything was open to discussion and change. Despite these assurances, and considerable feedback, the proposed storyline did not alter from the first meeting to the next – although the exhibit title was changed after the third to include the term “Pacific” (an unnecessary change in the opinion of some Canadian delegates).

The exhibition summary, presented at the two meetings I attended (in June and August 2007), showcased themes developed over several years in consultation with Upper Skagit Elder taqʷəblu (Vi Hilbert). This document states that:

The title, chosen by one of the museum’s Native advisors, is the Lushootseed term for “gift” and invokes the principle at the heart of Salish culture, that of reciprocity, both in the public and spiritual domains. This richly symbolic word expresses the important acts of giving gifts at potlatches, of “giving thanks” during first food ceremonies, the gifts of creativity bestowed upon artists and other leaders, and the roles of master artists, oral historians, and cultural leaders to pass vital cultural information to the next generations. The exhibition itself is a gift that the museum and its advisors give to the community, providing a platform
for learning and understanding based in current art historical scholarship and indigenous knowledge bases (S’abadeb Exhibition Summary, page 1).

The S’abadeb storyline, although not contested by planning committee members, speaks not of community consultation but rather the close collaborative relationship that existed between the exhibit curator and one well-respected Elder. Although consultation (largely information sharing) was later extended to representatives from multiple communities, the experience of future visitors had already been planned out, as was demonstrated in an accompanying floor plan also distributed to delegates with their working papers. This exhibit plan provided titles for the five S’abadeb galleries, mapped the location of key objects such as a canoe, and even identified the placement of interpretative technology such as computer kiosks and touch screens. Although the final installation differed slightly from the initial gallery plan, the consultation process was one that required community members to respond to suggestions made by SAM as opposed to working together to identify a storyline and other content for the exhibit.

Emphasis on chronological sequence was a tangible element in the distributed working papers, despite expressed efforts on the part of curatorial staff to depart from the familiar. Delegates were informed, at the planning sessions I attended, that distinct spaces had been set aside for: greeting visitors (Orientation Area); showcasing the diversity of Coast Salish material culture (Gallery 1: Gifts of the Earth); archaeological objects (Gallery 2: Gifts of our ancestors); the Vancouver Voyage objects (Gallery 3: Gifts of our Families); ceremonial objects (Gallery 4: Gifts of the Spirit World); and contemporary works (Gallery 5: Salish Art Today). Regardless of conscious intent, visitor experience was already being arranged into a recognisable historical timeline – pre-contact, contact, and contemporary. When visitors encounter this type of familiar
experience, one where their worldview is not jarred or disrupted in any manner, the opportunity to provoke new insights is lost.

The installed exhibit, unveiled publicly on October 21, 2008, showed only minor departures from the preliminary plan. The most significant change was the absence of ritualist rattles, and other ceremonial items, considered not appropriate for public display by the majority of the community advisors participating in the project. Several empty platforms were also included in recognition of the places and things that could not be exhibited within the confines of a museum, such as landscapes and spoken languages.

The gallery titles – *Gifts of the Earth, Gifts of our Ancestors, Gifts of our Families, Gifts of the Spirit World, Gifts of our Artists* – were also employed for a concurrent virtual exhibit on the SAM website. Archaeological objects and contemporary works and activities were co-mingled within this virtual exhibit to demonstrate cultural continuity and recent divergences. In the virtual exhibit, visitors were oriented to: Coast Salish people and their cultural practices; the sources of such knowledge – oral tradition and archaeology; historical events including acts of cultural resistance and revitalization; provided a brief glimpse of ceremonial life; and introduced to Coast Salish “art forms” and contemporary artists.

*S’abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists*, and the companion virtual exhibit, remain true to the vision presented in working papers circulated at the community planning meetings held in 2007. If we critically examine these papers, what do they tell us about the exhibit? In the brief excerpt from the *S’abadeb* exhibit summary (discussed previously), we see that western preoccupation with taxonomic classification orders visitor experience as cultural work is broken down into discrete categories, or
specialties, that stress individuality rather than the entwined natures of these “creative gifts”. Problematic is the statement that: “the exhibition itself is a gift that the museum and its advisors give to the community,” since it invokes the language of philanthropy and conveys a sense of “pride” on the part of the host institution (see Price 1989:25), whether intended or not. The use of the term “advisors” as opposed to “partners” demonstrates an imbalance in the collaborative relationship, acknowledging that the museum was in the position to choose whether or not to follow the “advice” provided at such meetings. One Canadian delegate described the process as information sharing as opposed to collaboration, noting that SAM was only beginning to explore how to undertake community consultation. The delegates I spoke with all felt they had been treated in a respectful manner, but held mixed opinions on the level of consultation that was undertaken with their respective communities and the process that was followed to obtain exhibit content.

What the above example conveys is the difficulty inherent in museum work itself. Ethnographic displays, whether they occur in an anthropology museum or an art museum, are faced with the challenge of translating one type of cultural experience to an audience of diverse background. In most instances, professional “experts” or curators are the driving force behind such work, and whether intentionally or not, bring their own cultural experience into the end product. Musqueam language instructor, Victor Guerin, explains the difficulty of translation is that cultural meanings are often lost, noting:

Well one thing about language and culture is that the expression itself is a bit of a misnomer, because frankly you can’t separate language and culture they’re one – part and parcel of each other. Our language…our culture is encoded in our language. You can look at specific expressions to see that. One of the examples that I like to use is the way that words are viewed in terms of the aboriginal term and the English gloss, as opposed to the English translation. Take for instance the
word woodpecker. In English it’s called a [Northern Flicker] woodpecker and in our language it’s called tumulhupsum. Tumulhupsum is a combination word coming from the word tumulth which is our word for red ochre paint and the lexical suffix upsun which means the neck. So literally the term translates to the one with red ochre paint on his neck. So, if you look at for instance a classroom situation where someone asks, “what do you call a woodpecker?” And you tell them tumulhupsum, and then leave it at that, they view that as a translation, but it’s really a gloss. They don’t get the cultural information when you leave it that way. They look at it as a translation and say, “oh tumulhupsum means woodpecker when it doesn’t” (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

This tendency to present Coast Salish culture, and other First Nation cultures, in a fragmentary, or incomplete, manner is not unique to museums. It pervades written texts, media portrayals, and other modes of communication characterised by an “intrinsic lack of neutrality” (Freire 1998:124).

Translating culture is a difficulty that many First Nations must now struggle with themselves, as they attempt to solidify their national identities through commemorative and pedagogical activity targeting community members who have been educated in the western system of education and whose language of fluency is English. T’xwelátse (Herb Joe Sr.), a traditional councillor employed by the Stó:lō Nation’s Family and Children Service Program, explains:

They’re being taught within a very different education model, the public education model that all of BC uses. And basically all of Canada uses as well. But that education model is so different than our historical education model that our young people now are finding a need in their lives for museums. And well, that being the case, then we necessarily need to get more involved with museums. It’s a necessity in our lives today rather than a…miscellaneous choice that you can make (Interviewed July 27, 2006).

Adapting to new educational models is just one of the ways that contemporary Coast Salish nations must accommodate to the influence of the outside world. Band and tribal agencies now utilise organizational structures that are outwardly similar to the governance structures of the Canadian and U.S. governments, with separate departments
responsible for portfolios such as education, health, resource management, legal matters and justice. This is viewed by some as a necessity for dealing with federal agencies (and does not mean they have abandoned cultural protocols as part of their process for conducting business). Many communities also assign specific departments or individuals to act as liaisons to museums (and other cultural institutions), but a great deal of diversity exists as to how respective communities handle their affairs. Table One details the types of individuals selected to act as museum liaisons, based upon my research over a five-year period.

Regardless of how a community chooses to delegate museum work, the reality is that on occasion small numbers of individuals may determine how the identity of the larger community is constructed. Musqueam language instructor, Victor Guerin, suggests that:

…consultation tends to focus on the staff members in Band Administration. It’s fairly difficult to bring consultation to the community at large because they have their own [priorities] – you know they have to put food on the table, so we have their schedules to contend with. It’s generally administration staff that can make time for museum people to consult.

I think there’s… a lot of knowledge that’s lost in that difficulty in consultation. But also exhibits by their very nature tend to need brevity, there’s really only a certain amount that you can include in the content of a presentation (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

However, other representatives from Musqueam offer alternative viewpoints about how consultation occurs within their community. They note time is spent gathering advice for specific initiatives at the Elder’s Lunches, Musqueam 101, Musqueam Youth 101, at local schools attended by community youth, and through other community forums.

Exhibits, and other forms of commemorative activity, tend to present unifying narratives despite the diversity of experience that may exist within a community. This is
because coherency is required to counter existing stereotypes and inaccurate or one-sided portrayals common to news media. Multi-vocality is still employed, but within an overarching framework determined by specific community processes. For example, those assigned the role of museum liaison often rely upon existing materials, accumulated in archival form for the purposes of treaty negotiation, curriculum development, or language preservation to guide their interactions with museum staff. Geraldine Manson, Snuneymuxw Cultural and Language Elders Coordinator, and an Elected Council Member, explains her community’s process as follows:

We do consultation really closely with one or two key Elders. We are also mindful of the research that we’ve done with the history of our Nation, to always use that as a guide too. It’s never done by itself. (Interviewed October 22, 2007)

The theme of the exhibit in question ultimately determines who will be consulted, since different individuals offer different forms of expertise. This also returns us to a previous concern over who determines the content of an exhibit or public program, with communities responding to externally driven opportunities as opposed to those developed in conjunction with a partner institution.
**Table One: People assigned to Museum Work from within Coast Salish Communities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Other Roles of Museum Liaisons</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Type of Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quw’utsun’</td>
<td>Elected Council Members</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musqueam</td>
<td>Director of Treaty, Lands and Resources; accompanied by Language Instructor / Elder</td>
<td>MOA, LOA, CMC, VM, NMAI, SAM, Smithsonian</td>
<td>E, P, R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squamish</td>
<td>Director of Education; and or a Representative from Chief and Council</td>
<td>VM, MOA, WV, SAM, NV, CMC, Burke</td>
<td>E, P, R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songhees</td>
<td>Elected Council Members</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmalco</td>
<td>Elected Chief</td>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snuneymuxw</td>
<td>Cultural and Language Elders Coordinator / Elected Council Member accompanied by an Elder</td>
<td>MOA, SAM</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseycum</td>
<td>Cultural Researcher accompanied by Elected (and Hereditary) Chief</td>
<td>MOA, AMNH</td>
<td>E, R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stó:lō Nation</td>
<td>Director and Staff from Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre; Members of Stó:lō Nation Repatriation Committee</td>
<td>MOA, SAM, VM, Burke</td>
<td>E, R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsleil-Waututh</td>
<td>Staff member(s) or Elected Chief / Director of Treaty Department</td>
<td>VM, SAM</td>
<td>E, P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duwamish</td>
<td>Elected Council Member accompanied by Tradition Keeper</td>
<td>SAM, MOHI</td>
<td>E, P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snohomish</td>
<td>Elected Chairman</td>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nisqually</td>
<td>Director of the Archives Department / Tribal Archaeologist accompanied by Archives Staff</td>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown S’Kllallam</td>
<td>Elected Council Member (assigned on a rotational basis)</td>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klahoose</td>
<td>Community Elders</td>
<td>LOA</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliammon</td>
<td>Spiritual Advisor accompanied by an Elder Senior Treaty Negotiator Community Researcher</td>
<td>LOA, CMC</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations:**

- AMNH = American Museum of Natural History in New York
- CMC = Canadian Museum of Civilization
- LOA = UBC Laboratory of Archaeology
- MOA = UBC Museum of Anthropology
- MOHI = Museum of History and Industry
- NMAI = National Museum of the American Indian
- NV = North Vancouver Museum
- SAM = Seattle Art Museum
- VM = Vancouver Museum
- WV = West Vancouver Museum and Archives

E = Exhibit  
P = Public Programme  
R = Repatriation
Communities such as Musqueam, the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, and the Snuneymuxw have all enjoyed some level of success in partnering with outside institutions to develop exhibit and programming content that satisfies the aspirations of their own communities while educating external audiences. However, their respective relationships with the Museum of Anthropology, the West Vancouver Museum and Archives, and the Nanaimo District Museum, have only slowly gained momentum. For example, Musqueam’s relationship with the UBC Museum of Anthropology, discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, has been many decades in the making.

In this chapter, I have discussed some of the ways contemporary memory and identity is generated by Coast Salish communities through commemorative activity, such as museum exhibits and programming. In the process, I have critiqued one institution engaged in the difficult task of consulting numerous Coast Salish communities. That is not to say that the Seattle Art Museum does not deal with First Nations in a respectful manner, but simply provides a means to offer some insights into its current relationships and perhaps, assist with their ongoing development.

To conclude, I would like to acknowledge Geraldine Manson’s comments on those recent efforts:

The Seattle Art Museum I put my hands up to them, because they have now come to realise after all these years that First Nations are the ones that carry the knowledge – how things should be displayed or when to be displayed now. It has never been that relationship before. You read about our petroglyphs in books that have been written by others and it’s their thought or understanding of what an object is – why it’s that way. They don’t go out and get the information, they just assume… (Interviewed October 22, 2007)
Duwamish Tradition Keeper, Shla’dai’, likewise acknowledges the progress being made by SAM and other Washington State museums, stating:

I have been happy with the headway I have made with the museums, the two that I’m working with too [SAM and the Museum of History and Industry]. I think the only way is up! As I said before, this is new for the Duwamish as I have brought the weaving back to my tribe and my son, Michael Halady, has brought the carving back. And we are looking forward to a positive presence in the community and we are on that path and we hope it will grow with time and will be a good thing for our tribe and the city which was named after our great Chief Si’ahl. (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007)
The significance of material culture (buildings, clothes, ceremonial paraphernalia, market goods) lies at present in its challenge to colonial authority, its assertion of survival, its demand for response, its provocation to action. In other words, it marks out the contested field of First Nations identity politics (Charlotte Townsend Gault 1997:132).

No surviving culture is ever static, cultural dynamics require change in order to survive. What survives in a culture is what people accept and bring forward (Bates 1999:202).

In the twentieth century our world became a much smaller place as the “exotic” and “foreign” were transformed into the “familiar,” and sometimes “commonplace,” by new forms of transportation and communication. During this same era, issues affecting ethnic groups around the world were spotlighted on a world stage, as post-war reaction to the ethnic cleansing of the Holocaust grew and a new type of global citizen began to emerge. Air travel, the rise of tourism as an industry, and new advances in media – especially television, brought new knowledge of social inequality to the doorsteps of the middle classes. Individuals from all social classes began to view themselves as creators of history, and preserving the past became a widespread preoccupation for the masses, not just in museum settings, but also in the privacy of their own homes (Friesen 2000; Gillis 1994; Nora 1989; Sobchack 1996; Taylor 2001).

In the 1960s, indigenous peoples in the United States, Canada, Australia, and other former colonies, began to assert their rights to equal participation in their respective nations by drawing attention to unresolved issues relating to their existing aboriginal rights and title. In this atmosphere of change:

There was a growing movement towards cultural revival and self-representation by tribal groups seeking to re-establish and enhance their cultural identity through the preservation and revival of traditional culture, history and art, and to counteract the negative and stereotyped image of the Indian. One manifestation
of this self-determination movement was the establishment of Native American museums and cultural centres (Simpson 2001:135).

It also manifested in the formation of new political and cultural organisations in former colonies around the world, and eventually led to the development of new types of relationships between indigenous peoples and institutions, such as museums, whose histories were entwined with colonialism.

On the Northwest Coast, there has been a long history of engagement and efforts at collaborative research, beginning with the research conducted by anthropologists and other museum collectors in the late 1800s. Anthropologist, and Ethnology Curator, Martha Black notes: “although participants and methods have changed from individuals – often First Nations artists – acting as representatives of their cultural communities in museums to formal partnerships between museums and First Nations institutions, and not all collaborative projects have been equally successful, collaborations between First Nations and museums have been going on for more than fifty years in British Columbia” (2009:5).

Since the 1950s, First Nations involvement in museums and other cultural initiatives has gathered strength, building upon a handful of early success stories. The **Totem Pole Restoration Project**, implemented by the UBC Museum of Anthropology and the BC Provincial Museum, is a prime example of one such early collaboration between museums and First Nations. Initially the project employed Kwakwaka’wakw master carver Mungo Martin, but it soon attracted younger artists such as Doug Cramner, Henry Hunt and Bill Reid as apprentices and observers (Hawthorn 1993:16). Although it actively employed only a handful of artists, the project’s greater legacy may have been
felt when participating (and visiting) artists returned to their home communities – some with new skills, others with new outlooks on the relevancy of museums.

In 1969 the resurgence of Canadian indigenous identity was spurred on when a newly drafted Indian Policy known as the “White Paper” was proposed in the House of Commons. This document necessitated immediate action on the part of First Nations as it sought to extinguish aboriginal rights and title in Canada by suggesting the assimilation strategies employed over the last century had effectively destroyed First Nation cultures across the Nation. Previously, when faced with repressive laws such as the Potlatch Ban, in effect from 1884 until 1951 (Muckle 1998:72), Canadian First Nations had responded by quietly concealing their cultures from view (Spradley 1969; Blackman 1992; Alfred 2004). However, the potential repercussions of this new Indian Policy required a different response. To protect their rights, First Nations had to work actively to establish public identities. They needed to demonstrate that their cultures still existed, distinct from the rest of Canadian society.

The White Paper

On June 25, 1969, the Canadian government sought to resolve its Indian problems (and phase out transfer payments to its legal wards) by implementing change to the nation’s Indian Policy. Delivered by Jean Chrétien, then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the 1969 White Paper stated:

For Canadian society the issue is whether a growing element of its population will become full participants contributing in a positive way to the general well-being or whether, conversely, the present social and economic gap will lead to their increasing frustration and isolation, a threat to the general well-being of society (section II).
The paper goes on to suggest the continuation of separate status will impede Canadian First Nations from “full social, economic and political participation in Canadian life” (section II). Disguised as concern for the social and economic well-being of a segment of Canadian society set apart by its cultural difference and imposed poverty, the new policy, in fact, did more to protect the interests of mainstream Canadians. Fear seems to have been its guiding principle, since frequent references were made to “the rapid increase in the Indian population” (section II) and a newly emerging “forceful and articulate Indian leadership” (see sections II and V). A leadership that acquired many of their skills through forced assimilation strategies, such as residential schools, where they gained knowledge of mainstream society and, in some instances, the education to function within it.

Throughout the White Paper, the Government presented its arguments using “common sense” rhetoric, suggesting that social equality was the key motivation for change rather than economic interests. However, economic interests were undeniably the guiding principle behind the proposed policy, which sought to completely eliminate the Department of Indian Affairs. The paper suggested other federal and provincial agencies could assume the responsibilities of the defunct Department and “administrative savings would result from the elimination of separate agencies” (section V, subsection C). In addition to saving overhead costs on administering services to its First Nations citizens, the Government also seemed preoccupied with the missed economic opportunities posed by reserve lands noting that:

The reserve system has provided the Indian people with lands that generally have been protected against alienation without their consent. Widely scattered across Canada, the reserves total nearly 6,000,000 acres and are divided into about 2,200 parcels of varying sizes... The Government believes that full ownership implies
many things. It carries with it the free choice of use, of retention or of disposition [emphasis mine] (section V, subsection E).

The paper goes on to imply that the only way native control of native lands can be attained is through changing the ownership from land trust to fee simple land, which could be mortgaged or sold. It argues that no one will do business on reserve land without these alterations, although time has since proven that this is clearly not the case.

The 1969 *White Paper* did more than just seek to sever the “special status” of its Indian subjects through economic initiatives, it also sought to appropriate their cultural difference for the benefit of Canadian society as a whole. It patronizingly suggested that native peoples were unaware of their rich cultural heritage, while avoiding mention of past assimilation policies and government responsibility. The paper notes that:

> The Indian contribution to North American society is often overlooked, even by the Indian people themselves. Their history and tradition can be a rich source of pride, but are not sufficiently known and recognised. Too often, the art forms which express the past are preserved, but are inaccessible to most Indian people. This richness can be shared by all Canadians. Indian people must be helped to become aware of their history and heritage in all its forms, and this heritage must be brought before all Canadians in all its rich diversity (Section V, subsection A).

Heritage resources were indirectly equated with natural resources, which like reserve lands, were viewed as under-developed in the eyes of the liberal government. Whereas, First Nations culture was once something to eradicate, it was now something for *all Canadians* to preserve and share (regardless of existing cultural protocols for determining ownership and use).

> Given the rise of tourism as an industry, following the advent of affordable air transportation, this change in attitude is not surprising. The success of the tourism industry pivots on the ability to deliver a unique product to the consumer, and in former colonies, such as Canada and Australia, that unique product has come to be equated with
the cultures of indigenous peoples combined with the beauty of natural landscapes (see Blundell 2002; Hall 1996; Keelan 1993; Jacobs 1996). Tourism pivots on quests for “authentic” experiences that can be commemorated through souvenirs – an economic niche that many feel indigenous people and their material culture can satisfy. However, in their enthusiasm to market indigenous cultures, mainstream governments and businesses often fail to consider the rights and needs of indigenous peoples. Their priorities do not recognise the non-secular aspects of indigenous life, nor do they realise that some things are not appropriate (or available) for display or sale.

The Red Paper and Other Counter Arguments

Canada’s “articulate Indian leadership” was quick to respond to this new Indian policy. On June 26, 1969, the National Indian Brotherhood released a statement, noting that:

We have had less than 24 hours to examine this policy, but feel we must issue a strong statement now lest the Canadian public believe the Indian question is solved to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned. We know it was not the intent of the new policy but we fear the end result of the proposal will be the destruction of a Nation of People by legislation and cultural genocide [...] Throughout the period of consultation referred to by the Minister in his policy paper, the Indian leaders were confident they had abundantly made clear to the Minister, and through him the Government, that an essential first step in developing a new approach to the so-called Indian problem would be to honour the existing obligations; the outstanding promises and commitments made to the Indian people. Instead of this approach, the Minister proposes to solve the problem by evading the responsibility of the federal government under the British North America Act (1969:2).

Consultation clearly meant different things to each of the parties. While both parties entered these meetings aspiring to create positive change, a cultural gap existed, resulting in divergent understandings of what each party was seeking. The Canadian government
was working within a framework that saw First Nations culture and land as unexploited commodities that could benefit all Canadians (with the proper guidance). By contrast, First Nations people were expressing their need for self-determination and urging the Government to begin reconciliation by honouring its existing legal obligations.

In June of 1970, Harold Cardinal, a First Nations lawyer, presented a response that reflected consultations among 42 First Nations communities by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta. The paper titled, “Citizens Plus,” has become more widely known as the “Red Paper.” This articulate document is now acknowledged as the main counter-argument to the White Paper. The preamble states:

To us who are Treaty Indians there is nothing more important than our Treaties, our lands and the well being of our future generation. We have studied carefully the contents of the Government White Paper on Indians and we have concluded that it offers despair instead of hope. Under the guise of land ownership, the government has devised a scheme whereby within a generation or shortly after the proposed Indian Lands Act expires our people would be left with no land and consequently the future generation would be condemned to the despair and ugly spectre of urban poverty in ghettos (Indian Chiefs of Alberta 1970:1).

The paper further notes that instead of continuing discussions to resolve native concerns about the policy, government officials were proceeding with implementation of the five year plan detailed in the White Paper, as was evidenced by new departmental budgets.

Citizens Plus, or the Red Paper, offered a counter policy that deconstructed the arguments presented by the liberal government in the White Paper beginning with the notion that special status equated discrimination. Arguing in favour of retention of legal Indian Status, the paper notes:

Retaining the legal status of Indians is necessary if Indians are to be treated justly. Justice requires that the special history, rights and circumstances of Indian people be recognised […] The 1969 statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy is based on the assumption that any legislation which sets a particular segment of the population apart from the main stream of the citizenry is ipso facto
conducive to the denial of equality and therefore discriminatory and to be deplored. Such an attitude indicates a complete lack of understanding of the significance of the concept of equality, particularly in so far as the law concerning the protection of minorities is concerned (1970:4).

Equality in law precludes discrimination of any kind; whereas equality in fact may involve the necessity of different treatment in order to obtain a result which establishes an equilibrium between different situations (1970:5).

The paper then outlined immediate responses the government could undertake to reform its Indian policy, including the appointment of a full-time Minister of Indian Affairs, public recognition of existing Treaties, and amending the Canadian Constitution to protect native rights as detailed by those Treaties. The Alberta Indian Chiefs were not in favour of repealing or amending the Indian Act, until “the question of treaties [was] settled” (1970:12).

The counter policy went on to identify several measures that, if implemented, would give native people more control over their daily lives. Chief among these steps was to relinquish government control over monies allocated for the well-being of native people. Rather than transferring the responsibility to provincial agencies, native leadership should determine how to administer such funds, particularly those designated for education. The Red Paper notes:

Our education is not a welfare system. We have free education as a treaty right because we paid in advance for our education by surrendering our lands. The funds for education should be offered to the tribal councils (1970:14).

In terms of fostering economic development, it was argued that changes needed to be made to how the government honoured its obligations to its native citizens. It was suggested that, “no program can succeed if it rests solely on continuing government appropriations, which depend in turn on annual legislative action” (1970:15).
The remainder of the document concerns specific plans for implementing organizational changes. However, the root of these changes is the recognition, and honouring, of existing aboriginal rights and title. The newly created Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) released its own declaration later that year, on November 17, 1970, which likewise noted:

It is evident that legislation for Indians is necessary and that the present Indian Act is unsuitable. New legislation and/or constitutional changes must provide us with educational and economic opportunity, and must provide more power and authority at the local level. The real issue is not revision of the Indian Act but recognition of the rights that have been denied us since Confederation and to enact constitutional legislation to guarantee those rights [...] We need legislation that will reverse the present paternalistic attitude of the federal government (1970:3).

The UBCIC response to the White Paper also called for First Nations people to administer their own transfer payments (something that was later achieved in the United States through the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975), thereby reducing the Government bureaucracies with whom they had to work. The resolution of outstanding claims, and the honouring of aboriginal rights regarding resource use – hunting, fishing, and harvesting, were fundamental components of the UBCIC declaration as well.

The White Paper quickly faded from public view in the face of these and other counter arguments. In 1973, a landmark ruling, known as the Calder Decision, sealed its fate when the Supreme Court of Canada recognised that aboriginal title had not been extinguished within the province of British Columbia, and that “the Nisga’a continued to hold title to their land” (Carlson 1997:148). This ruling was monumental for Canadian First Nations, since it recognised the ongoing relevance of the Royal Proclamation of 1763. This proclamation detailed criteria set by the Crown for extinguishing aboriginal title in Canada, making specific reference to the necessity of treaties (see Carlson
1997:148). This was a pivotal decision for BC First Nations, since only a limited number of treaties had been signed within the province.

The Emergence of Native American Self-Governance

The 1970s was also an era of positive change, across the border, for Native Americans where several legal advances paved the way for self-governance. In 1974, Washington State Treaty rights were upheld with the Boldt Decision, a ruling that allocated half of the commercial salmon fishery to federally recognised tribes in Washington State – those who had signed treaties with the United States government in the 1850s and who still met the criteria to retain their federal recognition (see Boxberger 2000; Thrush 2007). This suit, filed against the state of Washington by the federal government, upheld treaty rights for the following tribes: the Hoh, the Lummi, the Makah, the Muckelshoot, the Nisqually, the Puyallup, the Quileute, the Quinault, the Sauk-Suiattle, the Squaxin Island Tribe, the Stillaguamish, the Upper Skagit and the Yakima Nation. After several years of appeals, the Tribes listed above became co-managers of the state’s commercial salmon fishery (Boxberger 2000:155-157).

This momentum was further bolstered by the Indian Self Determination Act of 1975, which gave Native American tribes control over transfer payments from federal funding programs. This was quickly followed on August 11, 1978 by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA). This act addressed three specific aspects of Native American ceremonial life – the need for continued access to spiritual places, the ability to use sacred items currently restricted from use by endangered species laws and narcotic prohibitions (such as eagle feathers and peyote), and the right to practice native
religions without interference from outsiders (see Finkelman 2006:51). The implementation of this legislation did not go uncontested, and AIRFA was later amended in 1994 to clarify that the use of peyote was legal under the Act. These two laws enabled federally recognised tribes across the nation to gain more control over their daily lives.

However, unrecognised tribes in the United States were excluded from the benefits provided by these rulings, and for some communities these legal victories have been followed by even greater losses. For example, the Duwamish people, whose traditional territory includes the present day city of Seattle, lost their share of the commercial salmon fishery awarded by the Boldt Decision, and all of their other existing treaty rights, when:

In 1979, five years after his decision in United States v. Washington, Judge Boldt determined that the Duwamish and four other Puget Sound Native communities no longer met all of the seven criteria required for inclusion on the list of tribes eligible for treaty fishing rights [...] The modern day Duwamish officially ceased to exist in the eyes of the federal government and thus were considered to have no legal claim over the city named for their ancestral leader (Thrush 2007:193-4).

This has led to a struggle for both public identity and renewed federal recognition for the Duwamish Tribe, under the leadership of the Honourable Cecile A. Hansen (Miller 2003; Thrush 2007). Their struggle has been complicated by the neighbouring communities of Muckelshoot and Tulalip, who have since claimed that the Duwamish People were absorbed into their respective tribes (Miller 2003:94). By denying the separate status of the Duwamish, their federally recognised neighbours potentially share in a greater portion of the commercial fishery, awarded through the Boldt Decision, while closing the doors to competing and overlapping claims for territory and resources.

Communities without federal recognition exist within both Canada and the United States, and even memberships within federally recognised tribes and nations are fluid,
shifting over time. The Hwlitsum of Kuper Island (previously known as the Lamalchi) have not yet gained federal recognition in Canada, despite being recognised by neighbouring communities. In July of 2005 the Hwlitsum were accepted into the Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group by the Chemainus, Cowichan Tribes, Halalt, Lake Cowichan, Lyackson, and Penelakut (Press Release, August 26, 2005).

For tribes and bands seeking federal recognition having a public presence is a necessity. This can be a difficult task when the community is without lands to anchor its membership. Shla’dai’, a Tradition Keeper for the Duwamish Tribe, notes:

Duwamish have been so dispersed over the years we nearly lost all our art and crafts and our recognition. It is sad and we keep on keeping on. When the whites came we greeted them, and fed them, only to be run out of town, off our land, and with a lot of empty promises, and the beat goes on. I truly hope and pray that this go-around [a new petition for federal recognition] will be a good one, and we will get our recognition (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).

Establishing a cultural centre of their own and participation in local exhibits are two of the strategies the Duwamish have recently employed to raise public awareness about their Tribe. Shla’dai’ adds:

The Duwamish Tribe has had many public programs to show the community of Seattle that: “The Duwamish are Still Here”. We had a photographer take photos of the Elders, and he made up the 18”x 24” black and white photos, and had an exhibit in the Smith Tower Building. It was a fun night, and the show ran for a few months (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).

As a tradition keeper for her tribe, Shla’dai’ has worked hard over the last 13 years to revive traditional cedar bark weaving and to bring back traditional hat styles, while her son Michael Halady has begun to revive interest in wood carving. For the Duwamish, and many other indigenous communities, revitalising their culture is an essential part of reclaiming their aboriginal rights and title.
The Cultural Revitalization of the 1970s

In British Columbia, cultural organizations such as the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre and the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres were founded in the 1970s, as were several political ones including the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC). During this same decade, First Nations cultural centres began emerging throughout the province in communities such as K’san, Cape Mudge, and Alert Bay. The art school at K’san, especially pivotal in training a new generation of Northwest Coast artists, released its first collection of graphic prints in the late 1970s giving ancient traditions new expression as works of art on paper (see Ellis and Stewart 1978). Indigenous art was also flourishing nationwide as new training opportunities emerged at institutions such as the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College in Saskatoon and the Manitou Arts Foundation on Manitoulin Island in Ontario (McMaster 1998).

These opportunities followed in the wake of artist’s cooperatives such as the Salish Weavers Guild and the Igloo Trademark (Wells 1969; Gustafson 1980; Hollowell 2004). These entities were established to help Canadian indigenous artists market and sell their works on a global scale while retaining control over their intellectual property rights, since:

Studies estimate that around 50 percent of all Native or Indian arts and crafts sold in the United States have not been made by American Indian people, and in places with higher indigenous populations, like Alaska or the American Southwest, the situation is more severe. Given a choice between two similar items, most buyers prefer to purchase Native-made goods – according to the FTC [Federal Trade Commission], people will pay up to 30-40 percent more for work made by Native artists (Hollowell 2004:60).
The use of emblems, such as the *Igloo Trademark* – registered by the Canadian government on September 5, 1958 protects Inuit carvers by ensuring art collectors that they are buying “authentic” native art rather than counterfeit pieces (Hollowell 2004:79).

In Alaska, the *Silver Hand* emblem, adopted in 1972 by Eskimo artists, performs a similar task while building on the success of an earlier initiative launched by Alaska Native Arts and Crafts (ANAC) in 1937 (Hollowell 2004:69).

In addition to the resurgence of First Nations artistic traditions throughout the 1970s, museum professionals on the Northwest Coast were acknowledging that their professional practices had to change to be more inclusive of native people. In Vancouver, for example, Curator Emeritus Michael Kew recalls that MOA participated in several training programs for native peoples throughout the 1970s and launched its highly successful *Native Youth Program* in 1979, an initiative that continues to this day (2006: pers. comm.)

During the same period, James D. Nason, a former curator of Ethnology at the Thomas Burke Memorial Museum in Washington State, wrote: “while doing research, and in a variety of meetings involving Indians I have been made aware of what I perceive to be a hesitancy, resentment or basic dislike for museums on the part of a number of Indian individuals” (1971:13). He noted that renewed cultural pride, and the Red Power political protest movement, had changed the context of museum and native interactions. Native Americans were no longer afraid to voice their dissatisfaction with the imperialist agendas of museums, and were beginning to challenge the legality of these institutions and their collecting policies.
In recognition of native viewpoints, Nason, who was N'Deh (of Apache descent), called for changes to museum practice including the education of native volunteers, and the return of duplicates and copies of significant objects to communities to aid in cultural revival (1971:16). He also proposed that museums play an active role in facilitating cultural education programs in universities and local schools, noting that such projects were already underway in adjacent British Columbia.

**The 1982 Constitutional Act**

Momentum in asserting Canadian aboriginal rights exploded in the next decade as the federal government sought to repatriate the Canadian Constitution from Britain. Between 1978 and 1980, political protests brought aboriginal rights and title into the public eye nationwide and eventually led to constitutional reforms. The significance of these amendments are explained by indigenous scholars, Battiste and Youngblood Henderson, who note that: “before 1982, Aboriginal rights were seen as parts of the common law that could be overridden by federal or provincial legislation; however as constitutional rights they are part of a coexisting constitutional regime that is the supreme law of Canada” (2000:207). Changes to the constitution of Canada did not award aboriginal citizens new rights, but rather, clearly articulated their existing legal rights. By clarifying those rights, it was believed Canadian First Nations would be protected from further acts of cultural genocide (see Mainville 2001).

These changes not only protected aboriginal rights regarding lands and access to resources (through activities such as hunting, fishing, and gathering), but extended protection to indigenous knowledge and culture. This means that today:
Indigenous languages and worldviews are protected by sections 2(b), 21, 22, 25, and 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. In these constitutional vehicles, they are understood as existing Aboriginal rights independent of the liberal ideology of personal rights (Battiste and Henderson 2000:84-5).

Once this legal victory was won, another step in the process of self-determination was to reclaim control over how indigenous cultures were portrayed in mainstream society, while creating educational opportunities for community members both young and old. In both Canada and the United States museums became a place to accomplish these goals, as existing museum protocols came under close scrutiny from within, as well as from without.

The NMAI Act and NAGPRA

In the United States, legal victories for Native Americans followed a different trajectory with changes made to common law (as opposed to the constitutional amendments that occurred in Canada). Several laws have been passed since the late 1970s to ensure that (federally recognised) Native Americans can protect their cultures. These laws have addressed specific types of heritage resources – archaeological sites, human remains, religious paraphernalia, native art and ethnographic collections. The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), passed by US Congress in 1978, was followed by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) on October 31, 1979. The intent of ARPA was to protect archaeological sites and their contents on both public and Indian lands, by making permits a requirement for excavations on federal lands and imposing strict fines on violators. ARPA also gave federally recognised tribes
the legal right to manage heritage resources located on their reservations (Wright 2004).

In the book, “Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom,” it is noted:

While there were challenges to Native American religious and cultural freedom during the 1980s, there were also gains made by Indian leaders, particularly in the areas of Indian art and repatriation. The foundation laid by the 1979 Archaeological Resources Protection Act was expanded considerably during the 1990s, beginning with the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Act of 1989. The intention of the NMAI act was to provide a new home for a major part of the U.S. government’s native art and ethnographic holdings, which were spread among the Smithsonian institutions nineteen museums, galleries and research centres and the Heye Museum in New York. The new museum was to be constructed on the last available site on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. … The 1989 National Museum of the American Indian Act not only established the National Museum itself, it also set in motion a process of repatriating Indian burial remains and funerary objects from the Smithsonian Institution’s extensive Indian collection. This section of the NMAI act represented the culmination of decades of struggle on the part of Indian tribes to regain control over the remains of their ancestors and the return of sacred tribal artefacts (Josephy et al. 1999:228).

The NMAI Act created the first North American institution “devoted exclusively to the interpretation of native cultures in North America” (Simpson 2001:167). It was quickly followed by legislation that addressed the responsibilities of other federally funded museums in the United States.

In 1990, the United States Congress passed a law to protect the burial sites of Native Americans; one that also created a mechanism to assist with the repatriation of ancestral remains, funerary and sacred objects, as well as objects of cultural patrimony (Tweedie 2002; Peers and Brown 2003). This law, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), established criteria for how federally funded museums in the United States must conduct themselves towards Native Americans by requiring them to disclose the presence of human remains, and other culturally sensitive materials, in their collections to federally recognized tribes. In
essence, NAGPRA requires federally funded museums (excluding the Smithsonian Institution, which is subject to the NMAI Act) to be proactive in their relationships with Native American communities. Native American tribes without federal recognition, and source communities from other nations, are not covered by NAGPRA – the latter because they fall outside of federal jurisdiction.

Several case studies have appeared since the law was introduced (Messenger 1999; Mihesuah 2000; Tweedie 2002; Peers and Brown 2003; Kreps 2003), and many journals, including the popular Native American Art magazine, now run NAGPRA notices as part of their regular legal briefs column. Implementing NAGPRA has at times been a difficult task, since the process for repatriation detailed by the law does not always recognise and accommodate the diverse beliefs of Native American communities.

In 2002, the Western Apache NAGPRA Working Group, for example, found a repatriation request to the Denver Art Museum hindered when they were unable (because of ceremonial restrictions) to provide detailed information to museum staff about ownership and use of two objects of White Mountain Apache origin. The matter was discussed at the twenty-third meeting of the NAGPRA Review Committee, where members of the White Mountain Apache Tribe provided the following testimony about the claim:

Mr. Vincent Randall introduced members and experts of the Working Group present at the meeting. He said that some cultural objects are used for certain ceremonies and are spirit-filled, living entities with regulations for their use. In this case, the Denver Art Museum has asked for information to prove that the claimed cultural objects are needed for present-day ceremonies. Mr. Randall explained that for these cultural objects, traditional use calls for the objects to be ritually used and then put away for eternity. In addition, discussing the cultural objects poses great danger. Mr. Randall stated that the cultural objects that have
been claimed by the Working Group are very powerful sacred objects that need to be restored to their rightful place […] [emphasis mine]

Mr. Keith Basso said that he is a professor of linguistics and anthropology at the University of New Mexico and has been associated with the Western Apache people for 43 years. The Apache people have provided enough information to warrant and justify the return of the cultural objects. The cultural objects have been brought alive and need to be considered as animated beings with forces and powers of their own and deserve the most profound display of respect. Mr. Basso explained that avoidance is one of the most powerful ways to display respect in the Apache culture […]

Mr. Levi DeHose spoke about the significance and danger of the medicine used at that time and through today. People are not allowed to discuss these things. Mr. DeHose then spoke to the Review Committee in his native language, which was translated by Mr. Randall. When Mr. DeHose was growing up, holy men were spiritually gifted people with knowledge of different ceremonies. There are fewer ceremonies today than when he was young. People face consequences of disease or injury if they discuss ceremonies or cultural objects. Cultural objects are spiritually created and have great power. Cultural items are a vital force and rules have to be followed to honour the objects and put them away. When they are taken from their place, then there is a disruption in the force. These objects need to be returned to the mountains where they came from (NAGPRA Review Committee 2002:np).

In response to the testimony provided by members of the Western Apache NAGPRA Working Group, staff from the Denver Art Museum stated they had respect for the Western Apache NAGPRA Working Group, but felt they needed to follow the process set forth by the law.

Ms. Nancy Blomberg, curator of Native Arts, stated that the Denver Art Museum has a strong commitment to NAGPRA and views NAGPRA as a fair law that sets forth specific definitions and processes that are practical and reasonable. She expressed hope that at this meeting the Review Committee could clarify the specific requirements of NAGPRA and how they should be applied to claims. NAGPRA deserves the support of both museums and Indian tribes to assure the return of objects that have entered museum collections improperly. The Denver Art Museum’s institutional mission and self-image include raising public awareness of Indian art as fine art […]

The Denver Art Museum’s goal under the NAGPRA claims process is to honor claims that meet the law and deny claims that do not meet the minimum criteria of the law. When the Denver Art Museum denies a claim, the claimant is provided with detailed information to allow the claimant to perform additional
research to resubmit the claim or to understand the Denver Art Museum’s view of NAGPRA. This process was followed with the claim submitted by the Working Group. The Denver Art Museum did not offer opinions on whether the objects were sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony, but relied on NAGPRA to evaluate whether the claimants satisfied the criteria for showing that the objects fit these categories. The Denver Art Museum deferred to the wishes of the Working Group in bringing the issue before the Review Committee. Due to the importance of the claimed objects to the Apache people, the Denver Art Museum offered to return the objects as a gift, but the offer was rejected. The Denver Art Museum aims at cultivating long-term partnerships of mutual respect with Indian tribes. Ms. Blomberg stated that NAGPRA provides a very important tool to work with Indian tribes to identify and address situations that are viewed as oppressive, but NAGPRA should not be utilized as an all-purpose tool to correct every situation [emphasis mine] (NAGPRA Review Committee 2002: np).

[...] Mr. Echo-Hawk added that while the Denver Art Museum makes every effort to honor the choices made by Indian tribes, that does not mean that the Denver Art Museum must defer to every preference expressed by Indian tribes in implementing NAGPRA. The Denver Art Museum accepts what the claimants have said about the importance of the claimed objects to their communities. NAGPRA sets forth very specific guidelines for repatriation and the Denver Art Museum denied this claim because in their opinion the claim does not meet NAGPRA requirements (NAGPRA Review Committee 2002).

From the above excerpts it is apparent that the Denver Art Museum felt the Western Apache’s claim did not follow the letter of the law, although they seem to recognise that it fell within the intent of the law since they offered to return the sacred objects as a “gift.” However, the matter of disclosure is one that the Western Apache and other Tribes would continue to face in their dealings with museums, and thus was one that needed to be resolved. This particular claim was eventually resolved in the favour of the Western Apache NAGPRA Working group.

This example and others demonstrate that for some communities, NAGPRA has not yet changed the nature of their working relationships, or the tone of their encounters, with museum professionals. In the book, “Drawing Back Culture: The Makah Struggle for Repatriation,” anthropologist Ann M. Tweedie notes:
One potentially abrasive issue, NAGPRA itself was designed to mediate the differences between tribal and institutional constituents. For many [Makah] tribal members, the knowledge of elders represents the most authoritative voice on ancestral practices. However, European and American scholars of native cultures have been historically sceptical of the accuracy of such accounts. Even though the text of NAGPRA explicitly states that tribal oral history should carry the same weight as historical, ethnographic, and archaeological evidence in establishing cultural affiliations to objects, [Makah] tribal members question whether institutions will honor this principle (2002:94).

It is possible that NAGPRA, like other laws, will be amended over time until it becomes more flexible in its ability to accommodate the specific beliefs of individual Native American tribes. Some legal experts view it as the groundbreaker to future laws, noting:

NAGPRA is unique legislation because it is the first time that the Federal government and non-Indian institutions must consider what is sacred from an Indian perspective. Future legislation must be imbued with this same heightened consciousness of the nature of Indian culture (Trope and Echo-Hawk 1992:76).

At present, NAGPRA and the NMAI Act work side by side, mandating the obligations of federally funded museums. However, museum professionals still play a prominent role in interpretation and implementation of these laws, and therefore, still retain the balance of power.

The Smithsonian Institution has embraced the changes detailed by the NMAI Act, becoming a resource centre for indigenous peoples throughout the Americas (not just those falling within its federal mandate).

In addition to exhibitions and other aspects of the work of collecting, preserving, researching and disseminating information about the collections, the National Museum of the American Indian is forging links with tribal museums, native organizations, and individuals throughout the Americas. This strategy has been called “the fourth museum” and will extend the Museum’s work […] into communities across the country and throughout the continent (Simpson 2001:169).

Museum staff report that the National Museum of the American Indian is also:
… concerned with merging conservation and traditional approaches to collections care, and to that end is holding formal consultations with Native people on care and handling issues. The museum also lends sacred materials for ceremonial use on a case by case basis, and, according to [Curator Nancy Rosoff], without detriment to the preservation of the objects involved (Nicks 2003:26).

Curatorial staff are essentially working towards co-management of the collections by initiating contact with source communities and accepting advice. However, at the forefront of their museum work is the assumption that preservation of objects is the primary goal. In her book, “Preserving What is Valued,” museum conservator Miriam Clavir notes that for many indigenous people “preservation means cultural preservation: the active maintenance of continuity with indigenous values and beliefs that are part of a community’s identity” (2002:73). This does not always equate with extending the lifetime of a particular object, as the White Mountain Apache example shows, but instead may translate to ensuring the knowledge of its creation and use carries forward. Sometimes it is considered equally appropriate for objects to be put away until they return to the earth – problems arise when others are not able to allow these cultural processes to reach their conclusion.

Controversy Surrounds the Spirit Sings

In Canada, the transformation of museum practice took a different route. It was ignited by unanticipated community reaction to the celebratory exhibit, “The Spirit Sings.” The intent of this exhibit, held at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary during the 1988 Winter Olympics, was to celebrate Canada’s indigenous cultures and their artistic achievements (Harrison 1995). It became a site of political protest when the Lubicon Cree chose to boycott it, not on the basis of content, but to draw attention to exploitive
practices of its sponsors – Shell Oil and the federal government. Consequently, media attention shifted away from highlighting artistic achievement and creativity, to focus on the topic of resource rights, social justice, and unresolved land claims (Harrison 1995).

The concurrence of the exhibit with the 1988 Winter Olympics ensured that media attention was sustained. This national exposure became the impetus for a joint task force between the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations. The end product of this collaboration was titled: Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships between Museums and First Peoples Task Force Report. One of the main objectives of this Task Force Report was to develop: “an ethical framework and strategies for Aboriginal Nations to represent their history and culture in concert with cultural institutions” (Nicks and Hill 1992:n.p.).

The report focuses on five distinct areas in its Principles and Recommendations section. These are: (1) Interpretation; (2) Access; (3) Repatriation; (4) Training; and (5) Implementation (Funding). Since its inception many Canadian museums have embraced these principles in theory, if not in practice. Since the report’s recommendations are not legislated, Canadian museums may choose how closely they will adhere to the Task Force Report’s principles.

The Task Force Report recommended that progress be assessed after a ten year period (Nicks and Hill 1992). After more than a decade and a half, the follow-up report is now long overdue. Although this could be interpreted as a loss of momentum, a case study conducted at the McCord Museum in 2003 found that: “the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples and its report have fallen out of the public eye after initial prominence and international acclaim, but they still play an important role in Canadian
museums” (Bolton 2005:3). Research for the McCord case study was gathered at the archives of the Canadian Museums Association and the McCord Museum, and was supplemented by interviews with task force members. Its author, art historian Stephanie Bolton, notes that:

While the McCord Museum has increased its collaboration with Aboriginal community members and scholars in the presentation of individual exhibitions and has modernized its development of educational programming, the few Aboriginal staff and the absences of Native board members are cause for concern. Thirteen years after the appearance of the Task Force report, there is not one member of the Board of Trustees who is of Native ancestry. If no one of Aboriginal ancestry is a member of the governance structure of the McCord, it becomes difficult for the Museum to guarantee a long-term commitment to, and to take responsibility for, safeguarding Aboriginal issues should they lose importance in the public eye or the political arena. (2005:7-8).

Without a comprehensive follow up study to the Task Force Report it is hard to evaluate how effective it has been in implementing change in Canadian museum practice. For larger institutions, and increasingly for smaller municipal museums as well, it is common practice to include First Nations representatives in exhibit planning and to provide internship opportunities for youth and other community members (Ames 1999; Conaty 2003). My research has found that communities such as Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Skwxwú7mesh, and the Stó:lō Nation have been co-applicants in grant applications with partner institutions, such as the UBC Museum of Anthropology, the Vancouver Museum, and the City of West Vancouver, on at least one or more exhibit and public programming projects.

Staffing and board membership appear to be two areas where the Task Force Report has had less influence, although this is hard to quantify without more data (Bolton 2005). Two institutions in Western Canada that have invited First Nations to participate as Board members are the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Alberta and the Nanaimo
District Museum in British Columbia. The dynamics of these two appointments differ with the Glenbow inviting Irving Scalplock, then Curator of the Siksika (Blackfoot) Museum to represent his community by becoming a board member in 1998, while the Snuneymuxw First Nation requested they have representation on the Nanaimo District Museum’s Board. Snuneymuxw representative Geraldine Manson recalls: “I didn’t become a Board Member until probably 2004 or 5. We requested it and they would say – it was something they were never even thinking of. But we made them [think about it]. I now sit on the Board.”

In addition to these examples, in 2007 the UBC Museum of Anthropology created an External Advisory Board and invited Leona Sparrow as a representative of Musqueam and Mike Nicholl Yahgulanaas, a Haida artist, to become members. This example differs from the previous two, however, as it concerns a new entity as opposed to a longstanding governance structure.

**Public Representations and Dispelling the Myth of Terra Nullius**

In Canada, indigenous peoples have slowly gained legal recognition of their existing aboriginal rights, while seeking resolution for outstanding land claims. Landmark cases in Canadian aboriginal law include: *Guerin vs. the Queen* (1987), *Regina vs. Sparrow* (1990), and *Delgamuukw vs. British Columbia* (1997). Two of these cases were Musqueam victories. Information packages released by the Musqueam Indian Band explain that the *Guerin Case* established that: “the federal government must protect the interests of aboriginal people, and also recognised that aboriginal rights existed before Canada became a country,” while the ruling for the *Sparrow Case* argued
that: “aboriginal treaty rights are capable of evolving over time, and must be interpreted in a generous and liberal manner.” The Delgamuukw ruling, built upon the precedents set by these former rulings, broke new ground by accepting oral history as evidence for establishing aboriginal right and title.

These rulings were monumental, affecting indigenous law in other former colonies such as Australia, where advances for the rights of indigenous peoples have evolved at an even slower pace. In the 1990s, court rulings: “overturned the doctrine that Australia was *terra nullius* (a land belonging to no one) at the point of settlement and ruled that Aboriginal Australians had and retained native title and interests in law” (Povinelli 2002:39). These landmark cases were: *Mabo vs. the State of Queensland* (1992) and *The Wik Peoples vs. the State of Queensland* (1996). The first of these rulings recognised the existence of aboriginal title, while the second extended that recognition to lease-held land.

Indigenous law and the politics of representation are two arenas that have recently gathered strength worldwide, perhaps as a by-product of globalisation and the importance now placed on strengthening local identities. In Canada, the outcomes of these struggles have been mixed, with some communities emerging as stakeholders in urban development and resource management, and/or becoming active participants in curriculum development and museum projects, while others continue to struggle for recognition and inclusion. The Skwxwú7mesh Nation is in a unique position, having established a strong working relationship with the City of West Vancouver, with whom they shared a large *Culture Capital of Canada* grant in 2006, while in the adjacent city of North Vancouver their status has (until very recently) been much lower in profile. For
example, the Tsleil-Waututh and Skwxwú7mesh Nations were both conspicuously absent from a recent leaflet inserted into the *North Shore News* to commemorate the City of North Vancouver’s centennial celebrations in 2007. Three small, uncaptioned photographs of First Nations massive carvings, were the sole reference to indigenous people in the 8-page *City Views* insert in which Mayor Darrell Mussatto proclaimed: “Turning 100 years old is an extraordinary achievement for the community, as it reminds us of our City’s early pioneers who first laid the foundation for our vibrant community.” One could infer from this statement that nothing of interest occurred prior to the arrival of these “early pioneers” 100 years ago, thus thousands of years of occupation by Coast Salish peoples has been erased from public memory – so insignificant as to be deemed unworthy of a footnote.

This focus upon Euro-centric history also remains a common thread in municipal (and private museums) throughout the Greater Vancouver area. The Vancouver Museum, the North Vancouver Museum and Archives, the Hasting Mills Museum, among others, have relegated First Nations history to footnotes within exhibits dedicated to the story of urban development and the achievements of Euro-Canadians. Thus it is not surprising that in my interviews with Coast Salish community members, from both Canada and the United States, many expressed the desire to see their communities represented as living cultures. Unfortunately, participation in exhibits and public programs remains for many Coast Salish communities a reactive process, rather than one in which co-development occurs.

In Canada, many community museums express a willingness to incorporate some, if not all, of the guidelines set forth by the *Task Force Report* into their exhibit processes,
but in actuality are hindered by an inability to relinquish some of their control – specifically decisions regarding project timelines, label format and text writing, and other aspects of exhibit design. On several occasions I have been asked by other museum staff members why First Nations should get “special treatment?” This is especially puzzling for staff at community museums who have previously worked with immigrant communities, such as Chinese, East Indian, and/or Japanese communities, and experienced a willingness to accommodate the museum’s needs – something that has been perceived by museum staff as acknowledgement that they know how to do an exhibit.

**Figure 4: Visitors from the North – Totem Poles in Stanley Park**

Photograph by Michael Fortney, 2008.

At the Vancouver Museum, for example, where the permanent galleries are arranged in sequence by decades, immigrant communities are featured only in the
decades where museum and archival collections are most abundant for their respective communities. Local First Nations, by contrast, were to be represented in each decade to demonstrate their contemporary presence and their often overlooked role in local history. Despite this intention, local Coast Salish communities have recently found themselves excluded from Vancouver Museum exhibits as museum staff have been unable to adopt a consultation framework (or alter their internal exhibit protocols) to enable them to move forward as “partners.” Most recently, in 2008, the local communities of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Skwxwú7mesh found themselves excluded from an exhibit on Stanley Park – an area where their self-defined traditional territories intersect. For more than a century, the artistic traditions of others have been showcased at venues throughout this park – totem poles from northern Northwest Coast Nations and a petroglyph from Lillooet are two well known examples (Mawani 2003). Unable to accommodate the needs of local Coast Salish communities, the Vancouver Museum chose instead to focus upon the presence of visitors, such as Ellen Neel – a Kwakwaka’wakw artist, whose work is still prominently displayed at the park.

Self-representation is an important concern for many indigenous communities, and my research has shown that amongst the Coast Salish it is often given priority when opportunities present themselves. This activity is prioritised because it has larger implications for aboriginal rights and title. Anthropologist Joy Hendry succinctly conveys the significance of self-representation in her writings, noting that:

before people can engage in any kind of action – for examples the legal action that might be taken when a logo, or vast tracts of land, are stolen – they need to have an identity. Only then can they go on to engage acceptably and successfully in the political activities necessary to retrieve them. In other words, the expression of cultural form, which defines a people, or a ‘nation’, call it what you
will, is an essential part of cultural revival when people and their very existence as an entity has been presented as eliminated, or at very least under severe threat.

[...] in areas where First Peoples were subjected to programs of deliberate assimilation, intentional or unintentional genocide, or simply systematically represented to the world at large as having become extinct – their lands being deemed *terra nullius* – that their revival is required if they are to act as an entity. Only then, when they have recreated an identity that can be named and recognised, can they engage in political activities such as claims to their ancestral lands and demands for a system of self-governance (Hendry 2005:10-11).

However, the opportunities to engage in self-representation are often limited by the interests of others – museum professionals, academics, tourists, art collectors, etc… because the funding and venues for representational activities arise externally. All of these factors contribute to the shape of the final product, whether it is an exhibit or public program.

The focus of this chapter has been to provide a brief historical overview providing insights into the changes that have affected First Nations representations, not only in museum settings, but also in the broader public eye. This change has been situated as a global phenomenon – one that is embedded within the ongoing struggle for indigenous self-determination in the wake of colonialism. In terms of museum practice, it seems plausible that the most significant changes are occurring in those nations once considered colonies. Day to day encounters with indigenous people, and political pressure from federal and provincial governments now embroiled in treaty negotiations, and other forms of litigation, removes museum practice from the theoretical realm and inserts it firmly into the realm of applied anthropology, where benefits to source communities must be direct and far-reaching. The eligibility requirements for the Department of Canadian Heritage’s *Aboriginal Museum Development Program* are a prime example of this new attitude, noting that the program:
Provides project funding for Aboriginal organizations to enrich and preserve their cultural heritage, and to increase public awareness and understanding of Aboriginal peoples' rich and diverse cultures. Supports projects for research, preservation, and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage and for object research and documentation, including oral history initiatives and other community heritage projects.  
(www.canadianheritage.gc.ca, January 15, 2008)

Entities other than First Nations communities and organizations are eligible for project based funding under this component, but they must demonstrate a strong partnership and support from a First Nations community or organization.

Despite the advances that have been made, there is still more ground to cover. As an adjudicator for the Aboriginal Museum Development Program in 2005, I observed that the funding available for Aboriginal Heritage was significantly less than that allocated to other Museum’s Assistance Program components: Access to Heritage, Exhibition Circulation Fund, and Organizational Development.

In Canada, the protocols and procedures guiding First Nations and museum collaborations (when they exist) vary widely from institution to institution. By contrast, in the United States laws such as the NMAI Act and NAGPRA detail specific obligations that museum professionals have towards specific source communities – those with federal recognition. Although our two countries have chosen different approaches, and may be moving at different speeds, they appear to be on convergent paths as evidenced by an increased emphasis on collaborative exhibits and public programmes, repatriations, and changing attitudes of museum professionals towards collections care and preservation.
Chapter Four: Gathering Strength:
An Overview of Coast Salish Representations

I have kept good relations with all the galleries and museums I have worked with, as I believe that we are all connected in the field we are in. The public’s interest in this art, and the culture that birthed it, needs proper management. And that requires insight from within, which is not so readily given, for various reasons – of which none outweigh the damaging effects of being misunderstood for sake of being silent.

Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson), Puyallup Artist, Interviewed October 22, 2007

I was reading about how Susan Point and Bill Reid were using museums, so I started going to museums and looking at stuff and asking questions and found they were actually quite helpful. People who were staff were, you know, mostly pretty good. So the more I asked questions the more I learned. The more I learned, the more I realised I was just angry that we didn’t have anything at home. But as someone becoming an artist I can’t blame anyone else for not having something at my house, you know? I had to get up and make stuff. So once I realised that, once I opened up my eyes a little bit more, I started to realise what a valuable resource museums really were.

Tawxsin Yexwulla / Poolxtun (Aaron Nelson Moody), Skwxwú7mesh Artist, Interviewed August 16, 2007

It has been my experience in museums, and with other repositories of Northwest Coast collections, that Coast Salish people are relatively under-represented by ethnographic objects (see Table Two) and contemporary art – although archaeological collections tend to be more comprehensive. This is especially true of the more northern communities of Holmalco, Klahoose, Sliammon and Sechelt, and may partly be attributed to their distance from urban centres – even today requiring a traveller to take one or more ferries for access from the mainland of British Columbia. However, a second, more significant factor, for this oversight lies with the influence of early anthropologists and their collecting practices. Art Historian Aldona Jonaitis commenting on Northwest Coast Art, in general, notes that:

It is challenging to reconstruct a history of Northwest Coast stylistic evolution. Archaeological excavations are limited in scope and range. The earliest European travelers to the region collected and described late pre-contact pieces, but only from the relatively few places they visited. Museums began to collect artworks systematically in the nineteenth century, but even their professional
anthropologists acquired only pieces that they determined important, ignoring some works we would now find of great interest (2006:16).

While Jonaitis is privileging the academic in these musings, the truth remains that Coast Salish “Art” is among that which has been overlooked. This omission has occurred for a number of reasons, including both internal and external influences.

Coast Salish Elders teach us that, in our worldview, material culture cannot be distinguished from spiritual life and practices. The creation of special articles of dress and adornment, and devices for communing with the spiritual realm, are only one means by which this worldview is rendered visible. Traditionally, the manufacture of ceremonial objects, as well as other more commonplace objects, required an aspect of performance – the speaking of the “ritual word,” as referenced by the late Wayne Suttles (1987:103-105). To better illustrate this relationship I defer to the words of Snuneymuxw Elder Kwulasulwut (Ellen White), whom I have heard, on several occasions, speak to the power of objects now residing in museum collections. While visiting the UBC Museum of Anthropology in February of 2005, to discuss renewal of the museum’s visible storage gallery, Kwulasulwut explained to museum staff that the Ancestors: “didn’t like to tell exactly the name of the object or how it was made because of the spiritualness.” To her relatives in attendance, from other communities on Vancouver Island and the Mainland, she advised:

I always carry water and tumulth. Your energy could go on it otherwise. Every carving, everything they did was spoken to. Everything was spoken to as it was made. In this way it becomes alive and is sacred. The old people always spoke to everything they did so the object becomes alive… We have to decide, do we tell it the right way so our descendants 100 years from now will not be mixed up? I’m asking these sorts of things (Ellen White, February 15, 2005).
From this brief excerpt we can see that spiritual belief and practice permeates aspects of
daily life that, for some, would be considered secular in nature, such as the manufacture
of tools and other types of personal belongings. Members of the Coast Salish community
recognise adeptness, or special skills, as being the result of spiritual gifts. Generally
these are acquired by individuals who are ritually clean and respectful in their manner
and deportment (Barnett 1955; Snyder 1964; Kew 1970; Suttles 1987).

Encounters with spirits are of a highly personal nature and although others may
come to recognise what spirit helper an individual has, they are not a topic of open
discussion. This helps to explain why anthropologists and other outsiders have
previously encountered difficulties when attempting to collect from Coast Salish
communities (Jonaitis 1988; Thom 2001), and when attempting to translate Coast Salish
culture through their writings and exhibits. Within Coast Salish society it is considered
natural to be reticent about discussing spiritual gifts and their uses (Kew 1980), since to
do so is to risk compromising those same gifts and may even bring harm to the individual
who discusses them. For a sensitive and implicated researcher, one who is aware of these
“silences,” it becomes a challenge to translate these private experiences for the public –
whether it is in a museum setting or a publication. Ultimately, the question becomes,
“why should this be done?” rather than “how should this done?”

In many ways, Coast Salish culture has remained hidden from the public eye
despite the proximity of many Southern and Central Coast Salish communities to urban
centres in British Columbia and Washington State. The material aspects, long visible in
museum galleries – and now through digital images in virtual galleries on many museum
websites, are commonly translated through the lens of art or functionality, silencing the
performative elements embodied in song, dance, and theatrics. In his writings on Coast Salish Art, anthropologist Michael Kew cautions readers that:

We should remind ourselves, however, that such art was produced and experienced as an integral part of these other activities. We have no evidence that it was self-conscious art, that is, art for art’s sake. Although we may treat it independently and try to analyse, define and understand the rules of style and form, it also behoves us to try and see and understand it in its original context. We need to consider function and meaning of art objects for those who made and experienced them (1980:3).

Early collecting practices on the Northwest Coast seldom provided opportunity to do just that as researchers, and individual collectors alike, raced to obtain unique objects and other types of specimens from what they perceived to be the vanishing peoples of North America (Stocking Jr. 1985; Jonaitis 1988; Hinsley 1994; Cole 1995), sometimes with dire consequences for the very communities that they wanted to preserve and celebrate.

German anthropologist Franz Boas, often referred to as the Father of American anthropology, was highly influential in shaping the museum collections of several major museums in the United States and abroad, including the Royal Ethnological Museum in Berlin, the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and through his students and research assistants many other repositories throughout Canada and the United States (Hinsley 1994; Jacknis 1985; Jonaitis 1988; Cole 1973).

Boas was concerned with studying individual cultures in all their manifestations. A liberal Jew, who had experienced discrimination throughout his early career in Bismarck’s Germany, he was a staunch opponent of contemporary evolutionary theorists who sought to demonstrate the inferiority of so-called “primitive” peoples by ranking the cultural development of different societies (Kluckhorn and Prufer 1959; Jonaitis 1988).
He introduced the idea that cultures could not be compared or classified as different historical factors had influenced their development. Since cultures evolved individually, and not along predetermined lines, they could only be understood as individual entities. These concepts, now referred to as cultural relativism and historical particularism, are the foundation of Boas’s anthropological methods (Hinsley 1994; Jacknis 1985).

Boas conducted his own fieldwork in the Canadian Arctic, and later more substantively along the Northwest Coast. He was particularly interested in the Kwakwaka’wakw peoples of the Central Coast, who were the focus of many of his writings and whose material culture he exhibited in American museums and at the World’s Columbian Exhibition in Chicago (Hinsley 1994; Jacknis 1985).

Boas’s approach to anthropology was comprehensive involving the study of physical anthropology, ethnology, archaeology and linguistics, which he combined with museum collecting. He was an opponent of typological arrangements – groupings of objects of similar purpose without regard to origin, a method of display commonly used during the Victoria Era to tell evolutionary narratives (Hinsley 1994; Jacknis 1985). In response, he sought to implement comprehensive exhibits based upon tribal groupings which emphasised how the lifeways of different cultures were adapted to their specific circumstances (local environment and history).

Through the Jesup North Pacific Expedition (1897-1903), Boas, and his colleagues at the American Museum of Natural History, proposed to undertake intensive study of the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest and the adjacent regions of Siberia in the hopes of laying to rest speculation about the origin of the peoples of the so-called “New World” by establishing their affinities to the peoples of the “Old World”
Among the many researchers involved with the project was archaeologist Harlan I. Smith, whose tasks included collecting from Coast Salish archaeological sites and communities. Smith excavated burial cairns at Cadboro Bay in Victoria with little result (due to soil preservation conditions), but found an abundance of materials in Vancouver at Eburne – a site known today as the Marpole Midden (DgRs-1) (Thom 2001; Roy 2007).

While engaged in excavations in the Vancouver area, Smith also undertook ethnographic collecting and photographic documentation at the nearby communities of Musqueam and Katzie (Thom 2001). At Musqueam, Smith wrote of encountering difficulties when attempting to negotiate for ceremonial regalia, such as costumes, masks, and rattles, complaining that community members priced them too dearly for his budget. In a letter to Franz Boas he noted that:

I have worked my best to get things from them. Hastings has also. I sent you a list of what we got. Yet I hope to get more later. I have not all there is to get and want to bring you a complete lot from the Fraser Delta. (Thom 2001:149)

Anthropologist Brian Thom has reported that Smith remained persistent and eventually obtained:

a house post from “Chief Nuxwhailak,” who accepted only $10 for it and said that the pole was “part gift to museum” because it was going to use it for “educational purposes.” The AMNH received the post on the condition that it was to be labelled “from the house of Kaplänux, grandfather of present Chief Nuxwhailak from whom it was obtained” (Smith to Boas, 18 May 1898, AMNH). The chief’s condition about the label on his gift was not (and has not subsequently been) respected by the AMNH (2001:149).

Many other Musqueam houseposts were documented by Smith in 1898, and in subsequent years, through photographs. Over the next decade he collected additional massive carvings from Musqueam, and other Coast Salish communities on Vancouver

In 1902 Smith attempted to collect the last two remaining house posts from the community of Musqueam for export to the American Museum of Natural History, but their export was blocked by the Department of Indian Affairs when they realised that nothing of the sort had remained in the vicinity of Vancouver (MOA Archives, Massive Carvings File; Roy 1991). After a brief interlude, the two remaining house posts were reportedly “purchased” by the Alumni Association as a gift for the University of British Columbia and were “restored” by community members with a new application of paint. However, historian Susan Roy has noted:

I use the terms “sale” and “purchase” in relation to the houseposts with some hesitancy. I have not been successful in locating records which indicate how much (or whether) money was paid for these houseposts, though it appears funds were provided to the Musqueam for their restoration (1999:13).

The houseposts were presented to the university by the graduating class of 1927 at the Homecoming Ceremony. The event was witnessed by Frank Charles, Jack Stogan, Casimier Johnny, Freddy Cheer, Jacob Harry, Harry Roberts, and Cornelius Johnny, all of Musqueam, who dressed in ceremonial regalia for the occasion (Roy 1999). Their attendance at the event was documented in the November 9th edition of the Vancouver Ubyssey student newspaper, which also noted: “These totem poles had been brought from the Musqueam Reserve in Point Grey; and were given to the Alumni on condition that they be erected on the University site, which at one time belonged to this tribe of Indians” [emphasis mine] (1927:1).
In the examples given above we see something at work beyond simple commercial transactions. Harlan Smith’s difficulty in obtaining ceremonial objects, specifically a Musqueam shaman’s outfit priced at $100 (Thom 2001:149) – a very steep price in 1898, speaks not of the commercial value of the objects in question, but of their recognised cultural value. By pricing their belongings community members appear open to the possibility of a commercial transaction, yet are able to prevent or delay the actual purchase (and loss of the belongings in question) by assigning what is deemed too high a monetary value. This may have been a tactic used to circumvent the intervention of, and subsequent coercion from, the local Indian agent. In the instances provided above where community members were willing to part with belongings, such as houseposts, they did so with public ceremony – attendance at the transfer ceremony or by requesting public acknowledgement of family or community ownership.

Historian Susan Roy (1999, 2002) has demonstrated through her writings that Musqueam leadership was quick to understand the significance of publicly displaying their history to outsiders as a means of establishing their aboriginal rights and title. Musqueam leaders employed such tactics during the 1913 visit of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs when, Roy notes, they assembled a museum-like display of houseposts and other cultural objects outside of the church’s catechism house to be viewed by government officials (1999:18). Roy suggests:

If we understand politics to be strategies employed by Musqueam to further their existence as a Nation, then other activities such as displaying carved house posts, dancing, and weaving – all forms of expressive culture – can be understood as political strategies. These representational tactics, although they are not directly related to land, were important because they identified Musqueam as a “distinct” and “authentic” aboriginal people with ties to land. Spectators could come to understand the Musqueam through their cultural presentations (1999:6-7).
In this light, the removal of massive carvings from the community through the context of gift giving and public presentation can be correlated to assertions of political identity. Thus Musqueam people are seen to be taking steps to actively represent themselves and their history – Musqueam leadership was actively managing the band’s relations with the surrounding community, visiting dignitaries, and other people in positions of power.

Another example of Coast Salish leadership exerting control over their public identity can be found across the border in Washington State. Swinomish leader Tandy Wilbur organised several public events during the mid 20th century that focused public attention on his small community in a positive manner. In the 1930s, Wilbur orchestrated a public ceremony for the unveiling of a totem pole with Franklin Roosevelt’s head on top – with the result that Roosevelt sent a representative by train from Washington D.C. to attend the event on his behalf (Miller 2009: pers. comm.). (The pole still stands outside of the Swinomish Tribal Centre near La Conner.) A few years later, in 1941, Wilbur arranged for two Indian racing canoes to compete against two crews from the University of Washington Huskies. The resulting media event referred to as the “Great Race” also showcased the Swinomish community in a positive light, a rarity for this time period (see Miller 1998).

Harlan Smith was not the only member of the Jesup Expedition to encounter difficulties in collecting from Coast Salish communities. Livingston Farrand also experienced problems while collecting ethnographic data in Washington State. In correspondence to Franz Boas he reported reluctance amongst the Quinault to discuss cultural matters, which he attributed to the community’s involvement in the Indian
Shaker Church (Jonaitis 1988:191). To compensate, Farrand resorted to paying the Quinault for information, but this too met with limited success.

Although they sought comprehensive collections for the entire Northwest Coast, Boas – his students, colleagues, and competitors, were often swayed by their personal research interests. In Table Two, we see that the cultural designation Coast Salish, representing more than 70 bands and tribes in BC, Washington State and Oregon, is represented by the smallest numbers of objects (given the number of communities involved) in an impromptu survey of online databases of museums with substantive Northwest Coast collections. This is telling given the geographic proximity of these communities to the major urban centres of Seattle, Vancouver and Victoria, places all travellers to the region passed through as they ventured further north.

Ultimately, the collecting practices of early anthropologists and enthusiasts did more than just determine the shape of public collections of Northwest Coast “Art,” their work shaped public perception about those artistic traditions and their makers. Through his studies, Boas came to believe that highly stylised forms used by the more Northern communities, such as the Tsimshian, Tlingit, Haida and Kwakwaka’wakw peoples, were the pinnacle of Northwest Coast culture. He viewed the naturalistic artistic traditions of the Coast Salish as pale copies of these northern forms (Jonaitis 1995:152), and postulated that the Coast Salish had only recently arrived on the South Coast from the Interior. It was almost a century before it was demonstrated that he based this theory on limited archaeological and linguistic evidence (Suttles 1987:246-264) and interest in the Coast Salish began to gather strength.
Exhibiting Coast Salish Culture

Interest in Coast Salish culture has been growing since the mid 20th Century, first through research and writing (see Haeberlin and Gunther 1930; Smith 1949; Duff 1952; Barnett 1955; Jenness 1955; Snyder 1964; Kew 1970; Collins 1974; Amoss 1978), later through museum exhibits and other types of commemorative activity (Kew 1980; Johnson and Bernick 1986; Wright 1991; Baird 1997; Carlson 2001). The research of UBC anthropologist, Dr. Michael Kew, in particular, appears to have been highly influential. He developed a collection of colour slides, the *Coast Salish Artifact Inventory*, while conducting research for an exhibit on Coast Salish culture. (Copies of this inventory can be found in the archives of the UBC Museum of Anthropology and those of the Musqueam Indian Band). The objects featured provided the inspiration for the early works of Musqueam artist Susan Point – to whom he also gave a copy (MOA accession files; MacNair 2000:27). She has since, through her own efforts, risen to international prominence becoming an inspiration in her own right.
Table Two: Culture Bias in Northwest Coast Ethnographic Collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Culture Designation Used in Search</th>
<th>Collection Size (Available online as of: Jan. 17, 2009)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal BC Museum</td>
<td>Coast Salish</td>
<td>1641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal BC Museum</td>
<td>Haida</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal BC Museum</td>
<td>Kwakwaka’wakw</td>
<td>2275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal BC Museum</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal BC Museum</td>
<td>Tsimshian</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization</td>
<td>Coast Salish</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization</td>
<td>Haida</td>
<td>1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization</td>
<td>Kwakwaka’wakw</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization</td>
<td>Tsimshian</td>
<td>1564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Museum of Natural History</td>
<td>Coast Salish</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Museum of Natural History</td>
<td>Haida</td>
<td>808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Museum of Natural History</td>
<td>Kwakwaka’wakw</td>
<td>1143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Museum of Natural History</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>4459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Museum of Natural History</td>
<td>Tsimshian</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke</td>
<td>Coast Salish</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke</td>
<td>Haida</td>
<td>879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke</td>
<td>Kwakwaka’wakw</td>
<td>522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>2978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke</td>
<td>Tsimshian</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peabody (Harvard)</td>
<td>Salish</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peabody (Harvard)</td>
<td>Haida</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peabody (Harvard)</td>
<td>Kwakwaka’wakw</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peabody (Harvard)</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peabody (Harvard)</td>
<td>Tsimshian</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total from 5 collections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coast Salish</strong></td>
<td><strong>3052</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Represents approx. 70 communities / villages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total from 5 collections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Haida</strong></td>
<td><strong>5667</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Represents 7 communities / villages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total from 5 collections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kwakwaka’wakw</strong></td>
<td><strong>4446</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Represents 17 communities / villages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total from 5 collections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tlingit</strong></td>
<td><strong>8549</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Represents 16 communities / villages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total from 5 collections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tsimshian</strong></td>
<td><strong>2578</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Represents 25 communities / villages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My research indicates that Kew’s 1980 exhibit and its accompanying museum note, *Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth*, was the jumping off point for numerous exhibits of Coast Salish artistic traditions (contemporary, historic, and archaeological) in both Canada and the United States, as can be seen in Tables Three and Four. These tables provide a summary of exhibits and programmes dealing specifically with Coast Salish culture, but do not include those that addressed broader themes, containing only elements of Coast Salish art or history. For example, missing from Table Three are the Vancouver Museum exhibit on immigrant settlement, *Making A Living, Making A Life* (1992), and the MOA exhibit, *Site to Sight: Imaging the Sacred* (2004). These are two examples that involved participation from Musqueam community members, but focused on telling the history of a variety of peoples and places in the Vancouver area.
Coast Salish art also tends to be incorporated into larger displays, focused more generally on artistic traditions of the Northwest Coast, and these types of exhibits have also been excluded from the two tables. The Burke Museum’s State Centennial exhibit, *A Time of Gathering*, provides an exception. This exhibit was included in Table Four because substantive consultation was conducted with Coast Salish community members (from Washington State), and the exhibit itself featured a large number of Coast Salish pieces – this was because the Coast Salish are the largest indigenous group occupying Washington State. For these reasons I felt it was too significant to exclude.

One larger museum, the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM), is largely absent from Table Three. Coast Salish peoples are represented in the RBCM within a large permanent installation known as the *First Peoples Gallery*. This gallery was not included because it represents multiple Northwest Coast communities, and therefore falls outside of my criteria. Although Coast Salish community members did not mention participating in exhibit development with this museum, many have worked with the RBCM on other types of initiatives. Examples include: *Cultural Stewardship Program* internships; archaeological projects in the Greater Victoria area; and the 2005 publication *A Songhees Pictorial*. In addition, RBCM staff members have written letters of support for Coast Salish community initiatives; provided access to collections; loaned objects and provided photographs for museum projects such as the 2007 West Vancouver Museum exhibit *Stitiýnim (Enduring traditions)* and the *Inland Journey* virtual exhibit produced by the Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre (SLCC). Beyond the exceptions detailed, I apologise for any omissions or oversights as they are not intentional.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Project Title or Event</th>
<th>Locale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940s</td>
<td><strong>Coast Salish (Songhees Pole) placed in Thunderbird Park.</strong> Features an Eagle figure</td>
<td>Royal BC Museum, Victoria, BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>carved by William Clallam of Port Angeles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td><strong>Contemporary Salish Weaving, Continuity and Change</strong> (Undergraduate student exhibit)</td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980–</td>
<td><strong>Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td><strong>People of the Stalo</strong> (Education Programme)</td>
<td>Langley Centennial Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td><strong>Changing Tides</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology and Lab of Archaeology,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td><strong>Images of Coast Salish Culture</strong></td>
<td>Fraser Valley College, Abbotsford, BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><strong>Hands of Our Ancestors</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><strong>Coast Salish Research Project</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><strong>Coast Salish Traditional Culture Programme</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986–</td>
<td><strong>New Visions: Serigraphs by Susan A. Point, Coast Salish Artist</strong> (traveling exhibit)</td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><strong>Salish Images: Northwest Coast Artists Tribute to Salish Art</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><strong>Cowichan Indian Knitting</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td><strong>Proud to be Musqueam</strong></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td><strong>Coast Salish Impressions</strong> (Susan Point solo exhibition)</td>
<td>Gateway Theatre, Richmond Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td><strong>Susan Point</strong></td>
<td>Eskimo Art Gallery, Montreal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td><strong>Art Salish</strong></td>
<td>Canadian Guild of Crafts, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td><strong>From Periphery to Centre: the Art of Susan and Krista Point</strong></td>
<td>Thunder Bay National Exhibition Centre and Centre for Indian Art, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td><strong>Coast Salish House installed in Grand Hall.</strong></td>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td><strong>Quw’utsun’ Cultural and Conference Centre</strong></td>
<td>Quw’utsun’ Cultural and Conference Centre, Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td><strong>Salish Point</strong></td>
<td>Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td><strong>Xá:ytem (also known as Hatzic Rock) declared a National Historic Site by Government of Canada.</strong></td>
<td>Xá:ytem Longhouse Interpretative Centre, Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td><strong>Kw’achmixwáylh / Showing of the Pictures</strong></td>
<td>West Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td><strong>Musqueam Exhibits installed in International Arrivals Terminal</strong></td>
<td>YVR International Airport, Vancouver</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td><strong>Point on Granville Island</strong></td>
<td>New Leaf Editions, Granville Island, Vancouver, BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td><strong>Shxw’taselhawtxw (The House of Long Ago and Today) Longhouse Program begins at Coqualeetza</strong></td>
<td>Sto:lo Nation, Sardis BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td><strong>Susan Point</strong></td>
<td>Emily Carr House, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year(s)</td>
<td>Project Title or Event</td>
<td>Locale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td><em>From Under the Delta</em></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology and Lab of Archaeology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td><em>Uts’am – Witness Project becomes a summer residency program</em></td>
<td>Roundhouse Community Centre and Squamish Nation, Vancouver, BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td><em>Written in the Earth</em></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology and Lab of Archaeology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td><em>Susan Point Houseposts and welcome figure commissioned by Royal Bank Financial Group.</em></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td><em>Evolving From Tradition</em> (Susan Point solo exhibition)</td>
<td>Richmond Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td><em>Musqueam Weavers exhibit</em> Installed in Gathering Strength Gallery</td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td><em>Welcoming Figure raised at Ch’tl’am (Ambleside Park) in West Vancouver.</em></td>
<td>City of West Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td><em>Sátet te siwes / Continuing Traditions.</em> Installed in Gathering Strength Gallery (Graduate Student Exhibit)</td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td><em>A Stól:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas companion exhibit</em></td>
<td>Chilliwack Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td><em>Honouring the Basket Makers: Woven Lives of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumísxw</em></td>
<td>Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td><em>Witness Living Legacies display opens</em></td>
<td>Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td><em>Weavers at Musqueam Virtual Exhibit and Musqueam Weavers: Musqueam Weaving Through the Personal Stories of Weavers sourcebook</em></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td><em>To Wash Away the Tears.</em> Installed in Gathering Strength Gallery (Graduate Student Exhibit)</td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td><em>A Bad Colonial Day</em> (Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun solo exhibition)</td>
<td>Two Rivers Gallery, Prince George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td><em>Spirit of the Mountains sculpture by Xwa Lack Tun (Rick Harry) unveiled</em></td>
<td>Ch’tl’am (Ambleside Park), West Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td><em>Sítitúym / Enduring traditions</em> (Squamish Nation Sculpture Symposium Exhibit)</td>
<td>West Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td><em>Nexwmlíw Chét / Contemporary Treasures</em> (Squamish Nation Sculpture Symposium Exhibit)</td>
<td>Ferry Building, West Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td><em>We Have to Learn to Live Together in a Good Way</em></td>
<td>Chilliwack Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Transporters: Contemporary Salish Art</em></td>
<td>Art Gallery of Greater Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>A Journey into Time Immemorial (Virtual Museum of Canada).</em> Developed with Xa:ytem.</td>
<td>SFU Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Burnaby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Welcoming Stone T’xwelátse</em> (Ceremony and exhibit)</td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Stone q’aysc:am visits from Musqueam.</em></td>
<td>UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Squamish Lil’wat Project unveiled by Susan Point.</em></td>
<td>Stanley Park, City of Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre to Open</em></td>
<td>SLCC, Whistler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Gateway to Ancient Wisdom by Wade Baker.</em> Unveiled at the entrance to the new Spirit Trail.</td>
<td>City of North Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td><em>Traditional Territory.</em> Developed with Siyamin Artist Cooperative.</td>
<td>Cityscape Community Art Space, North Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td><em>Inland Journey Online Gallery.</em></td>
<td>Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre, Whistler BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year(s)</td>
<td>Project Title or Event</td>
<td>Locale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982 – 1983</td>
<td>Sahoyaleekw: Weaver’s Art</td>
<td>Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Eyes of Chief Seattle</td>
<td>Suquamish Museum, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Come Forth Laughing: Voices of the Suquamish People</td>
<td>Suquamish Museum, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Coast Salish Art</td>
<td>East Lake Gallery, Bellevue WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Steilacoom Tribal Cultural Centre Opened</td>
<td>Steilacoom Tribal Cultural Centre, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Contemporary Coast Salish</td>
<td>Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Salish Designs: Drums, Paintings and Prints by Susan A. Point, Coast Salish</td>
<td>The Legacy Ltd., Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Susan A. Point</td>
<td>The Art Space Gallery, Philadelphia, Penn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Crescents and Wedges (Susan Point solo exhibition)</td>
<td>Patricia Wismer Women’s Center and Kinsey Gallery, Seattle University, Wash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Susan A. Point</td>
<td>Arctic Raven Gallery, Friday Harbour, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Susan Point</td>
<td>Motherland Gallery, Fukuoka, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Teachings of the Tree People. Video production featuring Bruce Subiyay Miller.</td>
<td>Seattle Art Museum, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Carving a Legacy: Innovation in Coast Salish Art</td>
<td>Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Awakenings: A Gathering of Coast Salish Artists</td>
<td>Stonington Gallery, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Peripheral Visions (Susan Point solo exhibition)</td>
<td>Arctic Raven Gallery, Friday Harbour WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>SQ3Tsy'a'yay: Weaver's Spirit Power</td>
<td>Washington State University Museum of Anthropology, College Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Taqwshéhblu Vi Hilbert Ethnobotanical Garden</td>
<td>Seattle University Campus, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Stone T'xwelátse repatriated to Stó:lo Nation via the Nooksack Tribe</td>
<td>Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Susan Point: A Point in Time</td>
<td>Hatton Gallery, Colorado State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>This Coast Salish Place.</td>
<td>Stonington Gallery, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>SQ3Tsy'a'yay: Weaver’s Spirit Power</td>
<td>White River Valley Museum, Auburn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Duwamish Longhouse Dedication</td>
<td>Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Maynard Johnny Jr., Featured Artist</td>
<td>Stonington Gallery, Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6 demonstrates that interest in exhibiting Coast Salish culture has been intermittent, in both Canada and the United States, since the early 1980s. What are the reasons for this ebb and flow of public interest? A review of exhibit catalogues suggests that development of exhibits and public programmes dealing with Coast Salish cultural traditions and art forms coincides with other types of cultural celebrations, such as: the Vancouver 1986 World Expo, the 1989 Washington State Centennial celebrations, the 2003 announcement of the successful Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics bid – and the years preceding this widely publicised international event.

This suggests that First Nations cultures, and symbolic objects, are being used as a means to demonstrate the distinctiveness of these two nations at events which could attract visitors internationally – a tactic that has previously been equated with the marketing device of “branding” (Godwell 2000). Studies of aboriginal tourism inform us that: “specific global trends indicate that tourists are interested in the environment and interaction with local people and customs” (Keelan 1993:95). For this reason, in former
colonies establishing a distinct identity has often translated itself into appropriation of indigenous identity. For example, in Australia, another nation that also recently campaigned for and won hosting rights for the Olympic Games, the “symbols and icons of Aboriginal culture [were] used extensively, nationally and abroad, to suggest a unique Australian identity” (Meekison 2000:109). However, the result was that while indigenous culture was appropriated and celebrated by the host nation, social and economic disparities between settler and indigenous communities were obscured from view (Meekison 2000).

The Rejuvenation of Salish Weaving

The manufacture of Salish weavings and other Coast Salish textiles was a central theme for several of the early exhibits and public programmes listed in Tables Three and Four, including: *Contemporary Salish Weaving: Continuity and Change* (1980), *People of the Stalo* (1980), *sahoyaleekw: Weaver’s Art* (1982), *Hands of Our Ancestors* (1986), *Cowichan Indian Knitting* (1986), and contemporary Musqueam installations at the YVR International Arrivals terminal (1994). Weaving traditions have remained a vibrant component of recent museum exhibits as well, in both Canada and the United States, including the widely promoted *S’abadeb – the Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Arts and Artists* (2008), which will travel to the Royal British Columbia Museum (in abbreviated form) to coincide with 2010 Winter Olympics.

Salish weaving has been growing in the public eye as an art form since the 1960s when a revival was undertaken in the Fraser River Valley, facilitated by Oliver Wells – an amateur anthropologist and art collector (Wells 1969; 1987). Many cultural traditions,
including weaving, had gone into decline throughout much of the 20th century as
ceremonial life came under the scrutiny of government agents and was impeded by
repressive laws such as the Potlatch Ban. The influence of missionaries was also a
contributing factor, as anthropologist Wayne Suttles notes:

   [Mountain goat] wool was, of course especially important as the principal
material for blankets, it was often pulled off the hide by the handful and traded for
such items as canoes, paddles, dried clams, and dried herrings. Simon [a Katzie
Elder] asserts that in post-mission times the priests discouraged the sale of
mountain goat wool, presumably because of its use in native ceremonial life,
though goats were still hunted for meat (1955:25).

This is not to say that weaving disappeared altogether. Oliver Wells found Mary Peters,
a Seabird Island Elder, still practicing the art form in the early 1960s. By encouraging
her to share her knowledge, a Canadian revival of Salish weaving was triggered (Wells
1969; Gustafson 1980).

   In 1971, a growing community of Stó:lō weavers established the Salish Weavers
Guild in Sardis, B.C. Situated in a building on the grounds of the former Coqualeetza
Residential School, the Guild grew in subsequent years to have as many as 40 members
(Gustafson 1980:109). Local weavers brought their completed works to the Guild to fill
orders from local and international buyers up until 1985 when the Guild was dissolved
and weavers began to handle their own sales.

   During its years of operation, Stó:lō weavers and their children routinely gathered
together to spin and dye the wool used by guild members, activities that were
documented in publications privately produced by Oliver Wells (1969), and in an
assortment of Canadian magazine and newspaper stories. Margaret Jimmie, of Seabird
Island, recalled the process during a visit to the UBC Museum of Anthropology noting:
The weaver shop used to do all the dyeing and we’d get all our wool from there. And then make the weavings and then bring them back. Then they’d ship them out (Interviewed August 25, 2000).

Her daughter Frieda George, a weaver from the Jimmie reserve in Chilliwack, added:

If you wanted to go and help on the days that they were dyeing [the wool] you could go there and help and learn (Interviewed August 25, 2000).

Weavings created by Guild members bore its identifying label – a means to ensure an authentic product for consumers.

Although the Guild was short-lived, many of its weavers continue to sell their work through private commissions. Some also engage in repair work for local collectors, while others participate in public programmes and workshops – such as those offered by the X̱ytem Longhouse Interpretative Centre, that teach the skill to any interested person who can afford the registration fee.

In subsequent years, concentrated revivals have also occurred in the Canadian communities of Musqueam and Skwxwú7mesh. “Revivals,” such as these, were possible because specific individuals retained the knowledge of weaving, or undertook the steps required to organise learning opportunities – visiting relatives and other cultural experts, and studying older blankets in museum collections (Johnson and Bernick 1986:16; Brotherton 2008:131). For this reason, it may be more appropriate to classify these events as examples of cultural renewal as opposed to revivals, since the knowledge was never completely lost.

I have mentioned that concentrated “revivals” have occurred at specific places and times, but these are sometimes preceded by smaller efforts, which are equally important to the continuation of a cultural tradition. Downriver from Sardis, in the city of Vancouver, N. Rose Point – a Stó:lō woman who married into the Musqueam
community, taught weaving in her basement as part of a culture curriculum developed for the Musqueam community in the 1970s. Her efforts were featured in a newspaper article appearing in the Vancouver Sun, titled: “An Indian Woman’s Triumph, Rose Point starts a school, becomes a teacher.” The article notes:

Some time ago, Mrs. Point became interested in Salish weaving, took lessons, and eventually found herself arranging classes in her basement for women off the reserve. She spins her own yarn – she recommends New Zealand wool because it is much longer than that produced here – and makes her own dyes (Anderson 1971:43).

In the 1980s, Salish weaving underwent a more widespread revival at Musqueam through the efforts of Wendy Grant John and her sisters Debra and Robyn Sparrow. The sisters also visited with Guild weavers as part of their education, and then again when establishing their first weaving programmes (Johnson and Bernick 1986:16). Their early weavings, and those of their first students, were the basis for the MOA exhibit, Hands of Our Ancestors (1986), and for demonstrations in a pavilion at Expo ’86, which was held in Vancouver that year.

The work of the Salish Weaver’s Guild has also provided inspiration for weavers south of the border, although a different genealogy has guided the South Puget weaving tradition. In the SQ3Tsya’yay: Weaver’s Spirit Power catalogue, art historian Barbara Brotherton notes that Lummi knitters, Fran James and her son Bill, first began working with the Salish loom in the 1960s and were amongst the first to spark a revival in that area (2006:2). The late Bruce subiyay Miller, a Twana cultural and spiritual leader, has also been acknowledged for subsequently reintroducing the skill to several communities throughout Washington State and for creating the Southern Puget Sound Textile Guild in 2002 (Brotherton 2006:2). Susan Pavel, his student, and niece through her marriage to
Dr. Michael Pavel, now continues his work. Most recently, her weavings have been exhibited by the Stonington Gallery, the Seattle Art Museum, and College Hall at the Washington State University Museum of Anthropology. A second installation titled, *SQ3Tsyə’yay: Weaver’s Spirit Power*, was unveiled by the artist for the White River Valley Museum near Auburn, Washington in August 2008 and her work was featured in the *S’abadeb* exhibit, which opened at the Seattle Art Museum in October 2008.

Different Approaches to exhibiting Salish Weaving

*Contemporary Salish Weaving, Continuity and Change* (1980-1981), a student exhibit held at MOA, may have been the first exhibit to feature contemporary Salish weavings. Curated by undergraduate students from the UBC Anthropology department, the exhibit showcased the work of the *Salish Weavers Guild*. Comments in the visitor books for the exhibit reveal that it was very well received by the general public, who frequently described it as “interesting” and requested more information on the weavers and their work. One Florida visitor wrote:

I think you have done a terrific exhibition. I have always wanted to see the original method of Salish weaving and particularly the loom, I would be most interested in getting in a workshop… (1980 Comment Book, MOA Archives)

Another visitor more succinctly stated: “That’s incredible, real people” (1981 Comment Book, MOA Archives), showing that the museum had dispelled at least one widely held stereotype – the notion of the vanishing Indian.
Weavings made by the *Salish Weavers Guild* first began entering into the MOA collections, through donations and purchases, between the years 1977-1978. Wall hangings made by Marlene Greene, Monica Phillips, Ernie James, and Margaret Jimmie, were among those collected. However, these smaller pieces were not featured in the 1980 exhibit, which instead showcased larger works not from MOA’s collections (see Figure 7). The central blanket in the display appears to be one described elsewhere as a “revival version of the “Perth” Salish Blanket woven by Mary Peters” (Gustafson 1980:111). The “Perth” blanket referenced is one of several Coast Salish objects donated by Colin Robertson in 1833 to the Perth Museum and Art Gallery in Scotland (1980:45). According to the *Fort Langley Journals*, Robertson who “worked for both the North West and Hudson’s Bay Companies” (1998:161), obtained the blanket and other pieces
from James Murray Yale while at the Fort Langley outpost. Inclusion of this tribute piece by Mary Peters articulated the idea of cultural continuity to museum visitors.

Anthropologist Crisca Bierwert has also been instrumental in bringing attention to Salish Weaving as a form of contemporary artistic expression. Bierwert first learned to weave in 1978 from members of the Salish Weavers Guild, while working for the Stó:lō community, and later continued her education with weavers in Washington State (Bierwert 1982). She subsequently shared some of her experiences of weavers and weaving when she was invited by the Burke Museum to author the catalogue for *sahoyaleekw: Weaver’s Art*. The *sahoyaleekw* catalogue contains beautiful testimony to the continued importance, and relevance, of weavings in contemporary Coast Salish society as the following passage shows:

Putting a blanket over the ones getting Indian names honors them. It shows they are see-ahb. And it means more. There is a word for it…it is protection. It is taking care of them and showing that you care for them. Showing your affection. (Anonymous in Bierwert 1982:11).

The catalogue, however, maintains the convention of the day – writing about, rather than with, community members. When the voices of Salish people are present, they are anonymous voices. Anonymity was a hallmark of “Primitive” and “Tribal” art exhibitions during this era (see Ames 1992:52-54; Price 1989:63). It is one that requires objects to be displayed as cultural rather than individual achievements. Art historian Sally Price (1989) notes that this display tactic suggests indigenous art traditions are static, restricted by cultural conventions, rather than open to individual agency and aesthetics – objects become essentially timeless, and the artists who make them “people without memory.”
The narrative in the *sahoyaleekw* catalogue touches briefly upon the experiences of anonymous individuals such as “a Skwah woman,” “a Tulalip woman,” and “a Tzeachten woman,” but speaks more frequently to the techniques of the generic Salish spinner or weaver. Names of specific weavers are withheld until the end of the opening chapter, where they appear in a much smaller font. This catalogue is a tribute to the weaver’s art, but it is also appropriation of voice and experience.

By 1986 a change in museum practice is already evident, as named weavers from the community of Musqueam are profiled throughout the exhibit, and the accompanying museum note, *Hands of Our Ancestors*. This exhibit catalogue, like the one for *sahoyaleekw: Weaver’s Art*, also provides a curatorial overview of Salish weaving, but the weavers profiled are no longer anonymous and are represented by their own words.

The words of weavers – Debra Sparrow, Wendy Grant John, and Barbara Cayou, were also featured on exhibit panels throughout the *Hands of Our Ancestors* exhibit. The following label text was found in the MOA Archives, in the fonds of exhibit designer Herb Watson.

**The Revival of Weaving at Musqueam**

It is like somebody guides me. I don’t do it. It’s not me, really. I feel that I’m only the hands through which my ancestors work… I feel that way…that I will be able to show people again what we have and what we are.

Debbie Sparrow
Musqueam Weaver

**The Revival of Weaving at Musqueam**

I’d say over half of the women didn’t realise what type of weaving we were even talking about. They thought, well, mostly Salish women are known for their baskets, their beautiful baskets. So when they came to the programme – we started a programme through Canada Manpower – and when they came they thought we were going to be doing baskets and were shocked to find out that we had blankets…
We got together… and we made a proposal to Canada Manpower. And we initially asked for ten women. We got four. So we started. To start off, two had no experience at all, one had a year in spinning and weaving and dyeing; one had about the same as me but of course she had more experience working with wool. And to just watch it, in that small room where we were, grow – there’s no words to describe the feeling that happened in there.

And so it’s not just our own area doing it, either; we have people from other places down in the States and across the Island calling. And that’s why I think the other reserves are asking for help, so they can start doing it again. If we don’t go and sell it to the rest of the world, I’m not really that concerned. But if we can have our own people appreciating and loving it again, that’s a success.

Wendy Grant
Founder, Musqueam Weavers

These passages accompanied several others written by exhibit curator, Elizabeth Johnson, which detailed the historical and cultural background of Salish weaving. However, by 2002, when MOA created the virtual exhibit, Weavers at Musqueam, and its accompanying sourcebook – Musqueam Weavers: Musqueam Weaving through the Personal Stories of Weavers, curatorial voice had become almost absent. The spoken words of weavers, transcribed from interviews conducted by MOA Education Curator Jill Baird, created the interpretative text – curatorial role had shifted to one of facilitation.

South of the border, in Washington State, the 2006 catalogue for SQ3Tsy’a’yay: Weaver’s Spirit Power follows closely to the format of the 1986 MOA publication for Hands of Our Ancestors, although 20 years separates the two projects. In the SQ3Tsy’a’yay catalogue a brief bio of weaver Susan Pavel is followed by a longer introduction written by art historian Barbara Brotherton. The catalogue culminates with the words of Dr. Michael Pavel, husband of the featured artist, and the nephew of the late Bruce subiyay Miller (the Master Weaver who started the Southern Puget Sound Textile Guild). Curatorial voice and First Nations voices are balanced in this presentation, neither perspective is privileged.
Curatorial and academic voices provide a framework for interpreting weavings and other artistic traditions in the 2008 SAM catalogue for *S'abadeb – the Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists*, although six of the twelve chapters in the catalogue are authored (or co-authored) by Coast Salish people. Words from “art” producers are also included throughout, but they are sometimes secondary to academic voices. From these examples it appears that curators are employing different tactics for interpreting Coast Salish weavings (and other artistic traditions) in Canada and the United States. In Canadian museums curators are more frequently facilitating native voices, as opposed to framing them. Interpretation is occurring, but it is more subtle. Visitors do not always see the questions that provoked the responses given by weavers (and other artists), so the spoken words seem more spontaneous in nature. These perceivable differences may, however, be less characteristic of the two nations that produced them than the sites where these representations occur (art museums/galleries as opposed to anthropology/cultural history museums).

**Bringing Culture Forward**

The exhibits detailed in Tables Three and Four reveal that the sites of Coast Salish representation differ in Canada and the United States – museums dominate Canadian representations, while cultural centres and art galleries (public and commercial) play a much more significant role in the United States.
Table Five: Sites of Coast Salish Representations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum (includes Universities and Colleges)</td>
<td>30 (57%)</td>
<td>7 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Gallery or Art Museum</td>
<td>5 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Gallery</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>7 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Centre</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>6 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Park</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Building (Airport)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet / Virtual Exhibits</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Garden</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SAMPLE</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In museum settings, representations are largely predetermined through curatorial interests but transformed by consultation with participating communities. In cultural centres, communities negotiate amongst themselves to find a common voice to share their culture with youth and visitors (although this process is sometimes impeded by contract firms inexperienced in community consultation), while commercial galleries provide a forum for artists to share their visions. Each of these settings has its own unique set of constraints.

Puyallup artist Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson) has worked with a variety of institutions. He comments:

I have worked with the Burke Museum, Stonington Gallery, The Legacy Ltd. Gallery, Tacoma Art Museum, White River Valley Museum, Seattle Art Museum, the Museum of Art and Design in New York, and the Washington State History Museum on various levels of involvement, for such projects small and large. It came over time that I was invited to participate as a consultant, participating artist, or curator, and usually by recommendation of colleagues in the field (Interviewed October 22, 2007).

He adds that when it comes to determining the content of exhibits, the process:

varies a great deal [depending] on what kind of entity, gallery or museum. I think with the museums consultants play a large role and [museums], for the most part, do their best not to give one individual full reign over a project as there are many perspectives that need to be accounted for. In the gallery setting, however, it is a delicate matter of aim and focus of the exhibits planned – their themes and hopes.
They are aimed largely at collectors so it is about the clients and artists working under a theme most often. That varies too, as one theme could come from one artist speaking with the director(s) and stem outward, but then it could just be the directors themselves too (Shaun Peterson, Interviewed October 22, 2007).

Art galleries, unlike museums, are more concerned with individual experience – how an individual learns more about themselves through encounters that are aesthetic or performative in nature (Duncan 1995; Foster 1996). These experiences may involve disruption or invoke an emotional response. Museums, by contrast, seek to translate experiences and in doing so sometimes mask difference and obscure complexity (Cruikshank 1998; Rowlands 2002).

Indigenous art, sometimes referred to as primitive art, has often been anonymous art. Following in the turmoil of post modernism, indigenous art has (in some places) been elevated to the same status as western art, bringing contemporary artists into view and giving voice to their intentions (Johnson and Barnick 1986; Vogel 1988; Arnold et al. 1996; McMaster 1998; Bates 1999; Blanchard and Davenport 2005). However, in these types of exhibits the focus is on a specific type of cultural experience, and the individual artist gives voice to that experience. The collaboration is between the curator and the artist, as opposed to the community. As Art Historian Susan Vogal notes: “an art exhibition can be construed as an unwitting collaboration between a curator and the artists(s) represented with the former having by far the most active and influential role” (1999:191). This differs to the approach taken by museums since working with a collective of individual artists differs greatly from working with a group of representatives from a single community. The individual artist will be most concerned with the immediacy of how their own art or vision is represented; the overarching framework that unites that work with those of other artists will be secondary. The
resulting representation will be highly personalised – speaking to artist intent, whereas community involvement by its very nature speaks to a diversity of experiences each predetermined by the gender, age, and occupation of the participant. Negotiation plays a much larger role in the latter scenario, and the time involved must by necessity be more extensive.

The exhibit, *S’abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists* (2008), was created using a hybrid of both approaches. For several years, the exhibit curator worked closely with *taqʷsəblu* (Vi Hilbert), a respected Elder, to identify exhibit themes. Then in the last year of planning representatives from numerous communities were invited to engage in discussions about all aspects of the exhibit. One difficulty with this approach was a lack of consistency in attendants. Although representatives from approximately 40 communities participated – each of the three large planning meetings consisted of some new attendees and some, but not all of the individuals, who attended previous ones. While specific topics were selected for discussion, such as object selection and interpretative technology, community members devoted much of the time to familiarizing themselves with the project and then discussing the constraints to exhibiting certain aspects of our culture(s). Since only three of these larger community advisory meetings were held, much attention was focused on the culturally sensitive objects included on the proposed object list.

A great diversity of opinion existed on what was, and what was not acceptable, for display and who should speak to these issues. Because no time was provided at the beginning of the process for these larger issues to be addressed, object selection for the exhibit proceeded in the background with the Exhibit Curator contacting individuals such
as myself for information on specific types of objects and then making selections independently. Museum loans were requested without group discussion, due to exhibit timelines, reducing community involvement to reactive rather than creative response. Community members did not suggest what should be included in the exhibit, but responded to the proposed selections by deciding what needed to be removed from the object list (due to cultural constraints). This process, more than any other, demonstrated the importance of remembering that what was being celebrated as “art” served a different role within source communities.

The storyline, already mapped out with a gallery plan prior to commencement of widespread community consultation, continued on its predetermined course. Prior to the third and final planning meeting (held December 7th, 2007) advisors were provided with a copy of “Ways of the Lushootseed People, Ceremonies and Traditions of the Northern Puget Sound Indians.” A generous gift, given with the consent of the author taqʷəblu (Vi Hilbert), but one that came with homework for the recipients who were advised in an accompanying letter that: “Vi suggested that each of you compose a similar sketch of your own community that would include such things as a map of your lands, sample words in your language, an origin story, and overview of ceremonies and traditions or other content that you feel paints a picture of your community” (November 19, 2007). A task that if completed would no doubt have facilitated insertion of content into the exhibit’s framework.

As a member of the planning committee, I was asked by the exhibit curator if I would “consider serving on a small committee of advisory members who will be planning the installation of work of modern Salish artists in the exhibition?” The
invitation, extended to me via email on December 6, 2007, noted that my involvement would include attendance at no more than two additional meetings and work that could be done by email or phone. In reality, my involvement was miniscule – responding to a handful of emails. They involved providing contact info for a Skwxwú7mesh artist of my acquaintance and a request to source a photograph of the late Amy Cooper, a Stó:lō Elder whose basketry was to be featured in the exhibit. Other planning committee members of my acquaintance reported that they also received personal requests for information or commissions for art works, but were not invited to participate on research trips or attend additional meetings.

At the Gala Opening, held Tuesday October 21st, 2008, Christine Nicolov of the SAM Board of Trustees announced that the exhibit represented community consultation with representatives of 40 Coast Salish communities, located in both Canada and the United States, impressing many of the assembled guests who were largely non-aboriginal. The focus at this member’s only event was on the exhibit curator, Barbara Brotherton and the uniqueness of the final product, which was being promoted by the museum as an example of how to conduct community consultation. The tone was in-keeping with other exhibit marketing which noted:

*S'abadeb—The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists* is a major exhibition that explores the unique artistry and culture of Salish First Peoples of Washington State and British Columbia. The exhibition features more than 175 works of art from national and international collections that offer a glimpse into the daily and ceremonial lives of the 39 sovereign Salish Nations. Many of the works have never before been on view and are, for the first time, interpreted by Native voices (www.seattleartmuseum.org, October 4, 2008).
Although individual voices were used to interpret specific objects within the exhibit, suggesting multi-vocality, the framework for the experience remained highly individualistic, speaking to the curator’s perceptions about Coast Salish culture.

On viewing the exhibit for the first time I was surprised, and somewhat embarrassed, to find myself quoted (in really large font) on the narrative label in the basketry section. The quote, taken from a chapter I wrote for the exhibit catalogue (see Fortney 2008), was recycled for use within the exhibit. This, combined with errors regarding my affiliation on the acknowledgement panel at the entrance to the gallery, gave me the impression that the exhibit had been assembled in a hasty manner. Through conversations with others in attendance it became evident that encounters between the curator and individual artists, cultural experts, and community liaisons, provided the interpretation for the exhibit as opposed to consensus arrived at during the community advisory meetings as was being implied publicly.

In the exhibit, diverse cultural objects were presented as “art,” displayed on white platforms, in galleries painted with muted tones. On the peripheries, in one gallery a timeline provided a historical overview, while in another an archival photograph showing the interior of a Quamichan longhouse was projected into a corner where it was flanked by two of the house posts featured in the photograph. These components added some context to the belongings on exhibit, but did nothing to disrupt the overall experience which focused on the aesthetic qualities of the objects. Native voices appeared on labels throughout the exhibit, but were used in an anecdotal manner that really only offered “a glimpse into the daily and ceremonial lives” of those featured. We might ask: “if this exhibit was in the planning stages for more than eight years, why it was only opened up
to community involvement in the last year and a half, when deadlines created a necessity for immediate response and action?” When time is a limiting factor, thought provoking exhibits are an unlikely outcome.

How did community members feel about the exhibit? The overall tone was celebratory, although some privately expressed mixed feelings. SAM honoured its community advisors by inviting them all to attend a blessing ceremony, where each was ceremonially acknowledged by name for their role, in front of assembled witnesses. The media was also able to attend this semi-private event, and interact with advisors as they later previewed the exhibit.

Some of those in attendance, including the Chairman of one Washington State tribe, privately expressed misgivings about seeing cultural and spiritual objects presented as art. Others celebrated the recognition that the event brought to Coast Salish artistic traditions and contemporary artists. For many the exhibit provided the opportunity to see cultural heirlooms usually hidden away from view in museum storerooms and those residing in the collections of foreign entities, such as the British Museum. Shla’dai’, a Tradition Keeper for the Duwamish Tribe, reflected:

I really enjoyed seeing the "spindle whorls" seeing them in person and not on a piece of paper was so wonderful! Also that little welcome figure that was found off Bainbridge Island just blew me away! I thought it was Large! And here it is this little 8-9 inch figure… and it is so much more in person than in the photos I have seen of it. I have been to a lot of museums but I guess this exhibit “hit me” so to speak, due to the fact that it was my heritage I was looking at (Mary Lou Slaughter 2008: pers. comm.).

It is evident from one art critic’s review that S’abadeb was able to provide enlightenment to some of its non-native visitors. Sheila Farr, a Seattle Times art critic, wrote:
Some ideas are present only as empty pedestals, with suggestions about imagery that is too powerful and personal to be displayed in a museum. “You put them out in the public, and they become fodder for logos and T-shirts, all kinds of things that are totally inappropriate,” said Penelakut tribal member Joey Caro, an advisor for the show. “Their powers are derived from visions long ago that ancestors had […] They are used in cleansing, purification, healing the sick, helping a deceased person’s soul transit to another world. When they aren’t being used, they are covered up.” As revered Upper Skagit elder Vi taqsheblu Hilbert, 90, explained at a preview for the show, “Our people have preferred to be quiet… We honor the gifts of the Earth and the spirit. Many things are private and will never be shared (Seattle Times October 24, 2008).

However, in the same review Farr notes:

In mainstream contemporary American culture something strange has happened. Art has gotten so alienated from its source that we’ve come to believe an art object isn’t worthy of the name unless it has no function at all (Seattle Times October 24, 2008).”

From this statement it is evident that cultural difference was perceivable to non-native visitors, but beyond that, there was a failure to grasp that appropriation had occurred when it was decided to present these diverse cultural objects as “Art.” Although they are beautiful, they are not intentional art – to call them “functional art” is to classify them within western epistemology, ignoring their meaning for source community members.

The Constraints on Exhibiting Culture

When we look at the overview of exhibits presented earlier in this chapter, a trend is apparent in the subject matter of recent Coast Salish exhibits. This is an expressed concern for illuminating the contemporary nature of Coast Salish cultural traditions. Archaeological objects provide inspiration for contemporary artists in the exhibit Written in the Earth (1997), contemporary weavers and their innovations are at the forefront of exhibitions of Salish weaving, while contemporary art exhibits such as Awakenings: A Gathering of Coast Salish Artists (2005) and Transporters (2008), celebrate the
transformation of traditional art forms into new media – glass, metal, paint on canvas. This preoccupation with a contemporary presence, a strategic contrast to the historic notion of the vanishing Indian, is interesting and worth consideration. However, of similar interest is what is not addressed by these exhibits and that is the spiritual or religious elements of modern life.

Michael Kew’s exhibit, *Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth* (1980) is the first, and larger, of two MOA exhibits that directly addressed this aspect of Coast Salish life. It resonated locally with the community of Musqueam, where it became the trigger for dialogues with museum staff about what was, and was not, suitable for public display. This occurred when spirit dancers, initiates, and other cultural experts from the community came to the museum to view the exhibit and voiced their concern (and embarrassment) over the inclusion of Musqueam ceremonial items, specifically a spirit dance costume. According to internal museum correspondence, a full set of spirit dance regalia was removed from view following these discussions and packed into a trunk in textile storage with “restrictions on access” (Memo from M.M. Ames, May 21, 1987).

However, several more years passed before the remainder of culturally sensitive Coast Salish objects were removed from public spaces. In a 1995 letter to the Musqueam community, MOA’s Director initiated a renewal of discussions about this topic. He wrote:

On several occasions recently First Nations visitors have voiced to our staff misgivings concerning the presence of Swxaixwe masks in our visible storage area. These concerns have come from Katzie, Saanich and Sto:lo people. As you probably know, most of these masks were purchased from Musqueam people, and three unpainted ones were commissioned by the museum. One comes from Cowichan. It therefore seems proper to us that before we remove them, attempt to explain how and why they are in the collection, or take any other action, we should consult with you and ask your advice.
As you know, similar questions have been asked about the Musqueam memorial box with fishers on it. It has been the view of some staff, including Mike Kew, that having the box, masks, and rattles on display or in visible storage, is worthwhile for the opportunity they provide for visitors to see and study these unique and intrinsically valuable objects as art and as important cultural property. On the other hand, it is important for us to know if there are objections to the display of these materials, and to adopt better ways of exhibiting, storing and/or interpreting them (Correspondence of M.M. Ames, October 12, 1995).

The outcome of these discussions was the removal of Swxaixwe masks and syelmuxwtses (ritualist rattles) from public view, and the development and implementation of protocols for accessing culturally sensitive materials originating from the community of Musqueam. Although museum staff struggled to varying degrees to come to terms with the changes that were required of them (Ames 1999), once they decided to move forward they were quick to include the public in the dialogues going on behind the scenes, as can be seen in the following label text found in the MOA Archives, in the fonds of Director Michael Ames:

**Sxwaixwe Masks**

The masks in this case are called Sxwaixwe, and come from the Halkomelem speaking people of the Central Coast Salish region (Fraser Valley and Southeaster Vancouver Island).

The masks are used in spiritual cleansing rites by trained ritualists who inherit the right to their use. In community settings these objects are not displayed but kept covered and taken out only when they are used in ritual activities. The unpainted masks were made by an owner of the privilege for display in this museum. They have not been completed or used in ritual acts. Others in this case have been used before being sold to the museum by their owners.

*Museum of Anthropology staff members are in the process of consulting with descendents and representatives of former owners of these masks with the object of clarifying the proper, respectful, way in which these objects should be treated while in the Museum’s care.*

MOA also released guidelines for visitors to identify culturally sensitive materials to enable staff to remove such items from view. The implementation of these guidelines also provided a mechanism for First Nations to share information about appropriate care and handling of such materials. For example, on January 30, 1997, two Coast Salish
interns visiting MOA as part of the RBCM’s *Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program* identified several bird rattles (originating from a secret society on Vancouver Island) as being culturally sensitive. Staff ensured that the rattles were quickly removed from display, and the two visitors were able to ceremonially pack them before they were transferred to closed storage (Memo from Miriam Clavir, February 6, 1997).

The changes that were occurring at MOA throughout the 1990s were not always easy ones. Tensions arose during exhibit development for *From Under the Delta* (1996) and *Written in the Earth* (1997) – both archaeologically themed exhibits. This led to a series of meetings between staff from MOA, the Lab of Archaeology (LOA) and the Musqueam community, where through a series of complex negotiations the three parties agreed to sign two memoranda of understanding, one for each of the exhibits (Holm and Pokotylo 1997:37). These memoranda recognised that a relationship existed between Musqueam and the archaeological objects that were to be displayed – in essence that these materials were being “held in trust.” The memorandum signed for *From Under the Delta* also detailed specific steps that LOA would take to care for these collections – in particular they were required to develop better storage to conserve the fragile wet-site objects (archaeological basketry fragments, etc…) found at Musqueam Northeast and other local archaeological sites.

*Written in the Earth* was a major achievement for MOA and LOA, as it departed from the “archaeology as science” model to recognise that living people still had connections with the objects displayed, and that to them the objects were endowed with spiritual qualities as well as aesthetic ones. The exhibit process was also a learning opportunity for LOA staff, who note they didn’t initially recognise the significance
behind their choice to acknowledge the featured objects were being held “in trust” for local First Nations. The desire to conduct scientific testing, specifically radiocarbon dating, was one area where incompatibility between knowledge systems first became evident to them. Archaeologists Margaret Holm and David Pokotylo note:

Although for the majority of the artefacts, we were only legally required to ask permission of the museums loaning the objects, we also asked permission from the First Nations communities associated with the material. Although we did not realize it at the time, our request to “drill small holes in a few artefacts,” highlighted a difference in values between archaeologists and First Nations people. Several key artefacts, in our perspective, would be much more significant if their age could be determined. The risk of the procedure and slight damage to the objects was a trade off for the increased knowledge that would result from the AMS dates. To the Musqueam exhibit consultant, drilling a hole and taking sample material out of artefacts was a high price to pay. The intrinsic and spiritual qualities of the carvings would not be increased by the AMS dates (1997:36).

The question of the appropriateness of scientific testing led to discussions concerning liability and insurance of the featured objects, security issues that had not previously been considered by LOA staff (Holm and Pokotylo 1997).

Another outcome of the two exhibits was policy development that gave First Nations approval over how their cultural heritage was displayed. This was facilitated by conducting a private preview of the installed exhibit, and an opportunity for changes to be made prior to a public opening. The travelling component of the show provided an opportunity for community artists to replicate fragile materials that could otherwise not travel, a process described as a “tremendous success” (Holm and Pokotylo 1997:38). These changes in protocol initiated in the 1990s, were at first difficult for staff, but have now become a routine part of how they conduct business.

A decade earlier, mortuary practices, the Sxwaixwe dance, and spirit dancing were featured in the exhibit Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth. Ceremonial belongings
were accompanied by photographs that depicted how these objects were used, while object labels were highly descriptive. The communities represented were not asked about the content of exhibits – objects selected, themes, text, or methods of display. For example, the following label text accompanied an Initiate’s costume and staff featured in the 1980 exhibit:

Costumes for spirit dance initiates were made from mountain goat wool or cedar bark and consisted of a headdress, wrist and ankle bands, and a sash used by attendants to restrain dancers under possession of their powers. Their canes were fir saplings with decorative twists of feather and deer hoof rattles.

When spring came initiates’ costumes were commonly disposed of in the wilderness where they might be hung high in a tree, apart from human contact, to return to nature. The initiate’s costume exhibited here, a recent one made of sheep wool, was ritually cleansed at the end of initiation in order to disassociate it from the initiate and other humans, and thus permit its exhibition. (Source: MOA Archives, Herb Watson Designer Fonds)

Highly descriptive, this text does little to convey the secrecy (or perhaps I should say privacy) that are normally associated with such events.

Following the changes in policy that occurred at MOA throughout the 1980s – 1990s, label text throughout the museum was altered to explain the absence of certain collections from visible storage and to introduce visitors to the idea of culturally sensitive collections. In other areas of the gallery, culturally sensitive objects (from other areas of the world) were removed from public view by encasing them in white boxes with labels that proclaimed them culturally sensitive.

Despite these changes, or perhaps because of them, Coast Salish ceremonial life returned to the galleries in a new way. Ceremonial life was the central theme in the more recent exhibit, To Wash Away the Tears (2003). This exhibit was initiated by an individual from the Musqueam community, who later made a presentation to the Musqueam Chief and Council to obtain permission to publicly discuss this private matter.
The resulting exhibit, which featured a mortuary canoe and its contents, revealed one family’s way of mourning.

The vessel was later gifted to the museum (after its use in a Memorial Ceremony) by Shane Pointe and Gina Grant – siblings of Margaret Pointe, for whom it was made. The belongings gathered for the ceremony are traditionally burned or given away. The family of Maggie Pointe chose to gift this canoe to MOA as a way to share something of their lives with museum visitors, and to tell them “we are still here.” Recognising the significance of this gift, MOA has decided (through consultation with the Musqueam community) that the canoe and its contents will be a central feature of the Coast Salish displays in MOA’s newly renovated Multiversity Gallery (visible storage) opening in 2010.

Rather than explicitly detailing beliefs about ghosts, mortuary houses and tombs, as was done in *Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth* (1980), the exhibit team (family members, graduate students, and museum staff) instead chose to focus on how one family celebrates their dead and their process of grieving. The visitor book from the exhibit shows that they did so in a manner that spoke to visitors with diverse backgrounds. Exhibit Curator, Sue Rowley, found that visitors also showed their affinity and respect by adding to the contents of the canoe – including coins featuring Sacajawea and other Native American symbols.

*Swaxwxe*, dance regalia, and *syelmuxwtes* (ritualist rattles) are now sequestered from display in several Canadian museums such as MOA, the Vancouver Museum, the North Vancouver Museum and Archives, and the Glenbow Museum, an act which speaks to the recognition of the source community’s prerogative to protect objects.
of power (and the people who may come into contact with them). This is not a universal recognition, however, as museums such as the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) continue to display images of personal ceremonial regalia (dance staffs, rattles, dance shirts, etc…) through collections databases available on their websites, and to a lesser degree in their public galleries (http://objectdb.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/index.html, January 25, 2009).

The potential inclusion of *syelmuxwtses* (ritualist rattles) in *S'abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists* (2008) was the source of lively discussion between delegates from Canadian and American Coast Salish communities at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) at all three community advisory meetings. Opinions were mixed, with some representatives expressing reticence about the inclusion of such objects, while others debated how the experience could be mediated and the power of the objects could be conveyed to museum visitors. Some Canadian delegates (including myself) were surprised that this was an issue of discussion, since most Canadian institutions no longer attempt to exhibit materials that have been identified as culturally sensitive by community members.

Community members did not share a common outlook on the matter of inclusion of *syelmuxwtses* (ritualist rattles) and from the onset SAM did not anticipate that its advisory council would require time to discuss these types of serious matters and potentially arrive at a consensus. They also didn’t allow time at the beginning of the process for discussion of how to proceed if disagreements arose, and a consensus could not be reached. In 2007 loan requests for *syelmuxwtses* (ritualist rattles) were submitted to at least one Canadian institution – the Canadian Museum of Civilization. However,
this request was later rescinded, early in 2008, when SAM staff recognised the
controversy that their inclusion would cause. What this example tells us is that in the
beginning SAM staff gave the aesthetic value of these objects primacy over their spiritual
value – in other words, western notions of art were initially given precedence over
community concerns regarding the care of ritual objects and other personal ceremonial
belongings.

This is a phenomenon not uncommon in European museums, where interaction
with source communities is limited, and thus curatorial responses to requests for
repatriation or special care of collections are considered as theoretical rather than
practical concerns since regular confrontations with angry source communities are
unlikely. North American institutions, such as the Seattle Art Museum, must consider
such outcomes before proceeding without a clear mandate from source communities as
the above demonstrates. By contrast, European museums often utilise arguments for
continued display that employ the rhetoric of censorship, or allusions to a greater human
history, a means of the western world to continue exercising autonomy over indigenous
peoples of former colonies while proclaiming the world to be “post-colonial”. The
visitor’s guide to the American Collections at the Etnografisch Museum in Antwerp,
Belgium, includes the following:

**Show or Hide?**

Recently, a number of ethnological museums, American institutions in the main,
have decided that they will no longer exhibit sacred objects such as False Face,
*Katsina* and Gaan masks. This is in response to the demands of indigenous
peoples, who feel strongly that the public display of sacred and ritual objects
demonstrates a lack of respect. Although we can understand this point of view we
have decided not to hide the masks away but rather to let them be seen. In this
way we hope to draw the visitor’s attention to the contrast between the western
museum – which aims to show and reveal as much as possible – and the
standpoint of makers and users of the objects, who wish to preserve the power and mystery of ritual objects by hiding and concealing them (Holsbeke 2001:50).

In this publication the patriarchal language of a former colonizer is employed. Requests to remove objects from display are alluded to as childish “demands.” The museum is heralded as a beacon of light that illuminates, in stark contrast to the indigenous people they represent, whom they characterise as “hiding” themselves in primitive shadows. Regardless of the language employed, in the end the issue boils down to one of power – museums having the power to “decide” what path they will choose, while source communities can only petition or advise.

Several museums in Europe and North America have become proponents of the concept of the “Universal Museum,” a metaphor that employs the legacy of shared human history as a rationale for retaining contested collections. In December of 2002, a ‘Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums’ was drafted and signed by 19 major European and North American museums. This declaration suggests that collections formed during the Enlightenment exemplify a specific era in human history (its mores and practices), and this justifies their continued existence. Geoffrey Lewis of the ICOM Ethics committee counters that:

The real purpose of the Declaration was, however, to establish a higher degree of immunity from claims for the repatriation of objects from the collections of these museums. The presumption that a museum with universally defined objectives may be considered exempt from such demands is specious. The Declaration is a statement of self-interest, made by a group representing some of the world’s richest museums; they do not, as they imply, speak for the “international museum community.” The debate today is not about the desirability of “universal museums” but about the ability of a people to present their cultural heritage in their own territory (2004:3).

Interestingly, the only North American institutions that signed the declaration are Art Museums or Galleries. The following museums signed the declaration:
Throughout this brief overview of Coast Salish representations it has become apparent that proximity to the site of representation significantly affects the type of relationship a community will have with a museum. For those museums far removed from source communities (either by geographic distance or a veneer of academic elitism) issues such as co-management of collections and repatriation are often treated as theoretical rather than practical concerns. In these scenarios, post-colonialism is viewed as a fait accompli thus postponing any real discussions about the current realities of indigenous communities and their ongoing struggle for self-determination. The examples have also shown that a significant gap still exists between the fields of Anthropology and Art History, as evidenced by the practices of their museums – consultation processes, representational strategies, and views about repatriation.
Chapter Five: Returning to the Beginning - Examining the Emergence of a Partnership between Musqueam and MOA

I’m not the only person [from Musqueam] who’s been involved in working with the Museum of Anthropology. My direct connect to the museum was before it was in the current building, when it was still in the library basement. And at that time, oh I didn’t have much standing anywhere – I guess with the museum people. I didn’t find it a very helpful relationship. I was just basically a worker in there… I didn’t even get contact with the items from our own community or our own culture. So that was kind of disappointing.

Leona Sparrow, UBC Alumni and MIB Director of Treaty, Lands, and Resources, Interviewed August 2, 2006

Many changes have occurred in museum practice since the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) first opened its doors in a library basement on the campus of UBC in 1947. The inclusion of indigenous peoples in decisions concerning their material culture and heritage is an evolving process, involving a variety of perspectives. MOA’s relationships with BC’s indigenous communities have evolved over the decades from patronage and connoisseurship, to partnership. Since the museum’s collections derive from a number of source communities, the focus of exhibits and public programmes has also shifted to coincide with the research interests of its staff members. Today MOA is well known for its ongoing partnerships with the Musqueam, on whose traditional lands the university is situated. This relationship has been gathering strength for several decades, but emerges from humble beginnings, and at times has been fraught with confrontation (see Holm and Pokotylo 1997; Ames 1999).

Musqueam had almost no presence at MOA during its first two decades of operation, an era in which museum staff focused upon acquiring new museum facilities, collection building, and salvaging the heritage of more northern Northwest Coast peoples (see Hawthorn 1993). Totem pole restoration projects and carving programs hosted by
MOA and other local museums, and their sponsors, were determined largely by curatorial interests, and often focused on those communities whose material culture had been deemed most authentic by early anthropologists such as Franz Boas. During this era, linguistic and archaeological evidence had not yet revealed to the anthropological community, at large, the antiquity of the Coast and Interior Salish cultures of British Columbia and adjacent Washington State (Suttles 1987:257). The work of archaeologist Dr. Charles Borden at Locarno Beach, Point Grey and Marpole was just beginning to dispel these misconceptions. Realization of great antiquity only came when the Milliken site was excavated, beginning in the late 1950s.

The Musqueam began interacting with the University of British Columbia, at its Point Grey campus, soon after it opened in 1925. Musqueam representatives attended a public presentation of the Tsimilano and Capilano house posts to the university in 1927 (see Chapter 4 for more details). The display of the two house posts – depicting famous Musqueam leaders, was significant, since their presence publicly commemorated Musqueam history and was a means to visibly link it to the lands upon which the university now sits (Roy 1999). For several decades these carvings were displayed in an outdoor garden on the UBC campus, until conservation concerns required them to be moved indoors (MOA Archives, Massive Carvings Files). However, during subsequent decades the Musqueam had almost no tangible presence within the confines of the Museum of Anthropology, which first opened its doors (in the library basement) in 1947 to showcase the university’s ethnographic collections.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will explore the origins of the museum’s now close relationship with Musqueam. This overview is based upon research conducted in
the MOA Archives and the Musqueam Indian Band Archives, and includes feedback received on an earlier draft from community liaison Leona Sparrow and former Curator Dr. Michael Kew. Excerpts from interviews with community members have since been added to supplement archival data.

The Hawthorn Era:

MOA was under the supervision of Audrey Hawthorn between the years 1947-1976, while her husband Harry Hawthorn – the museum’s official Director, was tasked with developing an anthropology program at the University of British Columbia (see Hawthorn 1993; Audrey Hawthorn fonds, MOA Archives). During this era, the Hawthorns undertook several programs aimed at reviving the traditional arts and crafts of the Northwest Coast. Their work evolved from training artists through restoration projects, proceeded to commissioning new works from emerging master carvers, and eventually encompassed the training of native peoples as museum interns. The Hawthorns were quick to respond to any new opportunity that sparked their interest. In 1959, for example, when Audrey Hawthorn was invited to judge the artwork of inmates at a local correctional facility, Harry Hawthorn was subsequently inspired to investigate ways of reaching out to native inmates with a mentorship program involving visits from a master carver (Audrey Hawthorn fonds file 29-3). Archival records show that by 1993 a version of the proposed cultural program had become a well established reality with then Director Michael Ames writing in a grant application that: “of the four programmes offered to Native offenders, one called the Aboriginal Cultural Programme is co-
sponsored by the UBC Museum of Anthropology and Correctional Services Canada” (Michael Ames fonds file 2-B-27).

While the Hawthorn’s were very proactive in meeting the needs of a diversity of native peoples throughout British Columbia, their involvement with Musqueam – the museum’s nearest neighbours, was more casual during this period involving occasional visits to the community hosted by Andrew Charles Sr. (leader of the Sxwaixwe dancers) to observe longhouse events, and infrequent commissions from community members to supplement the collections or upcoming exhibits (see Hawthorn 1993; Audrey Hawthorn fonds files 1-7, 19-28). In correspondence written in 1971, Audrey Hawthorn made a list of carvers from whom the museum had previously commissioned works. She identified 18 Kwakwaka’wakw artists and only 6 non-Kwakwaka’wakw artists, of which only two were Coast Salish – one being Andrew Charles Sr. of Musqueam, who was by then deceased. The other carver, Dominic Williams – a Squamish artist, she only identified as being Salish (Audrey Hawthorn fonds file 6-25). Reflecting back upon this period, Ames acknowledged, in a 1985 memo, that Musqueam was “missing chances for commissions because they have not had the opportunities we gave people like Reid, Davidson, and Hunt” (Betsy Johnson Fonds, file 1-50).

Dr. Ames’ records also suggest that Andrew Charles Sr., his wife Christine, and their daughter Della became advisors to the museum, beginning in the 1950s (Michael Ames fonds file 1-F-3c). Their intermittent involvement with the museum appears to have begun around the time they left a large stone carving, named q’aysca:m, at the museum for safe keeping. This carved stone, also known as “the goalpost” because it was used in a game played between teams from different villages, was kept in the library
basement until the museum relocated to its current site in 1976. After several letters were sent to the Charles family enquiring as to what should be done with the stone, in 1978 she was retrieved by community members and returned to Musqueam (Audrey Hawthorn fonds file 19-28). *q’aysca:m* disappeared for several decades soon after, but in 2008 was found hiding in plain sight by Wayne Point while walking along the shoreline of the Fraser River.

In 1955 Della Charles married one of the Hawthorn’s first students, UBC anthropologist Michael Kew (2006: pers. comm.) The next year they moved to Victoria when he became Assistant Anthropologist at the BC Provincial Museum. Over the next decade they made several moves, to Saskatchewan in 1959, to Seattle in 1963, and finally back to Vancouver in 1965. Although Della Kew later became an active educator in her own right, involved with both MOA and the nearby Vancouver Museum where she was employed as the Docent Coordinator during the early 70s (Maranda 2006: pers. comm.), she had little contact with either institution for this ten year period.

Despite this interrupted contact, archival records attribute both Della Kew and Kwakwaka’wakw artist Mungo Martin with influencing museum staff to shift their collecting practices to include collecting from native communities and not just private collectors during the 50s and 60s (Michael Ames fonds file 1-F-3c). This practice went hand in hand with better documentation, in terms of provenance and use, ensuring that such information was preserved for future generations of native people. Della Kew’s active involvement in the documentation process can still be seen in MOA’s archives where her handwriting graces many of the original museum catalogue cards.
Other community members recall their families forging connections with MOA during this period through the work of Dr. Charles Borden, an archaeologist from the university who worked at gardens leased by Chinese farmers on the Musqueam reserve during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Dr. Borden founded a sister institution, the UBC Lab of Archaeology (LOA), in 1949.

Master Weaver, Debra Sparrow, attributes her community’s now strong relationship with the museum to Dr. Borden’s presence in the community, noting changes starting:

I think since the day Dr. Borden appeared. I remember going with my dad – I didn’t know what it was, I’d just go with him, wherever they would find artefacts. All over the Chinese [leased] gardens, then we’d collect them up, and keep them, and then all of the sudden we’d be driving down to Dr. Borden to bring them downstairs and that’s when I started seeing – I guess I understood that there was a relationship. I didn’t know why we had to give it to him, but we did. I know I was little, so… it would probably be the early 60’s. It was probably before that though, you know, that he would have had a relationship with my grandfather. When he was Chief, I suppose. Yeah, because he was around here, I think he took a real interest in coming down and meeting the people. It would be interesting to understand why the people here would even want to give him anything.

That we so willingly gave whatever we found instead of keeping it to ourselves and saying, you know, “these are… they belong to our people.” You know and that’s something that I have conversations with people out at the museum, when we’re having conversations, and Larry [Grant] was sensitive to it too, is that they’re not objects they’re people’s belongings. So we can’t call it an object, you know. So when we’re talking about everything that’s been taken from the ground or contact period, you know, like Rose mentioned that they didn’t catalogue everything properly. Well they didn’t want to, because then they would have been accountable for how they came about having it in the first place (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

To this memory of Charles Borden, N. Rose Point, a Musqueam Elder, adds:

Before the Museum of Anthropology was built, I didn’t work with them, but we were always – he did a lot of work here at Musqueam so they’d go and visit him, go visit him at where he stored the collections at UBC. He [Charles Borden] had them all in some sort of storage, but I can remember how dusty it was and really
primitive storage areas there. And I’m really glad that the museum was built (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

From the perspective of LOA staff, Charles Borden was a pioneer in collaborative research. He is remembered for hiring equal numbers of students and Musqueam community members for excavations at Musqueam, and in the 1970s broke new ground when he applied for one excavation permit with Stan Charles of Musqueam as his co-applicant; this permit was for excavations of the Charles house.

The Indian Heritage Project and Other Cultural Initiatives:

It was in the 1970s that Della Kew assumed a more active role in cultural programming – in local museums and on the Musqueam reserve. In 1971 she wrote a grant application for a six month pilot program called “The Indian Heritage Project.” Planning sessions for the proposed program were held at MOA with Vancouver Museum staff in attendance, since the workshops, themselves, were to be held at the Vancouver Museum. In the application to the Koerner Foundation, Della wrote:

The purpose of the “Indian Heritage Project” is to carry out an educational program for Indian men and women here with the purpose of importing a truer understanding of our rich heritage, part of the material aspects of which are on display in the Northwest Coast galleries (Audrey Hawthorn fonds file 29-6).

She later continues:

All planning and instruction will be carried out by qualified Indian people for native people who will participate in the benefits of the educational program without fee (Audrey Hawthorn fonds file 29-6).

The workshops, scheduled for a six-month duration, were to include: a weekly, 2 hour long, traditional dance program; a button-blanket robe making project to be offered twice a week; a cedar-bark robe making project also to be offered twice a week; a wood carving
program designed to proceed into a carving apprenticeship; language classes; and a photography project that would document the work done in the carving workshop (Audrey Hawthorn fonds file 29-6). Correspondence for the project identifies the Reverend Ernest White, Gloria Cranmer Webster (‘Namgis), and Mrs. Susan Davidson (Haida) as also being involved. A poster for the workshops, found in MOA’s archives, initially led me to believe the project became a reality. However, Dr. Michael Kew and the Vancouver Museum’s Curator of Anthropology, Lynn Maranda, both recall the grant application was not successful.

I chose to mention this project because the format of the proposed programme is similar to several initiatives implemented later at Musqueam for the cultural education of their own children (and other community members), which also involved hosting workshops. The proposed project also speaks to the initiative being taken by First Nations people during this period to address the needs of their own communities, both urban and residential.

Throughout the 1970s, the Musqueam, as with other First Nations across North America were focusing their attentions on rebuilding their community through initiatives that reclaimed their cultural heritage and created resources for capacity building. By 1975, several Musqueam community members, including Della Kew, N. Rose Point, Delbert Guerin, Fran Guerin, Andrew Charles Jr., Arnold Guerin and Leona Sparrow had established the Musqueam Cultural Programme (MCP minutes, MIB Archives). This programme had several aims, among them the development of language and culture curricula. Its members were very active in promoting these goals, publishing language books on the ḥə́ŋqəmı́łəm language and offering workshops on cultural activities
including weaving and ethnobotany. In 1975 Della Kew was successful in obtaining a grant from the McLean Foundation for the *Musqueam Cultural Programme*, but since the foundation does not issue grants to individuals, only registered non-profit societies, the grant was administered through MOA (Audrey Hawthorn fonds, file 37-11).

During this same period, MOA began participating in several initiatives and programmes designed to train native interns in museology. These programmes drew participants from a number of communities throughout British Columbia. Curator Emeritus Michael Kew recalls that former Education Curator, Madeline Bronsdon Rowan, was instrumental in starting the *Native Youth Program (NYP)* in 1979. The *NYP*, currently facilitated by Pam Brown, a MOA curator and a member of the Heiltsuk community, teaches native youth how to conduct cultural research in a museum setting and then develop interpretative programming. Students learn, over several weeks during the summer, how to give museum tours to the general public – a skill that helps them to develop strength at public speaking and confidence in their own cultural knowledge. Over the many years the program has been running, several generations of Musqueam youth have graduated from the program.

Musqueam youth have also participated in other types of internship opportunities at the museum. Museum Educator and Master Weaver, Debra Sparrow recalls that her first museum experience occurred in 1976 after completion of the new museum building:

> I must have been seventeen or eighteen and they were just moving into the new museum. Everything was coming from the archaeology building so everything was still boxed. So Rose [Point] put the call out and I came to the call not really knowing what I was going to do… And we spent that summer opening everything up and hanging everything and putting it into its cases and you know at that time I wasn’t very aware of really what I was doing. I liked the job. I was really taken by the Northwest Coast because I really didn’t know a lot about it. Never really left Musqueam, right? I was in awe of it, so it was a real experience for me to
have that opportunity and a lot of times I used to sit and talk about everything we were doing. So that was kind of my first experience with the museum. I didn’t really put a lot of thought into it at the time because I was young, but when I think back upon it now, I think, “Wow, what an opportunity it was to be there.” (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

This opportunity, like many other museum projects over the decades, was advertised to community members through the band’s weekly newsletter.

Leona Sparrow, a UBC student at the time, remembers feeling disconnected from MOA during this same period, noting that the museum “sat within our traditional territory, but we weren’t honoured… visible.” Musqueam was overlooked in many ways by the museum prior to the late 1980s. She elaborates:

Della Kew was involved in working at the Museum of Anthropology and I believe she was documenting the collection pieces. Michael Kew who was married into the Musqueam community, was a Professor of Anthropology, and his classes taught an overview of Coast Salish cultural, traditional values. So there was some exposure to the students. I’m not sure how far that went in terms of the rest of the teaching staff or museum staff. We did find it difficult to have Musqueam recognised. For example, the Haida houses were moved from the park on Marine Drive to the back of the museum and I don’t believe that Musqueam was informed or invited to attend in any way. A number of totem poles were also raised at the back of the museum and Delbert Guerin, who was I believe Chief of the day, wasn’t informed – and when he was out fishing I think he was asked for a comment and he didn’t know anything about it. Even within the museum, Musqueam was not visible. So it’s been an educational process – a learning process on both sides, in order to move from the museum staff [being the experts] to who Musqueam is, what our culture is about, and the fact that we would like to be recognised because it is our territory (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

Although Musqueam was not a focus of museum programming at MOA, during this time, community members did sometimes participate in other First Nations themed-programming. Victor Guerin, a member of the Musqueam Language and Culture committee, recalls that his first museum experience occurred in the mid 1980s when:

I worked with a fellow named David Rozen on what was known as the Coast Salish Research Project. And that was a project researching Coast Salish culture – Central Coast Salish culture actually, which is basically the people centring
around Vancouver and Southeast Vancouver Island. And the aim was to create a
tour of the city of Vancouver and through the Museum of Anthropology a slide
presentation on Coast Salish culture.

And then again I worked with the same fellow on a project known as the
Vancouver Indian History Project. And that was a similar project with a tour of
the city of Vancouver and focusing basically on the political history of the
aboriginal people of Vancouver, including the indigenous people of the Central
Coast Salish and all the other people that came from different parts of the Country
and outside the Country that identified as aboriginal people. So it dealt basically
with such things as the fact that the first union activity in Burrard Inlet was
aboriginally-based and that resulted in the first Union on the Vancouver
waterfront …it was known as the ILA – The International Lumber Handlers
Association (Victor Guerin, Interviewed April 23, 2007).

Although neither of these two programs were long-lived, they are interesting in that they
both focused on raising awareness among museum visitors about the presence of
contemporary First Nations people in the city of Vancouver and their ongoing
involvement in the history of the city. This remains the motivation behind many
contemporary museum collaborations for Musqueam, and other Coast Salish, community
members. Success of these early projects can be measured in many ways, as Victor
Guerin notes:

the Vancouver Indian History Project, I mentioned that they were focused on
developing public presentations and for some reason at the time that they were
developed they didn’t fly. The general public didn’t take to them. I think that
they would now, the times have changed some. I don’t know what it was that
happened at the time, but I think they would fly a lot better now, and I think that it
would be a really good thing to revive them as public presentations again. They
had a great deal of influence on bringing me to the point that I am now, as I
mentioned with David Rozen finding out that he was a fluent speaker of our
language lit a fire under me and started me working with our Elders (Interviewed
April 23, 2007).

Madeline Bronsdon Rowan, Education Curator at MOA during the 1980s, relied upon
David Rozen’s research materials, including lecture notes and slides of historic
photographs, to develop the Coast Salish Traditional Culture programme in 1986.
Rowan developed the program for delivery by NYP participants, and also incorporated it into her teaching as a lecture for university students enrolled in Anthropology 341: Introduction to Museum Anthropology (Madeline Bronsdon Rowan fonds file 8-17). The development of this program was also influenced by the People of the Stalo programme developed by the Langley Centennial Museum in 1980, and shared a focus on ecology. By incorporating David Rozen’s research Rowan developed a programme that moved away from static portrayals of Coast Salish culture to one that recognised and discussed change. This was mainly accomplished through a slide presentation focusing on Coast Salish architecture and changes that occurred after European settlement – the use of vertical house boards and the adoption of gabled roofs by some communities.

Exhibiting Musqueam Culture:

The visibility of Coast Salish culture increased dramatically at MOA throughout the 1980s and 1990s, as was noted in the previous chapter. Musqueam community members participated in exhibit projects headed by curators Dr. Michael Kew and Dr. Elizabeth Johnson and other MOA staff, as well as those involving native interns, graduate students, and staff from the Lab of Archaeology. These projects include: 

**Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth** (1980); the archaeology exhibit *Changing Tides* (1985); the Musqueam Weaving exhibit, *Hands of Our Ancestors* (1986); a photograph exhibit and sourcebook produced by Musqueam interns called *Proud to be Musqueam* (1987); and the award winning Coast Salish archaeology exhibits *Written in the Earth* (1996) and *From Under the Delta* (1996). The label text from these exhibits
demonstrates a gradual progression away from scientific discourse towards text featuring multi-vocality and the complexities of living cultures – this is especially evident in the exhibits *Written in the Earth* and *Proud to be Musqueam*. The emergence of Musqueam in these museum narratives was sometimes preceded by conflict as community members challenged the authority of museum staff to represent their history and heritage (Holm and Pokotylo 1997; Ames 1999).

A consequence of including Musqueam, and other Coast Salish communities, in museum exhibits and public programmes was that it opened the doors to dialogues concerning the appropriate care and display of those collections. In recent correspondence, Michael Kew reflected that, in his view:

A turning point, as far as recovering control of display by Musqueam people, occurred after the exhibition "*Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth*" opened in 1980. One exhibit contained Spirit Dancers Costumes, one of which had been commissioned by Della for MOA and properly "cleansed" before acquisition. The maker and Della and other members of Musqueam found nothing improper about the exhibition. However, several young men active in Spirit Dancing came to the exhibit in the early weeks of its life and complained to staff about the presence of the costumes being on display. I was contacted and removed the costumes and inserted an explanatory note in the exhibition case. The point that symbols of power were still meaningful to the Halkomelem was made with greater effect then initially!

But after this time Musqueam and other Halkomelem visitors voiced to MOA staff objections to some objects being viewed by the public. These included the unpainted Sxwaixwe masks commissioned by Harry Hawthorn… and other older masks purchased from Musqueam people. They had been on exhibition for many years.

The reasons for these changes were complex, I am sure, but they must be understood as part of the wider pattern of changes ensuing in that time: the initiation of treaty negotiations, increasing political activity of First Nations, increasing sense of independence, and so on. The ability of MOA staff to understand and move with, rather than resist these changes, that is, as your title says, to be "partners" with Musqueam, makes this case one of special significance. (2006: pers. comm.)
MOA’s relationship with Musqueam was changing in other ways as well. During the 1980s, Dr. Michael Ames made frequent invitations to the Musqueam Chief inviting Musqueam participation in exhibit openings and other public events. As a result, community Elders and cultural experts began, the now established tradition, of welcoming museum visitors to Musqueam traditional territory during public events.

A consequence of this practice is the transformation of the Great Hall at MOA into a stage where artists from the Haida, Kwakwaka’wakw and other northern nations now make concessions to Coast Salish territory. These individuals no longer assume the role of northern raiders, now they arrive as visiting dignitaries who readily acknowledge Musqueam territory and protocols.

Correspondence indicates that invitations were exchanged in both directions, with museum staff invited to attend important community events such as the opening of the Musqueam Elder’s Centre and a protest demonstration held at Pacific Spirit Park (Michael Ames fonds files 10-F-37 and 9-E-19). Musqueam also designated MOA as the repository for their cultural heritage during this period, and began to seek their expertise and assistance when issues concerning the preservation of archaeological collections or sites arose. For example, on March 1, 1988 when the band raised concerns with the province’s Heritage Conservation Branch, over archaeological investigations undertaken at the Terra Nova site without their knowledge, it was noted: “the Musqueam Indian Band has over the past few years designated the UBC Museum of Anthropology as the repository for cultural materials collected from Musqueam settlements (Michael Ames fonds file 10-F-37).” Later that year in July, the museum became involved with preserving wet-site archaeological objects uncovered at the Beach Grove Golf Club in
Tsawwassen at the request of Musqueam Chief Wendy Grant and Tsawwassen Chief Tony Jacobs (Michael Ames fonds file 10-F-37). This site later became known as the Water Hazard site and the basketry objects found preserved there were later featured in the exhibit *From Under the Delta* in 1996, and are now stored at LOA.

**Proud to be Musqueam:**

The increased presence of Musqueam people at MOA had several effects on museum policy. Exhibit projects such as *Hands of Our Ancestors (1986)* and *Proud to be Musqueam (1987)*, facilitated by MOA Curator Elizabeth Johnson, introduced several Musqueam community members to museum practices and provided mechanisms for those involved to make suggestions to the museum for improving its relations with First Nations.

Contact with MOA was initiated by community members from Musqueam, for each project, after grants were received from *Employment and Immigration Canada* to assist women in the community to reintegrate into the workforce (Fisher and Johnson 1988; Ames 1990). These grants were prepared by Wendy Grant John, and the funds were used, in part, to organise classes in Salish Weaving on the Musqueam reserve. (Separate exhibit funds were later acquired by Ethnology Curator Elizabeth Johnson.)

*Proud to be Musqueam* was the second project to receive funding from *Employment and Immigration Canada*. Leona Sparrow notes that all of the participants in the employment program visited MOA for cross-cultural awareness training, and this led two of the participants – Verna Kenoras and Leila Stogan to choose MOA for their two week work placement at the end of the program. This work experience resulted in
the photograph exhibit, *Proud to be Musqueam*, which, today, is still on display at the Musqueam Elders Centre where it can be enjoyed by the entire community.

For the exhibit Kenoras and Stogan worked to gather photographs representing all of the families on the reserve. In an article written by MOA Director Michael Ames it is noted that:

The two Musqueam curators chose fifty-four photographs from the hundreds offered by members of their band, deciding to cover the period from 1890 – the earliest date photographs could be located – to 1960. They worked to represent every family in the band and to cover the typical community activities. Everyone depicted was identified by name and connections to the present generations at Musqueam. Upon the advice of their elders, which they sought early on in the project, they did not include photographs of ceremonies and masks that were considered private. The exhibit labels were drafted by [MOA cultural educator] Lizanne Fisher taping the two Musqueam women as they discussed each photograph in turn, reporting the information they had learned from elders (Ames 1990:164).

Several years later travelling versions of *Proud to be Musqueam* and the archaeology themed exhibit *From Under the Delta* were incorporated into the *Musqueam Museum School Programme*, and are still in use today.

Upon completion of *Proud to be Musqueam*, Verna Kenoras and Leila Stogan were asked for feedback by Lizanne Fisher, a MOA staff member. Their responses indicated that their partnership with MOA had indeed changed their perspective on museums. Written notes from this interview state: “Yes our feelings did change after two weeks – because [the] museum is trying to preserve the artefacts and show we have something and did not lose it. Lots of people feel museums are taking things away from us- but, [they are] not [they] are preserving them” (Michael Ames Fonds file 6-B-0).

Kenoras and Stogan also made several recommendations to the museum for improving relationships, among them: creating separate programs for different cultures
and placing greater emphasis on programming that targeted their community’s children. In terms of accessibility, they felt the museum needed to make native people aware they could access catalogue records and other documentation, and were allowed to examine objects in the ethnology lab. Kenoras and Stogan also stated that school teachers needed to be made aware that their native students could come to the museum and see objects from their own communities. They suggested special programs should target these students and felt that the presence of Elders and native guides would draw more native people to MOA, noting that it’s: “really hard to listen to non-natives tell you about your history.” It was also recommended that when community members were invited to visit the museum, they be sent free passes along with the invitations. The inclusion of contemporary objects in MOA’s collections was also mentioned (Michael Ames fond file 6-B-0).

Almost all of these suggestions are now common practice at MOA – the only exception being that there are no full-time native interpreters at the museum, although Musqueam Weavers Debra Sparrow and Vivian Campbell are regularly booked for education programming and whenever possible MOA employs First Nations guides for its temporary exhibits. Self-identifying First Nations people are now allowed free entry into the museum as well.

Weaving Two Worlds Together and the Musqueam Museum School

Exhibit and programming initiatives of the 1970s and 80s paved the way for Musqueam and MOA to expand its relationship. In the 1990s, art historian Jill Baird came to work at MOA, eventually becoming Curator of Education. Building upon the
relationship established with the Musqueam weavers by other museum staff, the new Curator of Education implemented the first of two school programs developed in partnership with members of the Musqueam Indian Band in 1997. The first of these, called **Weaving Two Worlds Together**, was a collaboration between the Curator and Musqueam Weaver Debra Sparrow. The program, which was part of Baird’s Masters Thesis, was an exercise in cultural translation that produced a program 1 hour and 15 minutes in length. It made use of the museum galleries and involved exposing students to the perspective of a First Nations woman and weaver. Students were taught how science and mathematics are integral parts of weaving through experiments with natural plant dyes and demonstrations of the mathematics involved in weaving many of the patterns used by Salish weavers, past and present. Debra Sparrow notes that she chose to participate in the project because she wanted to educate people outside of her community about other ways of learning:

> I think that the way I want to learn, and how I learn, basically comes from the process that my ancestors had…I sort of rejected, mainstream learning. I do understand how important that it is. Yet I feel that in order for us in Musqueam to feel really good about where we are going, we have to really completely understand where we were. And that’s an education isn’t it – teaching yourself and others about who you are? (Baird 1997:3)

The program’s success led the two to develop an expanded version that began operating in 2000.

The result is the **Musqueam Museum School**, a one month program – involving five half day and one evening session, that is still offered by the Museum of Anthropology. It brings students into contact with Musqueam weavers, environmentalists, and fisheries experts. N. Rose Point, who was Musqueam Education
Coordinator at the time, acted as a liaison for the community, aiding the project by hiring community members and putting together funding. Debra Sparrow recalls:

Well it sort of started with the “Weaving Two Worlds Together,” then we decided to open it up because there were so many directions we could go in and still can, it could like go forever. But we just can’t seem to get anybody [from the community] behind us. It’s been frustrating – for these seven years we worked on it. It’s full, it’s booked every year. And it’s so positive I don’t understand why we can’t get our community behind that one. But we haven’t so far…

It’s worked so well and it’s still going. And it’s not like we had a year off or it didn’t go and we had to come back and fix it, it’s going. So Vivian and I deliver it, we’re the only two and we don’t have any back up (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

Like other museum educational programs, it was designed to fit into BC Ministry of Education curriculum. First Nations cultures are specifically addressed by the Grade Four Social Studies curriculum, and this is the target audience for this program addresses.

This program, like its predecessor Weaving Two World Together, was viewed by Debra Sparrow as a way to deal with stereotypes held by people outside her community, and a means to share traditional knowledge that would benefit not only her children but children from the larger community of Vancouver. In a discussion about Weaving Two Worlds Together she told Jill Baird that:

I think we need to school your people about who we were. And you see that’s a real threat to society, you know. I’m slotted into this category of romantic history or something, because I want to talk about weaving two worlds together. Society has a hard time, and academics and teachers and educators, have a hard time with that. I don’t want to be slotted into a little romantic social studies hour. I’m talking about more complex things than that… I think we all know that it, ‘the western school system’, was created for western concepts of civilization, how they perceived things – worlds, and how they perceive what’s important. So of course they are not going to take into consideration minorities or Aboriginal people who may have something to offer. I felt horrible in school. I felt so alone and afraid there, and so scared of the teachers. I don’t want my kids to live in fear. We need to know that there are other structures and we can incorporate them to work for us and for you in a way that’s best, and both of us can feel that we are gaining some opportunities of knowledge. (Baird 1997:19)
The *Musqueam Museum School* is delivered in several settings, at the Museum, in the community of Musqueam, and in the classrooms of participating schools. Musqueam people take the key role in sharing their traditional knowledge and are assisted by museum volunteers. The program emphasizes linking the past with the present. It demonstrates how traditional knowledge has always been a part of the Musqueam community, but that it is dynamic and has changed over the years. This is especially evident during the creek walk portion of the program where students visit Musqueam Creek – the last remaining wild salmon creek in the city of Vancouver, and are educated about ongoing efforts to restore the creek and protect it from pollution and other damaging agents. Working with the *David Suzuki Foundation*, band members have been experimenting with several new technologies including one that protects salmon eggs from damage caused by mountain bikes and other vehicles driven into the stream by area residents. Local golf courses have also been asked to forgo chemical fertilisers which eventually drain into the watershed killing wild salmon. By participating in the program, students learn about modern conservation efforts and Musqueam’s fishing heritage at the same time.

**To Wash Away the Tears**

Musqueam has partnered with MOA on many initiatives in the last two decades, including collections management projects, youth internships, and ongoing involvement in the museum’s renewal project, which involves renovation of the museum facilities and development of the Reciprocal Research Network. Amongst these projects, the recent exhibit *To Wash Away the Tears* marks a significant milestone in the relationship
between the two since it began with Musqueam community members Shane Pointe and Gina Grant approaching the museum in 2001 to request that it house a memorial display for their sister Maggie.

**Figure 8: To Wash Away the Tears component of the Gathering Strength Gallery**

For family members the memorial was a way to show people outside their own community that their cultural traditions were still alive, while honouring the Coast Salish tradition of giving away or burning belongings used in the memorial ceremony. When MOA agreed to the request, a memorial canoe and all of its contents were gifted to the museum. They were displayed in the *Gathering Strength* exhibit, a permanent exhibit
with changing components that reflect the last 50 years of Northwest Coast artistic traditions. Musqueam Elder Larry Grant, brother-in-law of the deceased, reflects:

Our connection with the Museum of Anthropology, it’s the community who determines what’s out there or if it’s a specific display like the *To Wash Away the Tears* display. That was a family donation, specific to one family… Their wishes are exactly what’s being shown out there today. And other things, I believe it’s our community that determines how it is to be displayed (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

Initiated by the community, reflecting an event that would have occurred regardless of museum involvement, the exhibit speaks to many aspects of contemporary Coast Salish culture – the belief in a spirit world parallel to our own, the practice of celebrating the accomplishments of deceased family and friends, and the extension of family networks beyond the boundaries of community. *Tawxsin Yexwulla / Poolxtun* (Aaron Nelson Moody), a Skwxwú7mesh artist who created a spindle whorl for the memorial, recalls with surprise the interest he has received for his involvement in the project, noting:

I was the cousin of someone else who was part of the thing so, you know, it was sort of a last minute where [museum staff] found out who I was… and it was pretty indirect that part. I think they were interested because a Musqueam man asked a Squamish man for help with his family. But the way we talk we’re cousins, so we were related, so that’s the conversation we were having. I guess, especially with the political strife between the Squamish and Musqueam, they were – I think they were a bit pleased to see that. Family superseding the politics and you know that was definitely part of why I was interviewed for that (Interviewed August 16, 2007).

MOA Curator Sue Rowley has noted that the exhibit was well-received by the visiting public and the display grew over the years as visitors adding coins and other tokens to the canoe. It also provided a cleansing mechanism for some visitors, who shared their grief over the loss of a loved one in the visitor’s book that accompanied the display.
q’aysca:m visits the Museum

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned the first visit of q’aysca:m, a female stone figure, to UBC. After spending several years in the library basement, the first home of the Museum of Anthropology, q’aysca:m was returned to Musqueam in 1978 and then went missing – thought to have been accidentally buried during a construction project. Andrew Charles Jr. searched for her for many years, and soon after his death q’aysca:m reappeared. After a brief period of display at the Musqueam Administration Offices, it was arranged for q’aysca:m to make a return visit to MOA. The timing was very appropriate as stone T’xwelátse, recently repatriated from the Burke Museum, was already visiting MOA at the request of his descendents.

The return of q’aysca:m to MOA in many ways seems to signal the return of a strong Musqueam presence, to the present day site of the museum, an area that has long been part of Musqueam traditional territory. It also provides a metaphor for their relationship with the museum as it comes full-circle and the community regains control over their belongings and representations. The three labels that introduced q’aysca:m to visitors follow.

q’aysca:m and Txwelatse are the only known figures of this type from this part of British Columbia.

q’aysca:m’s history

“This rock was used as a central starting point for a ball game played by a secret society. … The stone was in [the] centre of [a] flat playing field, with the … ball on top. At a signal, both teams would try to grab [the] ball, and run it past the goal post of the opposing team, at opposite ends of the field. After each goal the ball was returned to [the] rock.

…

Information from Andrew Charles, Senior given to Audrey Hawthorn ca. 1953.

Acknowledgements

After q’aysca:m was recovered the Musqueam Indian Band offered to have her visit the museum. The Museum of Anthropology thanks the Musqueam Indian Band for their generosity.
q’ayscaː:m’s history

The Musqueam and the Indian Arm people of long ago, were close neighbours. They used to invite each other to events …

One day, the Musqueam people were called … When they arrived they were fed. … At last the chief up there spoke, saying, “Let’s let the strong young men play … Tsukwele. … If you beat us, you’ll take [q’ayscaː:m] home with you. She will be yours.”

Finally, one strong one from Musqueam … ran away with the ball, and laid it on the head of q’ayscaː:m. That was the end. Those from old Musqueam won.

…five canoes were … lined up side by side, [with] house planks laid over them to make a raft … q’ayscaː:m was put aboard …, and brought home to Musqueam …

The old people said that when people came from all over, they played … Tsukwele. … The winners were the ones who took possession. They got q’ayscaː:m … Until the people stopped [playing the game], there was no one who beat … Musqueam. That q’ayscaː:m got stuck here.

James Point (Musqueam) recounted this history to Wayne Suttles in May of 1963

Finding q’ayscaː:m

Sunday, January 20, 2008

I might as well take the dog to the beach for a run. …
Standing on the boat ramp I looked down at a cement ball that had caught my eye a month earlier. … I looked more closely and I realized … it was more like sandstone [with] … strange indentations … Now, I wanted to get a better look.

… if I could turn the boulder over … but it was heavy. … After half an hour of trudging through the marsh I found a large cedar branch I hoped was strong enough.

I managed to wedge the boulder a bit but every time I went to reposition the branch the boulder would fall back … more prying and shoring were needed. Twenty minutes of hard labour went by until finally, with one last push the boulder rolled gently onto its back facing up at me. I froze with disbelief – q’ayscaː:m.

Wayne Point (Musqueam)

In this chapter, I presented an overview of some of the projects that helped shape the relationship between the communities of Musqueam and the Museum of Anthropology (MOA). It has taken several decades for Musqueam to obtain recognition
at MOA and then move beyond participation towards true partnership. It has been a learning process for both museum staff and community members, but one that has perhaps had far reaching effects since the museum is a training institution that disperses its students to museums and other academic institutions worldwide. In the next chapter some current perspectives held by Musqueam community members on museums is explored, moving the discussion out of the past and into the present.
Chapter Six: Creating a Public Identity at Musqueam

It actually permeates public perceptions – that is that our cultures are something of the past and the only thing that’s left of them is what you find in museums. But again, at the same time, over representation by certain groups tends to give people a perception that all of us are the same.

Victor Guerin, Musqueam Language and Culture Committee Member, Interviewed April 23, 2007

The further away from your home you get, the worse off your image, or presence, gets. It’s like when you go to New York and Washington you see some of the stuff that’s out there, it’s almost like an extinct culture or whatever. And then you see the Haida being [represented as] the entire West Coast culture. It’s always first recognised and it’s most exhibited for whatever reasons. So I think a sense of presence and identity – to get a sense of strong cultural identity, of who we are, is probably the biggest thing to get out there…

Terry Point, Musqueam Community Member / Cultural Researcher, Interviewed December 18, 2007

In the previous chapters I explored the evolving relationship between the community of Musqueam and the UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA), detailing the community’s early difficulties finding recognition and inclusion, to how through persistent action they achieved the status of partner community – initiating and co-developing projects that meet their self-identified aspirations (in addition to sharing their culture with others). In the last decade at MOA, Musqueam has been represented in numerous ways within the galleries and other aspects of the museum’s day to day operations.

Musqueam has also participated in several successful grant applications, which provided several years of museum training for two Musqueam interns, and enabled the renewal of the museum’s infrastructure as well as the development of the Reciprocal Research Network (RRN). The latter initiative involved partnering with two other communities – their upriver neighbours, the Stó:lō (now represented by two distinct political entities, the Stó:lō Nation and the Stó:lō Tribal Council), and the northern
Kwak’waka’wakw peoples, through the U’mista Cultural Society located in Alert Bay.

Musqueam community members are regularly consulted for their input into the development of the **RRN**, which is:

- a key component of the Museum of Anthropology's Renewal Project, "A Partnership of Peoples." In addition to the **RRN**, the Renewal Project comprises several complementary and innovative components, including a new Research Centre, Major Temporary Exhibition Gallery, and Community Suite. Together, they support collaborative, socially responsible, and interdisciplinary research across local, national, and international borders.

The **Reciprocal Research Network (RRN)** is a technology-supported research network comprised of communities, researchers, and cultural institutions. It will enable geographically dispersed users and institutions – including originating communities, academics and museum staff - to carry out individual or collaborative cultural heritage research projects. The **RRN** will facilitate the reciprocal sharing of information between users and the institutions holding objects associated with the cultural background of those users. It will provide new methods for both community and academic researchers to conduct collaborative research projects. It will also bring the ability to undertake research projects, currently primarily within the domain of universities, museums and other international institutions, to originating communities.

(www.moa.ubc.ca/RRN/about_overview.html, February 1, 2009)

The **RRN** is being developed under the direction of the **RRN Steering Group**, made up of members from the co-developing First Nations communities and MOA staff. It will eventually link MOA’s collection with those of other major ethnographic museums and repositories – local and abroad. These partner institutions include: the UBC Lab of Archaeology (LOA), the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM), the Glenbow Museum, the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC), the McCord Museum, the Royal Ontario Museum, the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), the National Museum of Natural History, the Burke Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum, and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The three co-developing communities will also
be integrated into the network, increasing their access to information about heritage resources and enabling them to share information with staff at the repositories that house these items. Early pilot projects were conducted at Musqueam by Terry Point, who at the time was a MOA intern. His work involved recording oral history in English and hənqəminəm to interpret specific museum objects.

In addition to these museum-based ventures, MOA curators Dr. Sue Rowley and Dr. Jennifer Kramer, also participate in community based programming by co-hosting a program called *Musqueam 101* with Leona Sparrow. The program is held at the Musqueam Administration Building, on Wednesday nights, for adult community members throughout the academic year. This program, originally co-hosted by the late Dr. Michael Ames, brings researchers from a variety of academic departments into the community to discuss topics ranging from colonization to indigenous land use and culture. Since 2007, the summer months have also brought students from the Department of Anthropology into the community for archaeological fieldschools – following in the footsteps of the late Dr. Borden, whose students conducted similar research in the community in the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s.

It is not surprising given the increasing number of collaborations that have been occurring between Musqueam and UBC, through MOA and other research units, that these experiences shaped community responses to interview questions. Several participating community members had accessed Musqueam collections in far away repositories, such as: the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec; the American Museum of Natural History in New York; and the new National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.. Despite this breadth of experience, their
responses to interview questions were largely predetermined by their experiences at MOA, the institution with whom they have the most intense relationship.

Conversations held with community members reflected a high level of satisfaction with MOA, which was expressed as a sense of ownership over the museum and the community representations housed there. Several participants even suggested that MOA now took its direction from the community itself. Education initiatives, exhibits, and the museum’s ongoing renewal project all elicited a positive response. However, when it came to critiques the museum’s gift shop seemed to be one area of operations where community members felt they had not yet gained a satisfactory level of visibility. At the reception held for the visit of stone T’xwelátse, in the spring of 2008, Musqueam delegates expressed dissatisfaction after viewing the displays in MOA’s newly renovated gift shop. Because the museum sits upon Musqueam traditional territory, many in the community feel it should do more to feature the work of Musqueam community members.

The gift shop was also a topic of discussion at the end of the focus group I hosted in 2006. My gifts for the focus group participants were purchased at the MOA gift shop after consultations with the community liaison. They included aprons with designs by Haisla artist Lyle Wilson, which were wrapped around MOA cookbooks, and an assortment of thermal mugs adorned with the emblems and motifs of other northern NWC artists. Although focus group participants were pleased with the gifts, they provoked some heated discussion amongst those present about the lack of similar representation for Musqueam artists. However, since these two events have transpired MOA has begun to take steps to increase Musqueam presence in the Gift Shop by

When it comes to working with other museums, both near and far, responses were less enthusiastic – ranging from a lack of familiarity with other museums to dissatisfaction with the types of communication occurring. The *Totems to Turquoise* (2004) exhibit, produced by the American Museum of Natural History in New York, was given as an example by Terry Point. The nephew of featured artist Susan Point recalled (in an interview that took place on December 18, 2006):

> We were in New York when they were showing “*Totems to Turquoise,*” the one that’s here now, the one in Vancouver and it was the preliminary. It was just ready to be exhibited in the next week or so and we saw the bios of some of the artists from here, and the person who they were writing about wouldn’t have liked what they were saying. So a couple of phone calls, and we had it edited, luckily just before it was shown. And I’ve seen that, and I’ve heard from people, you know that have been involved with the show, that it has happened a lot on the way through. So I think the communication could be a lot better in those institutions, the further you get east.

Sharon Fortney:

So they tended to consult more… They were working with the Haida and the Southwest groups, and then everybody else they just sort of wrote their labels for them?

Terry Point:

Yeah exactly. So there wasn’t any communication, the artist had no prior communication, until we actually got there and saw the exhibit and the panels that were [going to] go out, which is – You know, in this day and age, with the communication networks that we do have… I know artists are hard to get a hold of, but I’m pretty sure they could have gotten a hold of them, because it took us 20 minutes to sort out that problem while we were there.

It just took a phone call, right. I think that’s still – like they’re still lagging behind, but I think it’s a proximity thing too. And like, now they have… We were at the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian down in Washington which was a pretty historical event – the fact that they’ve actually got a museum now that’s dedicated to the people of North America, the First Peoples,
is you know unique to see. Especially an institution with so much money. [Laughs].

Sharon Fortney:

Yeah, that’s a novelty isn’t it? [Laughs].

Terry Point:

Yeah, a museum with money.

In the example detailed above, the lack of artist consultation is attributed to distance, but it may also be a reflection of the different styles of presentation used for art exhibits versus ethnographic ones. *Totems to Turquoise* dealt exclusively with Native American jewellery from the Northwest Coast and the American Southwest. The style of presentation was very much that of a contemporary art show, despite the inclusion of some older pieces – including a Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelet from the collections of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard. The artists who participated in a cultural exchange – Northwest Coast artists going to the American Southwest and vice-versa, were the focal point of the exhibit and its text. To create a context for these new works, pieces made by other artists from their respective culture areas (both recent and ancient) were borrowed from museum collections worldwide. Musqueam artist Susan Point was among those featured in this latter portion of the exhibit, and was among those not contacted by the exhibit team.

The remainder of this chapter contains excerpts from interviews conducted with Musqueam community members about their experiences with museums. These experiences and opinions are presented with minimal editing. For example, responses to specific questions were grouped together from individual transcripts, but were not
shortened. For some of the questions there are fewer responses, because participants sometimes chose to skip a question if they felt they had already covered it in a previous response. Also, since interviews were unstructured, they did not always utilise the same set of questions, but instead departed in different directions to address the specific experiences of the participant. Excerpts from some of the following responses have already appeared in preceding pages, but have been repeated to convey the full context of each community member’s thoughts on a specific theme or question.

*Have you participated in any museum projects, such as exhibits or public programs, and if so who initiated contact and how was it done?*

**Leona Sparrow, Director of Treaty, Lands and Resources:**

Well, the Musqueam community has participated in many museum projects with the Vancouver Museum, the Museum of Anthropology, also the Vancouver Art Gallery … There have been individual participants who have worked with the Richmond Museum, and the band is now engaging in working with the Richmond Museum.

We’ve had connections with the Delta Museum and the Hastings Mill Museum. Hastings Mill because of a display that was… it had some human remains, so I went down and talked to them. Delta Museum was more a matter of curiosity. We don’t have anything in their museum.

I guess community members have been to the Hastings Mill Museum. I don’t know about the Delta Museum. What type of connection has happened…or who initiated contact? It’s been both ways. It’s been… let’s see… It’s been the curators and Directors contacting the band, and the band staff, and at times community members contacting the museums.  
(Interviewed August 2, 2006)

**Debra Sparrow, Weaver and Museum Educator:**

I’d have to say that my first experience with museums Rose [Point] gave to me. Rose was working – I don’t know what job you were doing at that time, but the call went out to the community to work at the museum – the new museum… I don’t remember how old I was – seventeen? fifteen? I don’t know. I must have been seventeen or eighteen and
they were just moving into the new museum. Everything was coming from the archaeology building so everything was still boxed. So Rose put the call out and I came to the call not really knowing what I was going to do.

So I spent that summer – I think the woman that I worked with was Inge. She was Swedish… she was at the museum. And we spent that summer opening everything up and hanging everything and putting it into its cases and you know at that time I wasn’t very aware of really what I was doing. I liked the job. I was really taken by the Northwest Coast because I really didn’t know a lot about it. Never really left Musqueam, right? I was in awe of it, so it was a real experience for me to have that opportunity and a lot of times I used to sit and talk about everything we were doing. So that was kind of my first experience with the museum.

I didn’t really put a lot of thought into it at the time because I was young, but when I think back upon it now, I think, “Wow, what an opportunity it was to be there.” Um, that really brings you quickly into, you know, where I’m at now in terms of thinking about do those belongings belong there? You know, handling them at the time we talked a lot about spirit, her and I, because she came from a country where spirit too was important to her. And we wondered, you know, opening those containers and taking out everything that had been collected. We wondered ourselves at that time, what else was coming from the boxes? And you know those kinds of conversations went on and even more now thinking about it myself that maybe it really touched me in my spirit to begin a journey of, you know, doing what I’m doing now. And my experience in becoming interested in what, you know, is considered artwork now takes a different understanding for me, because I don’t believe what I do is art. I believe that I am creating and connecting to what our people were doing in their lives, everyday lives, it wasn’t art, it was who we were. And, that all ties into what you’re doing, you know, so it’s not about creating art like making blankets or making designs, Salish designs, to me it’s not art, it’s a part of who we are. And, now we have pieces back in the museum – I mean weaving was gone for 85 years. There was only one weaving in there at that time, now we have a collection happening and, a lot of people feel uneasy about what may…what’s there, what they’ve got in there…in the museum itself.

So my experience there was first when I was younger and then you know now when we did our first exhibit at the museum, called um… **Hands of Our Ancestors**, and had that experience there, and then working with the Musqueam Museum School now and Jill [Baird]. Jill has an exhibit out there now. So, you know personally I’m two ways about what they own or what they do at the museum. I went to a conference in the late 80’s in New York about this specific topic, and a lot of North American Aboriginal people – First Nations people, I think had to go through a real anger stage about their belongings in these museums and yet on one hand if we didn’t have them there, we wouldn’t have anything to go on. All these blankets in which we’ve researched, or what the late Paula Gustafson researched, if she didn’t do that in these museums, if the museums didn’t collect them in the early years 1700 - 1800s, we would have nothing to go by, nothing to verify. So in one way we’re upset that they’re there and no one pays any attention to them, in Russia and Scotland and England and everywhere else, but on the other hand we
can call on them to verify what our people were doing which was amazing. Amazing! So, I’ll stop there. (Interviewed August 16, 2006)

**Rose Point, Elder and Educator:**

I did some volunteer work with the Vancouver Museum back in the 19… oh golly, 70s – mid 70s. I was going to university, but volunteered for maybe an hour and a half twice a week and that was… quite interesting. Describing donations and then, in those days it was before computers, put them on cards, put them in a file, and it was real good to see all the donations that came in and I didn’t have anything to do with you know storage or anything, but just with the cards. And I helped with the training of the docents. I found that interesting. Taught them how to – I can remember when I first tried to teach them how to cut a fish, you know? I cut myself. [Laughs]. Anyway, that was fun. And cooking fish in one of those boxes with hot rocks, that was really interesting. Of course I had to be taught how to do that and then they wanted me to go down to… Where’s that place at the peninsula? That reserve? Makah. Yeah there, to teach them how to cook in those boxes, because they had some there.

My children were small. I couldn’t travel. But I think I should have forced myself to do it, it would have been quite interesting too. I think it would have been good for the people down there to have another First Nations person show them how it was done.

And…it was good to see behind the scenes, all the collections in the basement of the Vancouver Museum. And the documentation of letters and so on, all those that came in and I would imagine they’re still sitting there … But before the Museum of Anthropology was built, I didn’t work with them, but we were always – he did a lot of work here at Musqueam so they’d go and visit him, go visit him at where he stored the collections at UBC.

Yeah. He [Dr. Charles Borden] had them all in some sort of storage, but I can remember how dusty it was and really primitive storage areas there. And I’m really glad that the museum was built. How things were kept, but it’s still… They’re still working on fixing it up. And about the things that they’re storing, they don’t… In those days when they collected them, really they just took them because of the Potlatch Ban. They just took them with no history. And this is… This is what the museums deprived of us. It is that there’s no history on them, where and who owned whatever artefact that they have. I have a goat wool blanket and I know that it belonged to my great grand aunt and it was probably made in maybe 1850, and I still have that. Sometimes I think I would like to give it to the museum for safe holding, but then I don’t know if my great grand aunt would appreciate that. She was born in Spuzzum.

Yeah there’s… It would be nice if they had names to them. But that’s they way it was in those days. We didn’t have names because they didn’t know our names. Most of us had you know First Nations names and…that didn’t count. That’s the only problem that I have with the museum.
The volunteer work was just – a notice went out requesting volunteers so I did that. But then with the Vancouver Museum again in the 70s, I just was a friend of Lynn [Maranda] and so I’d just give her a call and suggest something and then go ahead and do it.

(Interviewed August 16, 2006)

**Larry Grant, Elder and Language Instructor:**

The first experience I had with the museum was when we went to New York in the middle 80s… We were travelling with the weavers, the weaver’s group, we got to – I never knew we could go into the Archives. That’s my first experience of going into archives and finding things that were attributed to our people and seeing how great their work was, you know, for the time. And being able to see… and what surprised me was a lot of the spirit dancing stuff. It was out in New York, the Museum of Natural History. And then going down to Washington D.C., at that same time, down in D.C. and getting into the archives, that’s my first experience with museums.

And then coming back this way, it’s not until I started the language program, working in the language program, that I got involved with the Museum of Anthropology. And what I’m doing there… what I’ve done there is actually go into the archives also and help identify things, like the Sxwaiwke stuff and some other spirit dancing uniforms, they’re there too. And we helped to identify the ownership aspect of things, but it’s a bit changed from when we were kids. Because when we were kids things were just put out on display, and [it was] said this is the moment, and nothing else was really there. And today watching how the museum in Washington D.C. has come around to where it actually listens to the community as to how they want to do the displays, how the want their belongings displayed, it has to be representative of the community, and that’s good to see that happen at MOA also – meaningful consultation with the aboriginal people as to what should or should not be shown and how the belongings were wanted to be shown began here at MOA before NMAI.

They’re asking our community how we want it displayed, what we want displayed, what we don’t want displayed. Which as a young person, the museum would do whatever they wanted. And now they have a little bit of sensitivity. Cultural sensitivity built into it. So it’s good – when I see the weavings out there, that collection that’s out there [at MOA]. But the one that I think is quite relevant today… in referring back to how the museum is becoming sensitive, culturally sensitive to the community, is that “Washing Away the Tears.” In the “To Wash Away Our Tears” display,” we’re represented as a living entity rather than a historical artefact.

I was contacted as one of the Elders here to sit on some of the expansion committees that MOA was doing, and contacting the three or four communities that were involved, in the artefacts that were being stored and could possibly be moved. That contact came through Leona [Sparrow] from a request from Jill [Baird] I think. I’m not quite sure who requested that. And that was more to do with moving, how to handle the objects that
were there, our belongings, to how we wanted them handled, who you wanted them handled by. And what to do with some of the ancestral remains that are there, the skeletal remains. So that was really through MOA contacting the band.

Also while I was there, I was upset with trying to get in contact with a lady named Ann… Stevenson regarding a Sxwai̱xwe mask. I couldn’t get a direct answer from her, and I couldn’t get a direct answer from my brother who was the contact person. So I expressed my frustrations there and all of a sudden they said that they came up with an alternate name – contact person, so I was the alternate contact person for the Grant family’s Sxwai̱xwe regalia. And … The reason I was upset was that I wanted to carve one and I wanted to see an old one of our family’s to replicate. And that’s really who’s been contacting me now, it is between Jill of MOA and Leona.

Also Rose Point contacted me when the Vancouver Museum was doing the basket display including Musqueam, Squamish and Burrard bands baskets to help identify baskets and to represent Musqueam as a speaker on the opening night of that display. (Interviewed August 16, 2006)

**Terry Point, Conservationist and Cultural Researcher:**

Well I started working with the Museum of Anthropology in 1997. When we developed a tour for – I was then working on the stream restoration project with the David Suzuki Foundation and Musqueam. And we tried to create an ecotourism tour, and part of that was to develop a tour at the museum. We had a general guided tour that I used as a base, but I made it more of a Musqueam tour. So we created, with Jill Baird, we created a tour there, which started [at the museum]. We did a tour there and then we did a tour of the creek. And then we had a lunch served. So that’s how I got initially involved with the museum.

And then a few years later, I did an internship where we just went over all the material that Musqueam has [at the museum] and created an access handbook… Well we gathered all the information, and most of the materials that are in the access book now, and then the next year we had a full year internship about the renewal project where the access book was finished. And… Yeah it was started… the summer of ’02 and then finished finally in ’04 and distributed to the community. So, it just shows how to access the materials and the people who you need to contact if you want to access archives or the curator, or education, or conservator, or… Because there’s also special objects that need special precautions, so we put that in the book as well. There’s some things that are obviously just on display, and then most of the material is behind the scenes and you need to contact people to get to see them.

So, that’s kind of how I started, and then last year I did another year internship about the **Reciprocal Research Network**, which will be an access database that will be kind of almost the same as the access book, but in a database format. And there’s three partner groups, First Nations partner groups, there’s us Musqueam, Sto:lo, and the U’mista
Cultural Centre and about 14 museums across Canada and the United States and a couple in the U.K. So we’re developing that as a database and my part of it was to create a pilot project on – to see the issues that Musqueam would have in adapting to this system, which would be huge. And what our resources could be to implement into the network, so I did a video project on the story of the sturgeon.

Auntie Sue – Susan Point, she’s got a print at the museum that depicts the story of the origin of the sturgeon… and here at Musqueam we’ve got the story in both English and in həńqəmiɲəm, the language over here. So I recorded three [versions] – it had a written version as well so that we can implement it into the database. So separate people telling the story in both English and in həńqəmiɲəm and we did that project last year and it went quite well, but it was a difficult process. We actually interviewed them in the museum. Then we created a mock up of what our database might look like through power point, where you can actually visualize the artefact itself and then the data that the museum has and then go into the video, into what we have here – the story.

So that was kind of cool. So that was kind of something that Musqueam could implement into the whole reciprocal part of the research network. So they have the museum data, and then what we have here to go behind it, and then it can also be used as a language tool as well, because we did it in two different ways. We do it straight through where the people I interviewed told the story, straight through in English, and in həńqəmiɲəm, and then we did it the way that they actually teach the language in numbered sets, like small sentences and paragraphs from one to seventeen or whatever. So they did one in English, and then they read it, and then… said the line in həńqəmiɲəm, so that you could actually follow the English along with the həńqəmiɲəm so you can understand a little bit… because part of the renewal project also has an oral history lab, which would be like really useful if we had some sort of stories and different… tools that we can use. So that would also be part of the whole renewal project and not necessarily just the reciprocal research network.

I had some prior [film training], in other projects, but I did some as part of the internship. I got to take a multimedia series at Langara College… so we got video editing training, but not necessarily how to shoot. I’ve had some training in how to shoot videos before, and then along with the multi-media training, so we did all of the Adobe products… We got trained in Premier Pro, which is a video editing system. I had training in that, so I used that to implement the whole system. And then Skooker Broome, the designer and media person at the museum, taught me how to use the camera that was there and certain lighting techniques and different things. So he set up, helped me set up for the interviews, and get a base training on how to use the equipment and how to shoot the actual video (Interviewed December 18, 2006).
Victor Guerin, Member of Musqueam Language and Culture committee:

I worked with, in 1980, I worked with a fellow named David Rozen on the – what was known as the Coast Salish Research Project. And what that was, was a project researching Coast Salish culture – Central Coast Salish culture actually, which is basically the people centring around Vancouver and Southeast Vancouver Island. And the aim was to create a tour of the city of Vancouver and through the Museum of Anthropology a slide presentation on Coast Salish culture.

And then again in 1983 I worked with the same fellow on a project known as the Vancouver Indian History Project. And that was a similar project with a tour of the city of Vancouver and focusing basically on the political history of the aboriginal people of Vancouver, including the indigenous people of the Central Coast Salish and all the other people that came from different parts of the Country and outside the Country that identified as aboriginal people. So it dealt basically with such things as the fact that the first union activity in Burrard Inlet was aboriginally-based and that resulted in the first Union on the Vancouver waterfront, the… it was known as the ILA – The International Lumber Handlers Association, which a lot of people confuse, they think that the International Longshoreman’s Association originally started in Vancouver, which it didn’t. That’s an East Coast entity. One was in ’83 and one was in ’86.

It’s interesting too that the one in 1983 was the first time I actually really got to know David Rozen. I’d seen him around before that time. He did a lot of work with Able Joe from Duncan and also with Wilfred Silvester and few other peoples… people from Vancouver Island. And out of that he – part of that was his Masters work, for his Master’s degree, but out of that work he also accomplished the feat of becoming a fluent speaker of the Island dialect of our language. And I’d had some exposure when I was a kid to programs that my mom had developed here at Musqueam involving our language and… That project, the original Musqueam Language Programme, actually fell apart for various reasons and following that I didn’t really pay all that much attention to our language until – until after I had met with David and gotten to know him in 1983 and found out that he was a fluent speaker of our language and that inspired me, to use the same expression that you just did, sort of lit a fire under me and I thought, you know, if this non-aboriginal guy can learn to speak our language then anyone, like myself, should be able to do so as well.

Ah, the two that I’ve participated with I’ve found out about through… Well the first one actually I found out about through the advertisement. It came out in our band notice. So I responded to it that way. The second one, I wasn’t originally one the people who was prime eligibility for the program. So it started off without me, it was a couple months and then… After I think it was 2 months, I’m not sure exactly now, but one of the participants dropped out and then David Rozen phoned me up and asked me if I’d like to come and participate. Apparently, he had wanted me there in the first place, but because of the eligibility criteria on the project he couldn’t bring me in at that outset (Interviewed April 23, 2007).
Vivian Campbell, Weaver and Museum Educator:

Initially I started working with the museum when I was teenager in the Native Youth Project, or the Native Youth Program. It was a summer employment program that employed high school students and taught us how to do public presentations and work hands on with cedar bark and learn traditional methods of our way of living. And so I spent a few years doing that and worked in many capacities. So I spent a few years doing that and then – so I’ve actually been working for a number of years since then, so probably over 25 years I guess or about 20 years now I’ve been working with them in different capacities.

I joined the Musqueam weaving program in 1997, Debra and Robin Sparrow taught that program and through that we became involved again working – being able to go and view blankets and learn more about weaving and eventually that turned into our Musqueam Museum School program that we’ve been, Debra and I co-educate for the past 9 years now. And that’s a public programs, education and public program, I guess, its run through the museum in conjunction with us as co-educators to deliver history on Musqueam as well as our traditional weaving.

So it’s a six week program and the kids – it’s revolved around a grade four social studies program, for their component of aboriginal studies, and so schools sign up with the museum and then we just plug away and go through the school term.

So sort of coming full circle now through working in the Native Youth Program, I really enjoyed working with cedar bark and that’s something that I just carried on through that. I really enjoyed the hands on and being able to go and actually strip bark, so through all of that and working in the community, and now going back and giving workshops to the Native Youth Program, at the First Nations House of Learning, with the NITEP program (Native Indian Teacher Education Program), an all over – actually all over the lower mainland. I get called into schools to do bark programs, but yes, you know it’s kind of come full circle to be able to learn and then just take it on my own, and then now be able to come back and share that with other programs and students. It’s pretty cool (Interviewed June 2, 2007).
Have these partnerships/relationships been maintained, and if so, in what ways?

Leona Sparrow:

The Vancouver Museum there’s been an ongoing attempt to develop a working relationship. It goes back many, many years. The late Della Kew actually worked at the Vancouver Museum, as did Rose Point. They worked as docents or community contacts to teach visitors and school groups about First Nations issues. As far as displays are concerned, it’s been difficult to make that a partnership. It’s a work in progress actually.

I personally was involved in a display called “Making a Living, Making a Life.” I was contacted by the Curator of the display at the time and the decision had already been made – what the focus of the display would be and the resource materials that were to be used and one of those resource materials was actually my thesis. So I had to do a considerable amount of work to have the community and family portrayal… seen in an objective way relative to the rest of the display.

Okay, that’s the Vancouver Museum. Following that there was actually a similar display done, just on my family. And… based on my thesis, and we were able to negotiate that display travelling to Musqueam for a period of time and had a little opening here on the reserve. That was quite successful.

There were specific things that were negotiated, like copies of family photographs, those were returned to me, or to whoever had loaned them, and the panels – the boards that were used in the display were returned to the community. So that one worked out nicely.

Since then we’ve tried to work collaboratively with the Vancouver Museum on a number of things. There’s the basketry display that was facilitated by the Vancouver Museum involving the three First Nations: Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish. And we tried to develop a type of protocol agreement around that, but it was never finalized.

I’m not the only person who’s been involved in working with the Museum of Anthropology. My direct connect to the museum was before it was in the current building, when it was still in the library basement. And at that time, oh I didn’t have much standing anywhere – I guess with the museum people. I didn’t find it a very… helpful relationship. I was just basically a worker in there. I didn’t even get contact with the items from our own community, or our own culture. So that was kind of disappointing.

…The museum came before I became a student there, and as a student I found the connection with First Nations people was not very deep. And it wasn’t a partnership, it was a relationship of the museum and the community, and it didn’t seem to be a… It was the experts and the Indians, I guess. That inclusiveness in developing a relationship was not really firmly established. It was still the museum people are the experts. They would
try to… I guess present their own views when they made displays and presentations. First Nations voice was not apparent at that point.

And in terms of early exhibits, I don’t think we were considered a focal point – the Musqueam people, because it was a preference on the part of some curators to deal with other cultural groups, and they got the focus.

So Musqueam was just… [the museum] sat within our traditional territory, but we weren’t honoured, visible. I know that at a certain point, again Della Kew, was involved in working at the Museum of Anthropology and I believe she was documenting the collection pieces. Michael Kew who was married into the Musqueam community, a Professor of Anthropology, and his classes taught an overview of Coast Salish cultural, traditional values. So there was some exposure to the students, I’m not sure how far that went in terms of the rest of the teaching staff or museum staff. We did find it difficult to have Musqueam recognised. For example, the Haida houses were moved from the park on Marine Drive to the back of the museum and I don’t believe that Musqueam was informed or invited to attend in any way. A number of totem poles were also raised at the back of the museum and Delbert Guerin, who was I believe Chief of the day, wasn’t informed, and when he was out fishing I think, he was asked for a comment and he didn’t know anything about it. Even within the museum, Musqueam was not visible. So it’s been an educational process – a learning process on both sides, in order to move from the museum staff to who Musqueam is, what our culture is about, and the fact that we would like to be recognised because it is our territory.

Anyway the relationship was difficult to establish, not because there was any resistance on the part of the museum staff, it was just we were changing the historical course of museums generally. And it was difficult, from our perspective, probably overwhelming from the museum perspective to make that shift in thinking to involving First Nations people in the actual decision making – the consultation process. Eventually we were successful in being represented at museum functions as the host nation, like if a new acquisition was being presented, a new totem pole for example being placed, Musqueam was asked to welcome the guests. So this developed as an event, whenever there was an opening at the museum, there was a foot in the door to try and bring Musqueam presence more to the forefront (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Debra Sparrow:**

Well MOA’s become… Their relationship with us, I think has become more than just a museum relationship because they’ve gotten to know us all through *Musqueam 101* or, you know, on a personal basis, and now they understand more about community because when there’s ceremonies they come and they’ve become more than just museum faces.

And, I think we respect them back for that… for showing their ability to come into the community and really care, not just be a museum face. Although sometimes that happens because everybody’s so busy working anyway right? With our lives.
So I think for them it’s a real education for them too, to not only get a degree in working in museums, but actually understand what the people are about that they’re working close too and whose land they’re on. And through Leona and her intervention, being a representative through protocol, she insures that that always takes place. And so, you know, I think they’ve had…they’ve sort of stood up and paid attention to that whereas another museum, in a different situation, not close to a reservation might feel differently. Because I know Jill [Baird] went to Paris a few years back and I was supposed to go with her, but I couldn’t because I was sick, and she said it was amazing how the Paris Museum really felt removed from the nature of – the whole relationship between the real people. And that to me is something that I think the museum at UBC is – has a reputation as far as I’m concerned – is that they, you know, are a part of our community. They’re not just there working at their jobs. Their jobs are more valuable to them than just a document, so that’s what I feel about that (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Victor Guerin:**

Well my immediate thought is to the Museum of Anthropology and in recent decades we’ve built a fairly good relationship with them and it can still be improved, there’s still a ways to go, but I’m quite happy with that relationship between ourselves and the UBC Museum of Anthropology. But on the whole with museums… in terms of other museums in the world, I’m going to say that I’m not all that happy with our relationships with them. Again it’s starting to change but museums are not – they don’t take a lot of responsibility towards the communities from whom they collected their objects or from whom objects have been collected for them. There’s been some movement. You know about things like the U’mista Cultural Society where they’ve repatriated objects back to the originating community.

So there is some movement… in terms of responsibility towards communities in museums around the world, but in most museums in the world there’s a long, long ways to go. Lot’s of them are still in the mindset of the early 20th century, and the late 19th century, where indigenous communities are sort of oddities to be studied or however you’d like to put it. They don’t look upon us as – it’s almost like we’re not people (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

**Terry Point:**

Well, with the Museum of Anthropology in the past ten years or so there’s been a really…a good relationship. We’ve had a community liaison for UBC in general, and with the museum, which is Leona Sparrow who is the Director of our Treaty office and who I work for now. And they’ve actually got a memorandum of understanding, or obligation, and we… that is signed by both the chief and council and the museum. Actually they just signed a document a MOA [Memorandum of Agreement] with the entire university last week. So now they’ve got an affiliation with the tribe and that
affiliation with UBC, but they had one directly with the museum. And it’s been said by
the Director [Anthony Shelton] on a number of occasions that the museum is a
Musqueam museum. They kind of hold our stuff for… They maintain our artefacts for
us, not necessarily the other way around I guess. And, um, working with… Working
these last few years, getting a chance to see other institutions and how they deal with the
affiliation with us, like the RBCM in Victoria which has got quite a few artefacts of ours.
Um, I realised that it’s not as good as – probably proximity means a lot, but I mean we
went over there last summer and realised that all of the artefacts through the treaty
process should have been faxed to us, and so that we know exactly, and the identity and
different things, what artefacts are there, but somehow that got lost in the shuffle and we
never got one. So we ended up having to redo that whole process that was probably a 4
year old process. But now we’ve got new ones, so we’ve got all the artefacts and all the
details and stuff from that and when we were over there we actually – they taught us how
to use their database too, how to access their database, because it’s… [online].

Yeah, online the database. They gave us some forms and things so we can actually, you
know, kind of guide us through it because trying to navigate through that database is not
fun. If you don’t know where you’re going it’s not – it’s not fun.

It’s not like when you actually have the documentation and you can look through it. Then
it’s… then it’s quite easy. And I think the farther east you go too, and it’s like the
different institutions, the communication’s like rare, if any at all. (Interviewed April 23,
2007).

Vivian Campbell:

I think now they’re working towards building a strong relationship in that they want to be
respectful of how things are housed and what they do with them, how they’re
displayed… I think our community specifically has been working on a relationship with
the Museum of Anthropology for a number of years now and you know I think it’s a
respectful relationship and I think you know they work very hard to ensure that. They
meet protocol in that they’re respectful of everything that is there, as well as whatever
projects we have going on here in the community as well as within the museum.

We’ve had – well I, myself, have had personal experience with the Vancouver Museum.
We did an Honouring the Basket Makers exhibit a few years ago. It ran I believe from
2002 until 2004. It was about a year and half in length. I was able to create a basket for
that exhibit. It was a collaboration between three Nations, and again that was a respectful
relationship and there’s been some really positive things that have come out of it.
Through that exhibit we’ve been able to create like teaching kits, you know we’re able to
put bark pieces in and that’s now been returned to the community. So that’s pretty
impressive. It was kind of nice to be able to see my basket come back here. I just kind of
thought it was staying there, I had no idea, I didn’t remember that it was coming back so
it was quite a nice surprise to have her come in and go there’s the basket. Cool.
I think it’s a total teamwork of collaboration in that museum staff work really hard to be, you know like I say, to be respectful and ensuring that protocol is met and the community in turn works really hard to you know always learn and always do the very best that they can to accommodate and do what the museum would like as well (Interviewed June 2, 2007).

**In your opinion when did your community start to work with museums and what influenced the decision?**

**Leona Sparrow:**

Probably beyond my memory. We sort of tried to work with museums and the crux of the difficulty was that we either weren’t being represented at all, or the representation that was given to our cultural group, and our community, was not done in a way that was satisfactory to community members. The First Nations people were looking for ways to express themselves and felt that museums were not representing history and culture from a First Nations perspective. That message had to get out somehow and the First Nations community wanted to participate in that representation. There was a huge uproar in the 80s and it resulted in a national conference where museums and First Nations were represented and there was a paper that came out of that with a number of recommendations. The *Task Force Report*. And to my knowledge, the *Task Force Report*, like a lot of reports, is information on paper that may or may not be implemented and in a lot of cases it’s not been implemented. It’s at the discretion of the institution and involves the communities.

It was an ongoing process that resulted in those incidents of recognition coming to fruition. It didn’t just happen automatically. It took a lot of time and energy, initiative, and door opening to make those incidents happen and it happened around the same time the *Task Force Report*. From my view, it was not a result of Musqueam changing it. It was probably a result of the museum changing its perspective somewhat. There was also a lot of fall out from the Calgary Olympics. And there was “The Spirit Sings” display that came about before that and that was also instrumental in bringing that *Task Force Report* to fruition. I think that the fall out from that display made a lot of museums, curators, directors, step back and really think about what they were doing (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Debra Sparrow:**

I think since the day Dr. Borden appeared. I remember going with my dad down to – I didn’t know what it was though, I’d just go with him, wherever they would find artefacts. All over the Chinese gardens then we’d collect them up and keep them and then all of the sudden we’d be driving down to Dr. Borden to bring them downstairs and that’s when I
started, you know, seeing – I guess I understood that there was a relationship. I didn’t know why we had to give it to him, but we did.

I know I was little. I was born in ’54, so it would probably be the early 60s. It was probably before that though, you know, that he would have had a relationship with my grandfather. When he was Chief I suppose. Yeah, because [Charles Borden] was around here, I think he took a real interest in coming down and meeting the people. It would be interesting to understand why the people here would even want to give him anything. That we so willingly gave whatever we found instead of keeping it to ourselves and saying, you know, “these are… they belong to our people.” You know and that’s something that I have conversations with people out at the museum, when we’re having conversations, and Larry was sensitive to it too, is that they’re not objects they’re people’s belongings. So we can’t call it an object, you know. So when we’re talking about everything that’s been taken from the ground or contact period, you know, like Rose mentioned that they didn’t catalogue everything properly. Well they didn’t want to, because then they would have been accountable for how they came about having it in the first place. I don’t think they wanted people to know – that they probably either just took it or you know forced people to give it to them.

I think museums, as well as any entity, without really saying it, there’s a question “Well what’s in it for me?” You know on the other side of the double edged sword is the fact that you have a good relation with them, but what’s in it for them. Does it give them a better reputation? Again the closer, the more knowledge, how much can they take or how much will they take? How much do we want to share? How much have we shared? We’re, you know, it amazes me how open we are as aboriginal people after everything that’s happened to us. Yet I suppose it is because we need to re-educate people because for those 50 – 60 – 70 years that we were sort of somewhat in a silent time and where Rose [Point] is talking about that even some of the younger people, like my age and a little older, and they’re young in terms of the older ones that are gone, we didn’t value anything. Why would we? If we found some arrowheads in the ground and we found out they were worth money we’d go sell them. I mean that’s what it was about, it was about money. I mean the whole mindset of our people had changed by then. So instead of, and that’s what I said earlier, instead of us bringing them home and valuing them and keeping them where we think they should be, we’d rather if we could make money from them we would. Same as the masks now, the value of the spiritual teachings behind the Sxwaixwe and the masks, was that it could make us money too.

When you look at the Northwest Coast people now they’ve exploited themselves everywhere – their masks in every gallery, and they’re all mimicking the originals…and they’re beautiful and yet, you know, its business. And that’s why I’ve never sold to a gallery in my day. I’ve never sold any of my work to a gallery because I’m not in a position to say that I’m doing my work for money. I don’t do that, if somebody commissions something from me in their private home or the museum, it’s got a reason for being then I’ll do it, but I won’t sell to a gallery and have them say, “I want five purple ones or I’m not buying it.” So I wouldn’t give them that opportunity, because my work is to me too valuable (Interviewed August 16, 2006).
Larry Grant:

I don’t know how you mean by relationship – as a working relationship, being sensitive to the community’s interests, or a relationship where we knew that the Curators or the Anthropologists that were collecting things. That would be not as personal a relationship, I don’t think, as what’s been happening in maybe the last 20 years where they’ve finally are becoming sensitive to our cultural needs, where we don’t want certain objects displayed… and I know, probably in the 1950s, or late 1940s, some of our family members were selling their masks to the curators, to the museum, or replicating to be displayed in the museum. And as time goes by, it becomes sensitive to not have those belongings out there for the public to see because, the public itself – at large, didn’t respect the cultural aspect of our belongings. How special it was to our culture. And our communities began to say, “Well why are we displaying this?” And the museum agreed to not display those objects, you know, masks. Today, if you go down there and ask them now, they’ll put things away for you and not show them to the public (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

Rose Point:

I think that as far as the sales of things go, you have to think of the history of our education. Went to the residential schools, everything pertaining to a culture was called heathen. So this is why the sales have been – the 50s, 60s, people would sell things downtown and I was buying them, because the museum wasn’t buying them. So they’d sell them to curiosity shops downtown and I started buying them, so now I have about a thousand artefacts. When your brothers and everybody… when they get ready to go to Cultus Lake, or in canoe races, they’d go and get artefacts and bring it to me.

So you have to think of our history as to why these people were not looking after their regalia, their things like that. I guess they wanted to get rid of it, because of what the residential school was teaching our people. That they were going to go to hell if they kept it. They’d go to hell if they sang those songs. They’d go to hell if – all these things. So that’s why they were being sold. Not knowing what it meant to our ancestors. You can imagine how some of our people felt – you know this was our grandparent’s things and yet what were the schools telling them. Even if they spoke the language they’d be strapped. So it became, I call it the Broken Arrow Syndrome, where the very thing that you could live by is broken. Your spirit is broken, everything, with the past. So that’s why I think it was so easy for the museums to come and take everything. And other museums, from Europe and elsewhere. It’s because of the residential schools, starting in 1884. And I think that’s why we need to maintain a close relationship with the museums. Keep them on track (Interviewed August 16, 2006).
**Terry Point:**

I think we’ve always been at least working with [MOA] in some fashion and as for the other museums I couldn’t… even speculate on how involved they were with different artefacts. But the new…Museum of Anthropology was built in 1976. The current one, and then before it was under the library, but the Hawthornes had communication with the band council and with the band itself. And so the relationship wasn’t that new, the museum that’s here has been better I guess than, from what my personal experience and what I know about the history of the museum, than the Vancouver Museum. I’m not sure how like the relationship was there. I think I’ve only been a couple of times.

When I think about it, like any time I’m writing a paper about the importance of it, it’s not only something that stores our artefacts, but its also like a reconciliation almost of what had happened with the ban of the potlatch and different things and how most of those artefacts actually got there. I think it’s kind of a, it’s almost like a healing process for us too to have these partnerships and relationships and be able to bring back human remains or our things if um…if we needed to do that. And to work closely with museums, and to understand their policies, so this whole institution that’s like quite scary I guess in some respects, and we’re trying to build bridges so that we can get past that mentality of …going into a huge institution and being kind of scared of sharing anything, of sharing your information I think, because your scared that they might keep it or… just use it.

For fear, because it’s happened before and the thing of it is we’re now just trying to work more closely with these institutions to try and get away from that, that fear, and then to use some of that information that was misused before and to like actually express a positive view from a First Nations standpoint, which is something that is coming a lot in the near future. And I think we need more people that are working with them, working for museums, which even now you still don’t see it. You know like we’ve had internships. Like I’ve had internships, I’ve worked there for a couple of years – so they give me all this training, but they don’t have a position where you can actually fall into (Interviewed December 18, 2006).

**Victor Guerin:**

I would say it was the early 70’s [that Musqueam began working with museums]… and what influenced it? I would say it was a general state of social upheaval in the time period. You know there were all kinds of things going on with civil rights and civil disobedience toward government and it was a time of confused change. It changed the relationships between the establishment and the general public in a lot of ways and it started a turn around that’s still in progress to this day. Some ethnic communities accomplished more change in that upheaval than others, and I think aboriginal communities lagged quite a ways behind in relation to others. Like for instance, the African American, African Canadian communities, accomplished a lot more change in
that upheaval than the aboriginal community in my perception (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

Do you know the names and dates of any projects that your nation has participated in?

Leona Sparrow:

…Two at the Vancouver Art Gallery. And one of the…and the Haida one recently. It’s on right now. [“Raven Travelling: Two Centuries of Haida Art,” June 10 – September 17, 2006. The VAG website also lists Musqueam artist Susan Point in reference to its current exhibit, “75 Year of Collecting: First Nations Myths and Realities,” May 6 – October 15, 2006].

“Down From the Shimmering Sky” [1998] Musqueam was involved in that. Peter [MacNair] came to Musqueam to ask permission for that show to be put together and presented, and we were featured as a host.

The Richmond Museum…through the Richmond Nature Park, I’m not sure if it’s directly – if they were directly connected, but my grandfather [Ed Sparrow Sr.] was invited to open the Nature House at the Richmond Nature Park. And he made some comments at that time about Musqueam use of the area and gave them the name to the place, and also one of the canneries in Richmond, maybe Britannia – Britannia Shipyard.

But then there is some…some other tape material on fishing…and one of the cannery sites. And then more recently, very recently the Richmond Museum has come…came to the Band and asked if we would be interested in a joint application for Legacy Funding to put on that…to put together some educational materials for Richmond Schools.

Well another aspect of our involvement with the museum is the Native Youth Program. We’ve had quite a few community members go through that for training and it’s been very successful for the majority of them- student participants.

And it was a project to introduce women into the workforce. Women who actually had never been involved with the workforce or who had been out of the workforce for quite a period of time. So we put in a component of that program to have all of the participants spend two weeks at the Museum of Anthropology as kind of a transition place where they could connect with the outside community without having to go too, too far. That was successful in that both – both sides realised that there was a big gap in what their expectations were and how to get those expectations to merge. In the end it was quite successful. … Work study, placement…and “Proud to be Musqueam” evolved from that.

The one big initiative that Musqueam participated in was the Vancouver International Airport. We became involved because the Board of the YVR, which was a new Board,
and the management of the airport was turned over from the Government of Canada to the Vancouver Airport Authority. And so they were redeveloping the terminal, and extending the runways, etc… The Board decided that they would spend a large amount of money to purchase the “Jade Canoe.”

The Bill Reid sculpture. And that terribly offended the majority of the Musqueam community. Not that Bill Reid was being acknowledged, but the fact that the airport would spend that amount of money on a piece of Haida created art and not even acknowledge Musqueam in any way, shape, or form. So we approached the Airport Authority with our concerns, and actually that was the Director of the day, who offered a token amount of money for Musqueam representation and we said, “Ah, no I don’t think that would be appropriate. For us to be represented you have to invest a little energy into finding some resources to be represented properly.” And eventually, a sizable sum was accumulated, but in our view it still doesn’t match the Bill Reid. So our objective was to utilize the resources at hand to our best advantage and make sure Musqueam was well represented. The community was invited to participate in helping to formulate the actual layout where Musqueam would be represented. And the Airport Authority unilaterally decided that we would be visible in the International Arrivals level, and that wasn’t necessarily where Musqueam really wanted to be that’s what was left. So we used community consultation to redefine that space – there were architectural drawings and we said, community members said, “Well you should do this and this and this,” and make some substantial changes and some of those changes were incorporated into the design. And then the community also had very good participation in the artistic representation of the community. Community members were involved in the commissioning process and in the selection process for the artistic representation of the community. But it was specific commissions (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Debra Sparrow:**

The museum in Calgary, the Glenbow, they had an exhibit of ours there [as part of a Northwest Coast gallery] so we went to see it and unveil it. Um, it must have been ’86 or ’85. So they had a few of our contents in there. Um any other museums… Well the Royal Museum in Victoria holds another one of our regalia for the woman that’s in their exhibit there. So, Robyn and I did a dress and a shawl for her. So we sort of worked with um… They contacted us and told us what… the understanding was that people were getting upset about this woman not being clothed so the decided to clothe her and they asked us if we would work with them to come up with regalia that we thought was appropriate for her. So we said, yeah we would. But it wouldn’t be too helpful because from what we understand the women wore skirts and no tops in the summer, so she’d still be without clothes. So we did sort of a tunic style dress for her, so that she would wear either the dress or she could wear the shawl over the dress as well. So we did both. So we did…we worked with that one or I did. But I haven’t, I haven’t really worked with any other museums. The Burke is currently just holding one of our pieces now and we went down to that opening in February. So the Burke… yeah they purchased one of ours, so it’s there now.
Well the *Musqueam Museum School*, the one that I deliver is the one that Jill [Baird] and I worked together and the seed that planted that was “*Weaving Two Worlds Together*” and we added to it. Are you talking about that same school or are you talking about the baskets?

Yeah well it sort of started with the “*Weaving Two Worlds Together*,” then we decided to open it up because there were so many directions we could go in and still can, it’s could like go forever. But we just can’t seem t get anybody behind us. It’s been frustrating for like these seven years we worked on it. It’s full, it’s booked every year. And it’s so positive I don’t understand why we can’t get our community behind that one. But we haven’t so far.

[Re: Canadian Heritage funding] The interesting thing is, I don’t see why we should apply to anywhere because our Band should be putting it – our Band should be embracing it. We should be celebrating it, that it’s that positive and that functional and doing well and the balance between the curriculum and how, you know, Jill and I you know our vision for it to bloom from. It’s worked so well and it’s still going. And it’s not like we had a year off or it didn’t go and we had to come back and fix it, it’s going. So Vivian and I deliver it, we’re the only two we don’t have any back up (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Rose Point:**

[Honouring the Basket Makers] Well that came through as a position. I think I was the only one applied, so, from here, so I got that position so. And that was quite interesting. Yeah. That was in collaboration with Burrard and Squamish so there was three of us working with Lynn. And…I felt our hands were tied, like some things we wanted to do, but no, we couldn’t do it. But it turned out quite nice. And then we put together the Musqueam… Musqueam MOA school package. I worked with MOA on that one. [The *Musqueam Museum School*.] We hired the people to put it together, getting the funds together, and so on. Yep, but I was there as a liaison person and guidance resource person (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Terry Point:**

When I was at the museum we did an exhibit called “*Site to Sight*” and when I was doing the research for that about our place in Steveston and Richmond and Garry Point in particular there just wasn’t any information out there and there’s just no presence of, no physical presence of Musqueam occupation out there. So we’re working now with the city of Richmond and developing a curriculum for – to get that out there and the fact that, you know, the fact that… That is our traditional territory and that land was traditionally used by our people. So that’s a process of steps as well and things that, you know, ways that we can use the training that we got, but it’d be nice, I think… I think ideally there
should be a First Nations person in all the institutions at least so that communication would be there, instead of the way that it is now, sporadically.

I think you know the other thing is it’s still, you know, it’s still the white anthropologist studying the First Nations group. Even though they’re working with us, it’s still going to be – when the paper’s published it’s going to be their name that’s going to be fronting it, right? So I mean it would be nice to have some papers out there – different things out there, that First Nations… From a First Nations perspective in a museum, which is ironic, I guess now, but hopefully in the future it won’t be, it’ll be common practice (Interviewed December 18, 2006).

**Who determined the content of the exhibits that you worked on and were the key messages that you wanted to convey?**

**Leona Sparrow:**

The overall concept is at times left up to people like myself. But generally speaking, I wouldn’t make that decision without consulting with several people in the community and often what we do is have some community gatherings to talk about the appropriateness of the concept and how that concept should be presented.

Sometimes the theme is brought to us and we get to fill it in, but other times we’re very direct about saying, “Well that theme’s wrong and we need to have… We need the theme to shift this way.” What we’d like to have is an appropriate representation of the community and the community’s culture and history. We’ve been fairly successful in that yes, otherwise… We can actually withdraw our support (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Debra Sparrow:**

I guess it depends upon what type of an exhibit it is. If it’s a collaboration then we, right from day one, we’re usually together on whatever we’re doing. If it’s their show, like “Written in the Earth,” they sort of selected what they wanted to do and then they brought us in to go over everything with them. Right from the start and actually through one of my conversations it was called “Written in the Earth.” A conversation that I had with one of them. So, you know it really depends upon what the nature of the exhibit is that they’re going to do, but you know as Larry mentioned they’re, you know they’ve become very culturally sensitive too. And I think MOA is at the head of that, from what I understood when I went to New York to the conference about this specific topic, right across North America as far as First Nations – American First Nations go, they were still in that sort of angry stage, because I don’t think the museums were listening to them. Where MOA had already contacted and had a fairly good relationship with us. So I never
really felt the same kind of anger that they did. Only I understood it. So, um, to me you
know I guess it just depends on what type of exhibit it is and how they reach out the
community but you know all the staff at the community, I mean at the museum, at MOA,
has been you know really understanding of what it is their relationship is with the
communities (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Larry Grant:**

Our connection with the Museum of Anthropology, it’s the community who determines
what’s out there or if it’s a specific display like the To Wash Away the Tears display.
That was a family donation, specific to one family… and that family was to be – their
wishes are exactly what’s being shown out there today. And other things, I believe it’s
our community that determines how it is to be displayed.

You have to understand all of the sciences to be able to do what we do. And that we’re
there and we’re still alive and we’re still practicing what was handed down to us for
centuries back. And I think through the weaving display out at MOA and Washing Away
the Tears and Written in the Earth displays, it’s there but in the Written in the Earth it’s
a little difficult, it may not be difficult, but… I don’t think the real skills, and how
proficient and self-sufficient our people were and still are surviving today is not really
conveyed. That…that we…well to me like that canoe was built for that memorial. If it
was in the water, it wouldn’t be quite right. But if it was being built to be put in the
water, it would have a little different configuration and that to be able to do that you have
to understand marine engineering, marine technology, which we don’t use those – that
kind of terminology. We have marine engineers. We have pharmaceutical people. And
we have historians, we have geographers, those were all part of how we lived and that’s
not really, really – that message is not really there. That our people were totally self-
sufficient prior to the introduction of the colonial way and that’s not really shown that
way. So I think that needs to be brought out in that terminology. It doesn’t…everything
appears to be a subsistence way of living. However, if it were only a subsistence way of
living there would not have been the numbers that they extrapolate from, that there were
thousands of us here in this area. So for thousands of us to live in this area, we’d had to
be more proficient than subsistence, and that’s not being conveyed.

So I think that has to come out in the displays, because even though it appears to be
primitive, when the archaeologists and anthropologists try out the real primitive way,
many times the instruments are more precise than today’s instruments, and more, you
know, more exact in the sense of how they’re used and the way we make it is more exact
to how we have to use the tools. So that’s not really always brought out. Like it’s
brought out in [Musqueam] 101, but it doesn’t get brought out in the museum in the right
way (Interviewed August 16, 2006).
Debra Sparrow:

I think the strongest [key message] that I, not just I, but you know people I’ve worked with in exhibits we’ve had is that we want people to understand our education system. How we value who we are. How we understand that we too are just as successful, and how we go about our life teaching our [cultural traditions]… In the past, you know I say this in the Musqueam Museum School, to be a weaver you’ve got to understand mathematics. You’ve got a hundred, two hundred warps, you’ve got to add, divide, subtract, if you don’t know numbers you’re certainly not going to make a weaving. But everybody thinks its art. They don’t think there’s any real effort put into it, because it’s just a beautiful thing hanging over there. But when you look at them and then you, as Larry said we toured the Smithsonian and seen the old blankets from the 1800s. Wow! The complexity of them. Amazing. And then these women were using the mountain goat and the dog hair, they weren’t using the cheating system we use now with sheep wool. Science is the way they had to look for dyes, figure out how the dyes stayed in there, if they weren’t doing that they were making medicines from them, it’s all science, social studies, history.

The way we pass our information down from generation to generation. Today we use a computer, well a long time ago the computer was in our heads in our brains. We had to use our brains. It amazes me that through – well it wouldn’t amaze Larry, but because of languages the whole is misunderstood. So what we’re trying – they were trying to communicate to us, we were trying to communicate back, and you know it all got lost. And through that this is what’s happened. We have been brainwashed to think that we’re not worthy of that world out there. Because we don’t have the same paper as them, or no papers, but what we have is Written in the Earth. That’s the way we write. Last year when Michael Blake was down here and he said he wanted to get help because he had to go to… I think he said he was being invited to the courts, and he wanted to find a way to get the archaeology into the courts now, because for awhile archaeology was not accepted into the court as evidence. And I said, well I know of something that I’ve thought about for a long time, and that is that, and it was funny because just not long before he came here I actually looked it up in the dictionary, and I talk about it in Written in the Earth, that they way in which we write is how we create. That’s our writing. When you look at a weaving you see it. You’re going to know that there’s a story in there somewhere. It belonged to a family – that family had a heritage, and a lineage, and it’s related in that blanket, usually. So if you talk about what all the artefacts that came from the earth, that was the way we wrote our family histories, that’s the way we identified ourselves, certain belongings that we had. So when I looked it up in the dictionary I kept thinking about this Written in the Earth and I looked it up in the dictionary, the definition of write, to write, it said, “to write, to be creative, to create.” So right there they’ve caught themselves because they’re including how we write in the creative process, to be creative is to write. So it defines it underneath writing in the dictionary so we can use the way we write in the courtroom. And that is with our evidence that’s under the earth. So that in itself is a loophole. And so I think, you know, that that’s… I think that’s what’s important that these kinds of voices are being heard in museums. And I know when we did that exhibit, Rose even asked if she could use it in a different way on one of your
things that you were doing that one time, and I remember because you asked me permission or she told me you were doing it and I said that was great because that sends out the messages, you know, and people see this and they read it and they’re like, “Wow, I never knew that about your people. I never knew that.” You know?

And that’s what I would like to think happens. And it’s not about me, it’s about the work and the messages from our ancestors that come through me, through Larry, through Rose, through anybody who is responsible and interested enough to take that responsibility (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Rose Point:**

One thing that… They never call our history a civilization. Never! There’s only one lady, I forgot her name now. And once we’re considered that we had a civilization, just as everyone else around the world, then I think the museums have to recognise that. Because for me, the white people came we were called savages, heathens, and some of them it’s still there. It’s in the back of their minds. Once they come to recognise that we had a civilization, we had our own technology, we had our own science, we had our own social structure, that we had our own doctors, we had our own herbalists, and our own specialists, we had our own people who looked after the dying, our own people who did the burying, we had our own midwives. We call them midwives, them that looked after the childbearing. And the person who looked after the mother and the baby for the first, like guardians. And once they recognise that from birth to death things happened, that is a civilization. Once the anthropologists and the museums recognise that we had a civilization, then I would say the museums have come a step forward (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Terry Point:**

Well, in our case when we did “Site to Sight” it was our teacher, and the curator, Carol Mayer who… so we developed the content and the structure. So we had a lot of reign on that. You know on that particular exhibit. However, still the content still had to go by her and by the liaison. The liaison here too, Leona had to read the content and make sure it was applicable to us and the Director at the time, which was Michael Ames, and who it turned out really liked our portion of the exhibit. It was based on a conversation that came up over lunch. Although the whole idea of sacred place and education and how you need to kind of have some sort of education that a sacred place is there to actually really know it. You could walk by it and not know it unless you have some prior education. So that was kind of our theme. Talking about Steveston and like how, you know I know like that’s the origin place, you know, that our name comes from. The Point last name and you wouldn’t know that to see out there [Laughs], because there’s like a… We went out to Garry Point and there’s a little blurb saying like First Nations, the Musqueam First Nations people used this in prior times. That was probably about it. And then so we were just talking about things like that and the education content has to go through the education curator who we worked with, Jill Baird, who was really good. And it’s still
funny, like you know to develop the Musqueam Museum School, Debra Sparrow and Jill Baird worked years on doing that like, you know, it’s one thing to… like historically teaching was done on a day to day, on a person to person, teaching but now days with the Western education system you really have to put together a curriculum and show exactly what you’re going to do step by step. Whereas historically you learned by watching or learned by doing and to try to blend it into the whole Western culture…education is difficult and you need to people to help you do that. But, you know, at the end of it, it’s the kids who end up teaching like how to work a certain – work it like…how to fit the curriculum into their standards or how to… So it’s a kind of a step by step, so… But if you don’t…if we didn’t have a person that was willing to do that though it would be – then it wouldn’t have happened. So I think it’s a personality thing too.

I’m glad that we are so close to a museum and everything. I couldn’t imagine trying to develop something for like the RBCM and having to travel to the island and try to figure out all that stuff and communication the way it is now is…like would probably suffice, but they still used to have to go over and have some sort of personal contact.

I think a sense of presence really, because I’ve found when you’re…the further, like the further away from your home you get, the worse off your image of presence gets. It’s almost like, you know when you go to New York and Washington you see some of the stuff that’s out there you know it’s almost like an extinct culture or whatever. And then you see the more, like the Haida being almost the entire West Coast culture, always first recognised and it’s most exhibited for whatever reasons. So I think a sense of presence and identity like, to get a sense of strong cultural identity and of who we are is probably the biggest thing to get out there, to get out of anything that I produce (Interviewed December 18, 2006).

Victor Guerin:

I think it’s still museums. From what I can see, what happens is the museum workers decide on what sort of a theme their exhibits are going to have and what sort of physical content is going to be included, and once that’s decided then they come to us briefly.

Yeah, there are a lot [of key messages to be shared]. Some of them would be a lot simpler to present than others. For instance, there’s a perception among non-aboriginals that we were converted to monotheistic belief with the coming of Europeans, but that’s not true. We’ve always been monotheistic people. We’ve been animistic in our beliefs, but that’s another – those are actual separate beliefs. There was an article written by Douglas Todd in the Vancouver Sun, many years ago now, where he spoke about monotheism, Buddha, Jesus Christ and he was talking about monotheism and how it was a revolutionary concept at the time it was introduced…

[Are key messages included?] No. I don’t think so and that’s what I was getting at when I was saying that some of the things that I would like to see, some of the perceptions I’d like to see changed in the general public’s viewpoint, are more difficult to accomplish
than others. It’s [because] so much of our traditional religious belief is not intended for public disclosure and that really stands in the way of our trying to change public perception of our beliefs (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

**Vivian Campbell:**

Well I can only speak to the one that I’m involved in. The content was created with, at the time for the *Musqueam Museum School* program, Rose Point and Debra Sparrow and Jill Baird. I guess because Rose was Education Coordinator at the time, it was easy to be able to say what could be included and what couldn’t as far as, you know, the weaving and the history of what it is that we wanted to convey. But because it was a partnership, you know and Jill was the one, as the Curator of Education, they all worked together to ensure that, you know, all the criteria was met and to make sure that it was a valid program that they could…you know that would fly.

For our specific community I find it’s really important that, and I like the way that within our own little exhibit in the museum, in the *Gathering Strength* exhibit, the weaving exhibit as well as *To Wash Away the Tears*… I think its very important that the community of Vancouver, the Lower Mainland and the whole world, understand that we’re a living thriving people and that we’re not in the history book that has vague information, and invalid information [laughing]. You know or just information that’s not valid and when I’ve had opportunities to work on exhibits, or participate in them, that’s something that I’ve always strived to ensure that somewhere it gets in there that… Even though we’re blessed with being sort of closed off from the rest of the community, or the rest of the out lying – by the forest, that there are a lot of people in the city that don’t even know that we exist here, but it’s nice to know that when they have an opportunity to go somewhere to learn that they have true, valid information that they can rely on and understand that we are still here and that we have a rich, vast history that needs to be – you know, some of it, specifically needs to be shared so that there’s a better understanding (Interviewed June 2, 2007).

**How are the key messages identified within your community, for exhibits, and what types of consultation occurs?**

**Leona Sparrow:**

[Discussing community meetings…] If a museum display represents Musqueam and takes photos from individuals or from the community archives, there’s a consent process for any individuals imaged – to be displayed and we most often ask that the individual must be given a copy of the photo that’s in the display (Interviewed August 2, 2006).
**Terry Point:**

…unfortunately it’s almost an afterthought, because they’re all…it’s the way our community is now, it’s hard to get them all together so you have to go – so what we do is we go to particular groups and share our information. And you know there’s the chief and council obviously you have to go to, and then there’s other culture groups, like the longhouse community, which is a group of dedicated people who still have this traditional…[religion].

And then there’s other groups like the youth, and the Elders, that congregate on a regular basis that we can target. Trying to get like a whole community overview, you can’t do that anymore so… The way that – that’s the way that we do it. We target those certain groups that meet on a regular basis so that we can gain their information and then have feedback from that. And then… so yeah, like I’m saying you have to develop something in order to get it out there. We tried with the renewal project. We tried to get artist’s opinions and different things about some of the stuff that was going on there, and it’s just…it’s a difficult process, because everybody doesn’t have the same hours or either they’re out working or they’re not working, and if… So it’s hard to get an interest group and *Musqueam 101*, a program that Musqueam and UBC run, is a great place to do it because they’ve got a particular following that always come and it’s a diverse group so that’s one of the first places that you know you can get the word out. And another one that you really have to kind of go out and get a group like a focus group of artists or whatever, and you have to work hard on trying to get a certain time and different things…

It’s difficult, so I mean trying to get the word out… it’s part of the job as well, trying to gain interest, because not only are you trying to do this project, but you’re trying to get the interest back into all of these artefacts and things. We’ve had open houses and things where we really target trying to get as many people as we can to see what’s there and to try to break down those walls, but then there’s people that just won’t even bother. No matter how much, you’re not breaking their, you know, their idea of a museum. So what are you going to do? (Interviewed December 18, 2006)

**Victor Guerin:**

Well…consultation tends to focus on the staff members in Band Administration. It’s fairly difficult to bring consultation to the community at large because they have their own – you know they have to put food on the table, so they have – we have their schedules to contend with. It’s generally administration staff that can make time for museum people to consult.

I think there’s a large… a lot of the knowledge that’s lost in that difficulty in consultation. But also exhibits by their very nature tend to need brevity, there’s really only a certain amount that you can include in the…content of a presentation (Interviewed April 23, 2007).
**Vivian Campbell:**

Well for the exhibits and pro-well for the exhibits specifically I guess, community consultation, it wasn’t really a community consultation, I mean within the *Gathering Strength* exhibit itself and the weavings, there were individual weavers being portrayed so those particular weavers were interviewed and they had a say as to what content was important to them and what messages they wanted to convey. So again, for myself, I had an opportunity, you know, during that time when I had a weaving hanging there to, you know, say what I wanted on the panel and it’s important. It’s…because that’s what brings it to life, that’s what makes it real. You can put a face to the name and you know make that connection.

*[To Wash Away the Tears]* I was asked by Shane Pointe to create some cedar bark works, so just to make some rope. I was also interviewed by [students and Curator Sue Rowley], just comments on Margaret’s life. She was a family member and that was to commemorate and honour her life. Memorials are very important still in our community – again another living practice that we have that is expressed by different families at, you know, every year. I was honoured to be a part of that and I felt that it was really important. I was really, not only honoured, I just thought it was really special that Shane and Gina, her family, would be willing to share that with the rest of the world. And to make it real. I thought that was great (Interviewed June 2, 2007).

**Who are the target audiences of your museum collaborations? Who was the message intended for?**

**Leona Sparrow:**

The general public.

[And then, what about your membership, or children, or…?]

I think that obviously that’s the first consideration is to make sure that the community is represented properly and that opens the door for our community and children to see their history and culture, learn from it (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Rose Point:**

I think our museums are international. Those are from all over, but primarily the Lower Mainland I would believe, yeah.
Yeah, I think that we as a community, I think have to get ourselves out there more. I’ve given… I did a walk at Stanley park and there were people from…Yeah. From France, from Italy, from – but the one I was really surprised was this lady from New York and she was saying, well I started out with a circle hey we talk about, did a prayer, holding hands in a circle. And I brought two plastic bags and I said, “When we come to a forest we have to leave the forest cleaner than we came to it. In better shape.” I explained to them that, “When you see a path, if the path is this way – just for one person you go one by one, if it’s two you could two, but not three.” And then we start talking about the trees and shrubs, what’s edible, what’s not edible. We came to the – where the seven sisters came from, and I said, “This is where the Seven Sisters came from.” The canoe and I couldn’t believe it. Even the staff from the park, the staff from the Park’s Board, didn’t even know about the history of the Seven Sisters. They said lightening came and knocked that tree down. I said, “No. It was Hurricane Frieda, 1962 knocked a few of the trees down. They had to cut some down because it was weakened.” They said they never heard of that! They never heard of Hurricane Frieda.

And I was really surprised that the Park Board staff didn’t know about it. And so when we left this lady was just crying, from New York, she said she was so touched by everything that we talked about. Talked about how we had to preserve the trees, respect the trees because they gave us life. Gave us protection and gave us a way of travel and gave us a basket for our babies, carrying berries, whatever, for cooking. And they said to us, that they had their Central Park in New York and I said, “It’s nothing compared to here – Stanley Park. It’s what I said. So I think if we did things like that you know as a community here, like did those walks at Stanley Park. I’ve done a 45 minute walk here – Woody can do it as well. And there’s one guy who says, “I’ve walked this I don’t know how many times in my life, I’ve never saw things that I talked about, that were there. Now,” he says, “When I come here I’m going to come here with an open mind, here with my heart,” he says. Because I always start the walk with the circle. How to respect the earth, the woods, and mother earth, what mother earth has given us. And so this here is what we feel the museum should be talking about, what the big Spirit has given us, what we have to carry on and respect mother earth and the Great Spirit. And that is how we, not just objects (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Debra Sparrow:**

Anybody who reads them. Anybody who comes to the museum whether from Vancouver or they’re from Europe or the USA or wherever they come from if they come and they understand and recognise and learn that the people are here, and that we’ve been here, and that message is related through the museum. And it should be in the city and I think Kamala Todd is responsible and I think she’s moving out of that position, but her – she’s working down there in the city. You know getting that established as well, because even the city of Vancouver doesn’t recognise us. You know?
The museum has been doing their job to the best that they can and that needs to move into the city as well because you get people in the city who don’t even know where Musqueam is.

…as Rose was talking about, these opportunities we could have in the city and yet it’s interesting that maybe the city doesn’t really want us to have them because if they did then they’d have – that would mean they recognise us. And if they recognise us, then they have to deal with us on the Table. And these opportunities that are coming up, 2010 approaching, we’ve had not too good of a relationship with the 2010 committee – Olympic committee, and yet the international committee said to them in Vancouver, “You better have your First Nations people standing with you. You better have it prepared when we come and they better be there with you.” And had they not said that I just wonder how really involved we would be. It was the big guys in Italy who said it. So I think this is a good, you know, maybe a lot of people don’t like the Olympics coming here. It’s a lot of money, it’s this, it’s that, whatever, I think it will do well for us. Because the international world has asked for us to take our place on the stadium. So to me that’s pretty powerful. So we need to work on that pretty quickly, and you know the museum will be involved with that (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Larry Grant:**

I know with the language, when we’re doing the language program, which is apart from the museum stuff, I know that the students are quite international. But in my own thinking it’s the local people, as the people of the city of Vancouver area, the Greater Vancouver area, to understand that the people who were here first are still here. And to me that’s the primary target. The international target are interested in aboriginal things so they come to where the aboriginals are, but the locals – it’s like they’re in the forest but they can’t see the trees. Because the trees are in the way. And that’s, I think that’s what our situation is. We’re here and still exist, but the local surrounding community doesn’t know we exist. And through that analogy I believe that’s really what I think our displays are. It’s primarily to make sure that people around us know that we exist as a people and we’re still here. Not with our hands out begging, but with our hands out in welcome (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Terry Point:**

Well, I think mine would definitely have to be the Elders, because we’re loosing a lot of Elders and there’s a lot of things that will…we will miss out on if we don’t get to hear their opinions now while they’re still around. I mean we just lost our last, you know, traditional speaker of what they call the old language just, you know, in the last two years. And there’s not a lot of… You know, it’s starting to come into that residential generation. Residential School generation, which is deprived of all of that stuff so that they are learning as they go as well. So I mean to try and get that information of what it was like prior to that is kind of a difficult situation.
Yeah with the different groups I guess. There’s the Elders, the younger generation, and then there’s the core population, which is like I said that whole core generation is hard to get to. So I mean you have to target, usually target the younger people so that they get their parents involved.

And it’s the only way to like seriously get them involved and then the other is just to get the information and to gain their trust, I guess if we’re targeting it would be the Elders and the youth (Interviewed December 18, 2006).

**Victor Guerin:**

Oh, that can vary from our own people to…to the general community and public to international visitors. International visitors are generally included with, are mostly included with the general public and I don’t think museums have has a lot of… support, I guess I’d say, in focusing entirely on international patrons.

… You know I still run into people that are surprised to find out that there’s an aboriginal community on Point Grey, and in some ways we like that you know, because the very fact of our isolation from the larger community is a large reason that we’ve retained a lot of our traditional ways. During the times when the Potlatch law was in effect, Musqueam could – we were separated by the barrier of the park between us and the main community, continued to practice our traditional ways, although underground. Many of the things that are now known as being a part of our Big House complex are originally things that were included in the longhouse, but could also be practiced outdoors. For instance, our traditional cleansing ceremonies that we use for puberty and naming and memorials and marriages and so forth, were and could originally be practiced and even out in the open fields in traditional times. And that’s starting to come back now, but because they went underground for so long, and for more than a generation, people nowadays think of them as part of the longhouse complex (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

**Vivian Campbell:**

I think it’s just open to everybody. I don’t think it’s… I mean you can’t say it’s for one specific group, it’s a public museum. It’s not like a country club, where only specific people are allowed. Right? I think they’re also made not for just one specific group or age level. I think it’s important that, you know, and I think we’ve succeeded in that you can – you know a lot of different age groups can go and read the panels or you know cruise through visible storage and still figure things out without it being so complex that, you know, you don’t get it (Interviewed June 2, 2007).
**What types of messages are important for your community to share with the general public?**

**Leona Sparrow:**

Hmm, kinds of messages… Well I guess the main message is that history didn’t start at 1808 or 1792 that the Musqueam community has been in this location for well over three thousand years, closer to four thousand years, or more. And our history is just as valuable as any other world history. We’d like to see some recognition of that. That’s the main message.

[Re: chronological history of the Vancouver Museum] That’s how their whole theme has been developed, and I can’t predict or determine what their themes are. But we can hope to modify the information so that it comes across in a proper way. Make it… make our information fit into all these different time… time… perspectives (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Victor Guerin:**

Generally speaking, my knowledge is broad enough that I can – I don’t like to go into – in front of an audience unprepared. But generally speaking, I work off of my audience. I’ll interact with them a little bit and get a feel for their knowledge base and attitude and then I’ll work from there and oft times what happens is that my prepared presentation sits on the table unreferenced. I work completely off of my personal knowledge, so my presentations are audience-based in that manner. Mainly because I can work from the top of my head (Interviewed April 23, 2007).

**Vivian Campbell:**

Well, again I think it has to be – you know it’s not, it has to be age appropriate for everybody. It has to be readable by everybody. You want to be able to… like I was saying before, just clear, valid information that is easily read without having to take so much time, but still convey a clear message (Interviewed June 2, 2007).
Were you and other community members satisfied with the final outcomes of your museum partnerships?

Leona Sparrow:

It’s still an ongoing process. Much better relationship – the museum, and the university, come to Musqueam periodically, which is a change and I think the Musqueam community is much happier with the working relationship because community members are asked for their opinions. They are asked to participate in developing displays, making comments on [unclear word] display, actually co-curating some of the displays and we’ve had some good successes.

The majority of them have eventually turned out quite well, although sometimes the process is difficult… for both parties. Because it’s a learning process for museums, and museum staff, and it’s a frustration for community members.

Yes, I don’t recall any that we’ve absolutely refused to deal with. [Laughs] They may have… we haven’t (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

Larry Grant:

I don’t think we’ve reached the final partnership (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

Debra Sparrow:

Well… yeah I mean for the one I worked on. I was happy, I couldn’t help but be happy because weaving hadn’t been shown in 85 or 90 years so to me that was amazing and we really didn’t have anything to compare it on, because there was only one weaving in the museum prior to this. So you know for us that’s pretty amazing. So they have a bit of their own collection their now. I think it’s… I think it’s been very positive for… in terms of that, the textiles (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

Terry Point:

Yeah. I think… I think we are happy with the partnerships that we… that we do have. I mean obviously there’s always room for improvement and I mean I think that’s only… that’s only going to happen through capacity building in both the museum part and in our part. You have… There’s only a few of us that have worked with the museum, close enough to understand their policies and different things right? (Interviewed December 18, 2006)
Victor Guerin:

I don’t know that I can answer that question. I don’t think that our partnerships are finalised yet. They’re still in development.

Specific projects...hmm to look at the two that I mentioned earlier, I would say no. With the Coast Salish Research Project I mentioned that they were – and the Vancouver Indian History Project, I mentioned that they were focused on developing public presentations and for some reason at the time that they were developed they didn’t fly. The general public didn’t take to them. I think that they would now, the times have changed some. I don’t know what it was that happened at the time, but I think they would fly a lot better now and I think that it would be a really good thing to revive them as public presentations again. They had a great deal of influence on bringing me to the point that I am now, as I mentioned with David Rozen finding out that he was a fluent speaker of our language lit a fire under me and started me working with our Elders. At the time I was not working specifically in the field where I am now, I was working as a commercial fisherman, and the food service industry, as a longshoreman, and various other things. And my work with Elders over...over a decade and a half, it was more than a decade and a half, was in my free time. But it led me to where I am now. In the mid 1990s, our community suffered the loss of a great deal of our Elders and fluent speakers of our language, and I at that time I was on the verge of entering the Longshoreman’s Union. I’d built up enough time. And I was just on the verge of going in. And when we lost all of those Elders, our Language and Culture committee was – they were at that time just known as the Language Committee, they were aware of my activities and prevailed upon me to come and work in the revival of our language. It affected a great deal of change in my direction.

One that I really liked was one that was done by – I didn’t actually see it myself, I saw the materials that came out of it, it was called Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth by Mike Kew. Yeah and I thought that was really impressive exhibit and presentation. It...It found a way to present some of the materials from our living culture and it presented some of the, a great deal actually, of the knowledge that Mike has gathered over his involvement, years of involvement, with our community. Gave people some insight into our religious beliefs and our material culture and our interactions with the environment. So that’s one specific one that I was quite happy with.

As a matter of fact at the time, I was a teenager when the exhibit was happening and I was in a rebellious time and I had actually rejected Christianity on the premise that I couldn’t see any good in something that had left... Uh, my idea was that a merciful God would never have left such a large percentage of the earth’s population without guidance for so long. And so I rejected Christianity on that principle. I was quite an angry young fellow and that was one of the reasons that I never went to see the exhibit when it was [Intercom interrupts] ... when it was occurring in the museum. Since then I’ve come around to a different perspective, my view now is that it’s not Christianity itself that was at fault, it was the practitioners at the time who were at fault (Interviewed April 23, 2007).
**Vivian Campbell:**

Well personally, I was. I have been. You know it’s a continuing relationship that always builds and always changes and… and it’s really great to see all the different kinds of projects that are happening within the community again and within the museum (Interviewed June 2, 2007).

*If you could change something about your working relationship what would it be?*

**Leona Sparrow:**

Wow, that’s a big one. From my perspective I would like to have more people at Musqueam who can share the load. And that means we have to get a few more community members who are trained and gradually that’s happening with working with the Museum of Anthropology and getting interns trained. But again that process only began because I went forward and said, “Why have other communities got interns when we don’t?” And so an intern process was developed for Musqueam community members.

…The positions were being created… The lack of positions was not a direct slight at Musqueam, it was just that other communities came forward first I guess, or were being worked with on other displays so it was a matter of convenience to get interns for those displays to happen. And Musqueam kind of fell by the wayside and it wasn’t a direct attempt to keep us out, it was just we weren’t on the front at that particular time (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Musqueam Focus Group:**

**Debra Sparrow:**

Mine would be the very fact that – what I just talked about, I think general population not just museums have to change the way in which they look at what – they’re not objects. Perhaps we need a new word. They’re not objects, they’re people’s belongings. They’re people’s personal belongings to families. And so…

**Larry Grant:**

Those families are still alive.

**Debra Sparrow:**
Yeah.

**Larry Grant:**

And if those belongings were handed down, as the way they would have been, they would not be in the museum. They would be being used in the community or wherever the family resides. So it's something that…[Pause]

**Sharon Fortney:**

[Speaking to Rose] Is there anything that you would change?

**Rose Point:**

I would change to have them refer to us as a civilization rather than the past or whatever

(Interviewed August 16, 2006).

**Terry Point:**

Hmm, I think the Museum of Anthropology’s going the right way in creating the…under the renewal project, creating a space for First Nations to go and feel comfortable in doing their research and to have access and then again I think it’s capacity. I mean there’s got to be somebody from – even if it’s not from our direct community, but someone from the area who is working and understands the culture a little bit more than the studier, because we’ve been in some focus groups where there’s really simple things that um…[etiquette?] Yeah, different things that you just don’t understand. Like people like us it’s second nature, who are from there and different things. People who have even studied the culture for as long as they could don’t understand those little things still. You know some of those little things that you can do or whatever. And I think if we have people within the museum communities who do understand that then… it’ll be a lot easier. I think the **Reciprocal Research Network** when it comes to fruition will help a lot with our younger generation I guess at least. It’s going to be a task and something that you have to be computer literate to do and it’s really difficult for some of the…like our Elders and things that don’t even know how to use email. I mean it’s a difficult process that we’re trying to figure out. How it’s going to be accessible for people, simple enough to navigate so you don’t… [need a helper].

Yeah, help. Because we’re trying to get away from that right. We want artists to be able to do that research from home or from wherever. At least to get the contact information from a system. Say you happen to be in Ottawa for whatever reason and you want to go see the museum and you want somebody to talk to and you want to see what’s there, you
know, you can go to an internet café or the hotel lobby or whatever and see who to contact and actually just on a whim go there and just see, and use a portal maybe in the museum. A portal that you can use and get to see what’s there and to see what kind of access you can get. But I think, yeah capacity and… and a way to like… Comfort to be in an institution like that. I think that walking into the big museums down in the States it’s daunting, even for people who have worked in museums. It’s still difficult to get what you need and it takes weeks and weeks of advance communication. So we want to try and break that down, so that you can just actually walk into the facility and try to get some – that help from that person who’s there who is dedicated to the West Coast or whatever, right? And then the reciprocal part of that research network, we can educate them as well on the etiquettes and things. So even if they’re not from here, or not even close to being from here, they can understand about certain things (Interviewed December 18, 2006).

Victor Guerin:

Hmm… That’s a tough thing to answer. I think in terms of …aboriginal collections, on one side of things I’d like to see them disappear altogether and see things like what’s happened with U’mista Cultural Society, have all those objects repatriated into the communities where they originate. I know that there’s some value to having those sorts of things accessible to people around the world, in terms of them learning something about us, but at the same time…

[Could this be achieved through loans from the communities themselves?]

Yes. Yes it could be, and also one of the things about those sorts of objects being on display, separate from the communities where they originate, means that the amount that people can learn about the societies and the people that those objects are generated from is very limited. Our people can’t be spending all of their time going around the world trying to teach people about us and then be expected to live our lives at the same time.

It seems that – on one hand it seems that if people are really interested to learn about us then they can come and see us. But on the other hand…lot’s of times it’s rather disconcerting for us to have people come into our community and say I want to learn about you. You know you kind of get the feeling again of being objectified, we are a specimen, sometimes people think of us that way. A lot of the time actually. People don’t want to recognise the strange idea of them wanting to come and study us. You sometimes want to ask them how would you feel if I was to come to your house and say, “I want to study you”? (Interviewed April 23, 2007).
Is your community planning a Cultural Centre? If so, what will its mandate be (i.e. serve your community members, economic/tourist venture, or public education)?

Leona Sparrow:

Musqueam would really like to have a cultural centre. We don’t have the space or the resources to have one on reserve. We’re investigating opportunities to have one in the public domain. It’s not because we don’t like the Museum of Anthropology. The Museum of Anthropology doesn’t have much of our cultural material, and it has to operate fairly with all cultures so Musqueam would like to have its own centre where the culture…

Ah, dual purpose. Community educational purposes and for public education purposes and for…marketing.

We haven’t done repatriations, what we’re doing is accumulating information about where items originated from within our traditional territory are located.

We can…we’re working on a program or project with UBC Museum of Anthropology called the Reciprocal Research Network and that’s hopefully a means of virtually repatriating items so that community members can actually see what’s around the world that originated from here as a preliminary… perhaps a preliminary step to the actual repatriation of some of those items to either the Museum of Anthropology or to a Musqueam Heritage Centre (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

Final Thoughts?

Leona Sparrow:

I was talking about ownership of collections, I view museums as custodians not owners. The community’s the owner of pieces, and they’re held in trust, and in fact we’ve got a lot of archaeological – what is considered archaeological, but it’s cultural, held in trust for the Musqueam Indian Band that… Materials that have been collected from archaeological sites within our traditional territory. I think we’ve been very clear in telling museums that we think they are not the owners. They are just holding the items and protecting them.

I think once we get that type of mindset on both sides that the relationship actually gets easier. I guess it’s a process of negotiation by constantly saying things and people can begin to understand where you’re coming from and the mindsets change a bit.
We had some protocol agreements with the Museum of Anthropology for specific displays and that’s pretty clearly laid out what we thought the obligations were, and… We asked that say for instance the Lab of Archaeology or the Museum of Anthropology worked together that we’d be involved in decision making, that it wasn’t just between the Lab and the Museum to make decisions about where our – the items that are Musqueam, would be visible or used in displays. We make those decisions as well. We’ve participated in those decisions.

We’ve worked with the Lab of Archaeology in a preliminary way in discussions about repatriation of ancestral remains. And that was a topic that was not on the page a number of years ago. Big progress [unclear word] there. A shift in the approach and attitude (Interviewed August 2, 2006).

**Musqueam Focus Group:**

**Larry Grant:**

That new one in D.C. is quite different. Very, very different. This is like…when Michael Ames and Shelton, Dr. Shelton’s topic about “how do you want it displayed?” Because they have there [at the NMAI], and they’re all in context. It’s not hats over here, shawls over there, baskets and canoes over there. It’s all how it’s being used. And displayed exactly how it’s used.

I couldn’t believe it you know “Holy cow!” And that’s what I found disturbing here. The displays are not in context. I know that they – the area kind of dictates how you can put the displays up but it’s like you have a mask, Kwakwaka’wakw people have a mask and the cape for the mask is at the other end of display. And the rattles are somewhere else, you know…

So it really, really takes everything out of context and isolates everything and never really shows you the whole.

**Rose Point:**

It’s all fractured.

**Larry Grant:**

Yeah it’s all fractured, fragmented all over the place, it’s not like you have a mask and you have the – this is adorning the mask, and with that mask you wear this kind of shawl, you wear other things, and with a different mask you wear different things, it doesn’t show that so, you know, it’s like looking at a picture and not the real thing. It’s quite different. You really don’t know – you can’t visualize it. There’s so much stuff in the museum, you can’t visualise exactly how it’s being
worn. In fact they don’t even have a picture of how it’s worn along side of each…belonging.

(Interviewed August 16, 2006)

Victor Guerin:

I prefer the Museum of Anthropology. They have a very progressive attitude. They recognise a lot of the very things that I’ve spoken about. How invasive it can be to come and study a people.

Well one thing about language and culture is that the expression itself is a bit of a misnomer, because frankly you can’t separate language and culture they’re one – part and parcel of each other. Our language…our culture is encoded in our language. You can look at specific expressions to see that. One of the examples that I like to use is the way that words are viewed in…in terms of the aboriginal term and the English gloss as opposed to the English translation. Take for instance the word woodpecker. In English it’s called a woodpecker and in our language it’s called tumulhupsum. Tumulhupsum is a combination word coming from the word tumulth which is our word for red ochre paint and the lexical suffix upsun which means the neck. So literally the term translates to the one with red ochre paint on his neck. You know, so if you look at for instance a classroom situation where someone asks, “what do you call a woodpecker?” And you tell them tumulhupsum and then leave it at that they view that as a translation, but it’s really a gloss. They don’t get the cultural information when you leave it that way. They look at it as a translation and say, “oh tumulhupsum means woodpecker when it doesn’t.

There are a lot of things like that, nothing comes directly to mind right now, maybe if you have anything that you are curious about I can translate it for you.

Yeah and as a matter of fact a lot things have been lost in that, because of that perception of looking for a translation and obtaining a gloss. For instance our word for cloud is shxw’ethutun and I got into a discussion with Wayne Suttles by email when he was still alive and I was asking him, because I didn’t have a translation, I was asking him “do you know what the word shxw’ethutun means?” Because I know it wouldn’t mean cloud. And we got into a discussion trying to analyse it from our knowledge of linguistics, because we had no one to consult with, no one that spoke the language. And we didn’t actually come up with a final decision on what it actually means. He came up with…he postulated a theory that it might have been dummy root with an implement suffix and a nominalizer attached to it, but you know…that didn’t satisfy our curiosity.

And I’ve since asked people who do know about the language and they couldn’t come up with any…any satisfactory translation either and so this is one of the things that we run into quite frequently. But now that we’ve become a people who…know English as a first language, much of the traditional knowledge, the language is lost, and probably will never come back. We also have the situation where no one has a complete set of
knowledge, some people will know a lot about one particular area, some will know a lot about another area, and nobody knows all of it. And it’s only when we can bring people together, which is actually an impossible task, we can’t bring everybody that knows about specific areas together in one room. That’s just not something that can be accomplished (Interviewed April 23, 2007).
Chapter Seven: Canadian Communities and their Museum Relations

There really is a need for doing capacity building and training with Coastal Salish artists and looking at the whole revival of that particular art form. And that’s what we’re really hoping to be able to claim a small part in, is encouraging artists to look at our own art form and the creation of new objects.

Snitelwet i Siyamiya (Deborah Jacobs), Direct of Education, Skwxwú7mesh Nation, Interviewed June 12, 2006

Our generation, we’re raised to read and write and work at libraries and museums, but there’s a whole generation with a different attitude out there – I mean the culture came from the world itself... There’s people who are saying is it really important to exactly recreate the past, as if we can somehow go back into our history? Or is it important that we maintain the teachings to find our connection with the world? Is it so important that I carve an eagle the way it was done 400 years ago? Or is it important that I’m actually spending my time around eagles, that I’m still making the same connections that they had 400 years ago? We’ve got lots of stories in our history where we came close to extinction, where we were very few, and we’re saved by sort of adhering to our way of life. We were able to rebuild our culture because we spent the time going out there [on the land] and finding the same teachings that people found originally. So in some ways maybe the object is distracting. For a culture that was obsessed with making stuff we weren’t that materialistic. People didn’t actually think of things as theirs.

Tawxsín Yexwulla / Poolxtun (Aaron Nelson Moody), Skwxwú7mesh Artist, Interviewed August 16, 2007

Many factors, historic and cultural, have influenced how Coast Salish peoples are represented in museums and other public settings in Canada. These have been discussed in previous chapters and include: collector bias; reticence on the part of community members to discuss cultural matters; curatorial interests; and the influence of the art market and tourism industry, among others. With the growing assertion of aboriginal rights and title in Canada, substantiated by several legal victories in aboriginal law, museum practice has simultaneously undergone a change in an attempt to become more inclusive to aboriginal peoples and other ethnic minorities. For many Canadian museums the Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples (1992) now provides the guideline for establishing a positive working relationship with local communities. Yet the needs of specific communities vary widely, and although the drafting of this document involved a consultation process, all of those involved represented federally
funded museums or First Nations cultural centres and organizations – people who
specialised in museum-related work. Consultation was not extended into native
communities to address the aspirations of a diverse spectrum of individuals, distinguished
by age, gender, education and occupations (traditional and westernised).

The Task Force Report, like its American counterpart NAGPRA, can only
provide general guidelines as to how museums should proceed. The needs of specific
communities must be considered on a case by case basis. With this in mind, I now
explore its five principle recommendations – interpretation, access, repatriation, training,
and implementation, as a framework for understanding the current status of Coast Salish
representations in western Canada and as a means to explore the perspectives shared by
community members.

Interpretation:

The previous chapter highlighted the viewpoints of several Musqueam
community members, all of whom had a great deal of experience accessing and working
with museums and their collections. A common theme throughout their interviews (and
those conducted in other Coast Salish communities) was the need to be represented as
contemporary people with distinct and valuable cultural traditions. This was the key
message that all of those interviewed wanted to share with the outside world.

Throughout the Greater Vancouver area, the Musqueam are currently represented
(through permanent exhibits) in a variety of sites – these include displays of
contemporary art at the YVR International Airport Arrivals Terminal in Richmond,
modular displays throughout the Vancouver Museum’s Joyce Walley Learning Centre, at
various sites within the UBC Museum of Anthropology (including some of its public programmes), and most recently through the addition of three large housepost sculptures to the Totem Park area of Stanley Park. In several of these venues, Musqueam cultural traditions are exhibited by combining contemporary objects and art pieces with historic photographs. Images of archaeological objects are occasionally used to demonstrate the longevity of particular traditions – such as fishing or weaving, and to stress a continuity of presence, as is the case with the exhibit panels created for the Totem Park area of Stanley Park.

Public Art and Museum Installations

In the late 1990s, three large exhibit panels were installed, in an alcove between a newly opened gift shop and food service outlet in the Totem Park area, to counterbalance the site’s focus on the totem poles of northern Northwest Coast peoples. The panels, titled: *First Nations of Stanley Park, Our Communities Today*, and *Traditional Technology*, provide information about the local Coast Salish communities of Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, and Tsleil-Waututh. Although they are larger in scale than other signage at the site, specifically one that discusses *Coastal First Nations* on one side and *The History of Totem Poles at Stanley Park* on its reverse, they are less prominent in their placement. The *Coastal First Nations* panel is set in the foreground of the Totem Pole display – at an intersection of pathways, so despite it’s smaller size, it is the text panel most likely to be viewed by the parks many visitors. This was certainly the case when I visited the site, in July 2008, to view the park’s newly installed *Gateway Project*. 
The *Gateway Project* further increased Coast Salish presence at the Totem Park site when, in June 2008, internationally renowned Musqueam artist Susan Point unveiled three massive housepost carvings – one to signify each of the three local Coast Salish communities (Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh and Tsleil-Waututh). The three “gateways”, surround the totem pole enclosure, and are strategically situated at three different entrances to this area of Brockton Point. One is located on the north side adjacent to the sea wall, another to the south in the parking area, and the third to the west, on a hill that borders a grass playing field. The distinct architecture of these monumental sculptures provides a clear contrast to the linear poles imported from northern Northwest Coast communities.

**Figures 9: Coast Salish Gateway designed by Susan Point for Stanley Park.**

Photograph by Michael Fortney, 2008.
In addition to the *Gateway Project*, Susan Point has helped to raise awareness of Coast Salish artistic traditions at several other sites throughout the Greater Vancouver area (and to the south in Washington State). Some of her previous commissions include two houseposts and a welcome figure created for the UBC Museum of Anthropology in 1997. The welcome figure is inspired by the much older Capilano Housepost, which stood in the Musqueam village until the early twentieth century when it was presented to the University of British Columbia (see Chapter 4 for details). The new figure is prominently displayed near the entrance to the museum where it welcomes visitors to Musqueam traditional territory. By contrast, visitors pass under her two houseposts – also inspired by older Musqueam pieces now in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, as they follow a path to the two Haida Houses erected behind the museum. Susan Point has also created additional large scale carvings, including an oversize cedar spindle whorl, for display in the arrivals terminal of the YVR International Airport. Her work is displayed internationally, but these are a few of the local sites where it raises her community’s public profile.

Skwxwú7mesh Nation artists have also raised several monumental sculptures throughout their territory in the last decade, in an effort to revitalize their traditional carving style and to raise public awareness of Coast Salish artistic traditions. Skwxwú7mesh Artist *Tawxsin Yexwulla / Poolxtun* (Aaron Nelson Moody) carved a massive female figure, modelled after his wife, for the Triconi Meadows – a remote area of the Elaho Valley, near Squamish, BC. This massive carving had to be lowered into place by helicopter, and now stands in a wilderness area bordered by clear cut logging. It was created as part of an environmental project known as the *Uts’am (Witness)* project
and reminds visitors hiking in this remote area that these lands are part of Skwxwú7mesh Traditional Territory, while provoking them to consider the footprints now being left behind.

The artist has also contributed a carved eagle to a pole erected by several Skwxwú7mesh artists on the grounds of Carson Graham Secondary School in North Vancouver, and was commissioned to create a set of carved doors for the Canada House Pavilion in Torino, Italy. These doors were exhibited at Canada Place in downtown Vancouver, before being shipped to Italy for the Olympic Games. Tawxsin Yexwulla / Poolxtun notes that they will be exhibited again in Whistler at the Skwxwú7mesh Lil’wat Cultural Centre during the 2010 Olympic Games.

In West Vancouver, a welcome figure carved by Skwxwú7mesh artist Sequilem (Stan Joseph Sr.) was unveiled on July 27, 2001 at Ch’tl’am (Ambleside Park). The figure was raised in celebration of K’aya’chtchn, a canoe gathering hosted by the Skwxwú7mesh Nation at the site two days later. A second sculpture created by Xwa Lack Tun (Rick Harry) was unveiled several years later near the western entrance to Ch’tl’am in March of 2007. This commission, Sna7m Smanit (Spirit of the Mountain), was made possible by funding awarded to the City of West Vancouver as part of its designation as the 2006 Cultural Capital of Canada by the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Each year the department selects five Culture Capitals across Canada and endows each with $500,000 to undertake cultural works. The City of West Vancouver partnered with the Skwxwú7mesh Nation in the original submission to commission a large public sculpture, through a juried process, and to create three celebratory exhibits of Coast
Salish Art. The exhibits were co-curated by the West Vancouver Heritage Services Curators, contracted staff, and Skwxwú7mesh Nation staff members with contributions from additional Skwxwú7mesh Nation community members.

The first of the three companion exhibits was held at the West Vancouver Memorial Library from January 26 – February 9, 2007. It was a small graphic exhibit detailing the progress of the sculpture Sna7m Smanit (Spirit of the Mountain), and included images of the water cutting process used to sculpt the metal.

Figure 10: Wáxayus (Salmon Chief Figure) and smaller carving by August Jack Khatsahlano featured in Stiuyntm - Enduring Traditions at the West Vancouver Museum.

A larger exhibit of traditional Coast Salish artistic traditions, titled: “Stiuyntm - Enduring Traditions,” was held at the West Vancouver Museum from March 20 –
August 31, 2007. This exhibit featured Salish weavings, basketry, engraved objects such as spindle whorls and jewellery, and several human and animal figures carved in a naturalistic style. It was followed by “Nexwníw Chet - Contemporary Treasures,” which was on display from March 27 – April 15th in the Ferry Building adjacent to Ch’tl’am (Ambleside Park). This exhibit featured the works of contemporary Skwxwú7mesh artists with many of the pieces available for sale.

This partnership was established over a decade ago, when the Skwxwú7mesh Nation was invited to publicly opened the West Vancouver Museum on July 1, 1994. The opening ceremony was witnessed by over 2,000 people according to the museum’s website. Kw’achmixwáylh – Showing of the Pictures, the inaugural exhibit, featured portraits of Skwxwú7mesh Elders painted by local artist Mildred Valley Thornton. All of the paintings were borrowed from the Nation for the exhibit – this was in keeping with the museum’s early emphasis on borrowing from community collections (as opposed to developing their own). The portraits remain on display, with their Kw’achmixwáylh exhibit labels, in the Skwxwú7mesh Nation offices.

The Skwxwú7mesh, like their southern relatives the Musqueam, have been aware of museums and the need to establish a presence (and good working relationship) for some time. However, these efforts gained momentum in the mid 1990s according to Snitelwet i Siyamiya, Skwxwú7mesh Nation Director of Education, who notes that:

The Skwxwú7mesh Nation has had a relationship with museums, in particular the Vancouver Museum, probably since centennial time. It’s a very longstanding relationship in that they house, within their collections, many of our objects. And the museum is over on Senákw, which is within our traditional territory. But we really – the Department of Education, became quite extensively involved with cultural institutions as a means or a way of developing educational programs for children in the public school system. It suited our mandate in terms of working with our partners so that we could secure additional curriculum. Our curriculum
person would work with their curriculum person – their education programmer (Deborah Jacobs, Interviewed June 12, 2006).

Whenever possible the Nation receives duplicates of the educational materials developed in their partnerships with museums for use within the schools attended by their children, while Skwxwú7mesh community members are involved in the development and delivery of museum-based programs.

The Skwxwú7mesh Nation as an entity, and some of its members acting as individuals, has worked with a number of museums on exhibit and film projects in the last decade. Nation sponsored projects include the Honouring the Basket Makers exhibit and school program at the Vancouver Museum, displays for the Joyce Walley Learning Centre at the Vancouver Museum, Our City, Our Voices: Storyscapes #3 a collaboration involving the City of Vancouver and the National Film Board of Canada, and an exhibit of Skwxwú7mesh art from the Mayor Jack Loucks Collection. The latter exhibit, created for the lobby of the City of North Vancouver municipal building, involves a bequest of First Nations art made by former mayor Jack Loucks.

The Skwxwú7mesh (and their neighbours the Musqueam) have also acted as host nation for the Vancouver Art Gallery, most recently at the 2006 exhibit, “Raven Travelling: Two Centuries of Haida Art.” In addition to these Nation sponsored exhibits and programmes, individual community members sometimes participate in smaller displays such as Sátet te Síwes / Continuing Traditions, a Coast Salish basketry exhibit I curated at the UBC Museum of Anthropology as part of my Master of Arts program. Chepžímiya Siyám’ (Chief Janice George) has also independently curated a small display of Skwxwú7mesh culture for the Vancouver Maritime Museum. The exhibit K’ay’chtń opened to the public in 2000 and is still ongoing.
Although the Skwxwú7mesh Nation has worked with a number of cultural institutions within the Greater Vancouver area, their closest partnership remains with the City of West Vancouver. Snitelwet i Siyamiya, Director of Education, notes:

We have a longstanding relationship with the West Van Museum and Archives, or the West Van Municipal government and their cultural heritage services section. I have maintained contact with my counterpart – the Director there, and also the Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation [who is] also responsible for cultural institutions. We participated in the development of the Cultural Heritage Plan, for example, for West Vancouver, looking at the vision for the next ten years.

Our relationship started a number of years ago now, when the former curator was Jaqueline Gijssen who approached us to look at beginning a partnership, which has really flourished since the museum opened. We’ve participated in helping to look at appropriate protocols and such for opening the institution and one of the inaugural exhibits, of course, was an exhibit that was developed speaking to the history of the Skwxwú7mesh people in our own voice. In mostly all of the projects we’ve been co-curators. (Deborah Jacobs, Interviewed June 12, 2006)

More recently, the Nation has begun to gain ground in their relationships with the two municipalities that govern adjacent North Vancouver – the City and the District. On September 18, 2008 a public art piece titled the “Gateway to Ancient Wisdom” was unveiled at the entrance to the Spirit Trail – a city-planned green space that will extend for 6 km along the waterfront of North Vancouver (once funding is secured). According to signage accompanying this installation: “this trail will connect to existing waterfront trail through the Waterfront Park, the Seabus terminal and Lonsdale Quay. The trail will feature seating areas, lighting and public art by Squamish Nation artists.”

The North Vancouver Museum and Archives has also recently extended invitations to the Skwxwú7mesh Nation to be included in future exhibits and programming, and recently installed new labels in their permanent history exhibits that include information about the histories of local Skwxwú7mesh and Tsleil-Waututh
people. These latter initiatives reflect a turnover in museum staff, namely new leadership with a new vision for this community museum.

Figure 11: “Gateway to Ancient Wisdom” by Skwxwú7mesh artist Wade Baker adjacent to the Mosquito Creek Marina in North Vancouver. Image shows installation in progress, finial and signage added later.

Skwxwú7mesh Nation artists were also recently featured through a North Vancouver public art initiative – the **Cityscape Community Art Space**. Opening on October 3rd and closing October 25th, 2008, **Traditional Territories** was:

An exhibition in partnership with the Siyamin Artist Cooperative, this exhibition features a remarkable display of a variety of mediums including acrylics, glass, clay, weaving, carving and silversmithing by more than 20 skilled artists from the Squamish Nation. The artists include: Chief Janice George, Lisa Lewis, Anjeanette Dawson, Nathan Lewis, Mathew Baker, Richard Baker, T. Richard Baker, Eddie Williams, Les Nahane, Wade Baker, Gary Baker, Cody Mathias, Norma Nahane, Chief Frank Baker, Katie Mathias, Pam
This and other recent initiatives unveiled on the North Shore suggest that the Skwxwú7mesh Nation – through the liaison work undertaken by their Education Department staff, and representatives from Chief and Council, is gaining momentum in the arena of public representation. By partnering with municipal and provincial governments, they are finding more and more opportunities for asserting a presence throughout their traditional territories. This translates into more opportunities for Skwxwú7mesh Nation artists.

It also gives them a stronger voice when it comes to development initiatives. The research and documentation that the Skwxwú7mesh have done, as part of their comprehensive land use plan, has enabled them to mitigate damage to archaeological resources along the Sea to Sky Highway – the corridor connecting Vancouver with Whistler. The expansion of Highway #99, begun after Vancouver was awarded the 2010 Winter Olympics, has led the provincial government to acknowledge Skwxwú7mesh heritage resources – such as pictographs, and enabled them to shift the expansion to avoid damage or destruction (Reimer 2005). The expansion project has also provided the Nation with the opportunity to develop a heritage tour, at rest stops along the route, to lead visitors to their newly opened cultural centre in Whistler.

Individuals from the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, and other Canadian Coast Salish communities, have also established commercial partnerships or ventures that provide cultural interpretation for diverse audiences. In many of these initiatives they take a lead role in the development and delivery of cultural representations.
Cultural Tourism

Cultural representations are not confined to museums in the Greater Vancouver area, but can be experienced at local tourist attractions. For example, the Hiwus Feast House, perched on top of Grouse Mountain – a popular tourist destination in North Vancouver, provides visitors with the opportunity to experience local First Nations cultures. Anthropologist Joy Hendry has described the experience as distinctly Coast Salish noting that:

In Vancouver, there are several tourist sites that have offered concessions of one sort or another to First Nations people. There are Haida carvers, who are willing to chat and explain their situation, and also dance, at the site of the suspension bridge in Capilano Park, and reconstructions of several important totem poles along with a Visitor Centre in Stanley Park. Perhaps the most spectacular is the evening entertainment offered at the Hiwus Feast House way up above the top of the cable car lift on Grouse Mountain. Visitors book for this dinner-show in advance, and are met at the terminus by a Coast Salish hostess who leads them up through the trees to a red pine, decorated “longhouse.” Once inside, we sat either side of a central fireplace and were regaled with a number of humorous stories, a variety of dances, and a feast brought out to us on a series of small plates. We were introduced to considerable explanation about Salish culture and several words of the Salish language... The show was fun, and interesting, and even the children present seemed to get quite involved (2005:70-71).

The site is now operated by members of the Sechelt and Skwxwú7mesh Nations, but when it first opened in 1995 the venture was operated by Kwakwaka’wakw performers – the Le La La dance troupe founded by Me’las (George Taylor) in 1987. Anthropologist Linda Scarangella notes:

Upon hearing of the Kwakwaka’wakw involvement, William J. Kwel-a-a-nexw Nahanee and S’Táplék Bob Baker co-wrote a letter to Grouse informing them that according to protocol, the hosts of this area (Squamish) should be represented, not an outside group not related to the land. After all, the mountain is on Squamish territory. Consequently, Taylor’s group was joined by the Spakwus Slu-lum dancers (Squamish). Taylor’s group was eventually phased out in the summer of 1998 (2002:16).
She reports that Sechelt artist Richard Krentz and Bob Baker, a member of the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, co-developed the current dinner theatre program which involves storytelling, songs and dances. Richard Krentz, who is president of Híwus, also built the feasthouse on Vancouver Island. It was later transported to its current site on Grouse Mountain (Scarengella 2002:14-15).

Nearby in Gastown, the historic district of downtown Vancouver, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation participated in a short lived theatrical exhibit known as Storyeum. Chief Leonard George worked with the exhibit team developing the storyline for the Coast Salish portion of the 72 minute guide tour. Anthropologist Joy Hendry, who interviewed Chief George for her book “Reclaiming Culture,” reported that the Tsleil-Waututh:

Regarded this as a great opportunity to make the visiting world aware of their history, and of their continuing presence, made clear in the conclusion of the show. Further tourist facilities are being set up by members of his community, and these are to be advertised in the lobby, so although Storyeum is not entirely under their control, they have certainly had a productive input into its creation (2005:71).

Storyeum operated for about one year, before closing in October 2006. Although this particular project was unsuccessful, and the Tsleil-Waututh have generally not been well-represented by local museums, they have begun to emerge with a strong public identity.

In 2002, when I worked with representatives from the Tsleil-Waututh Nation on exhibit projects for the Vancouver Museum, they expressed a great deal of concern that they had previously been overlooked by museums and were similarly not well-represented in the historical and academic literature. This created a difficulty for their community in asserting aboriginal rights and title during treaty negotiations. To compensate, their Treaty Department had compiled an impressive booklet titled, “Tsleil-Waututh First Nation Eco-Cultural Resource Guide for Burrard Inlet and Indian Arm.”
This document, available to their community members, compiled oral histories from community-based research projects into a comprehensive narrative used as a basis for developing the eco-tours delivered by Nation youth for Takaya Tours.

Takaya Tours, according to the brochure, is a “kayaking and canoeing cultural experience” which operates seasonally beginning in the late spring and closing in the fall. This tourism venture has been highly successful for the Tsleil-Waututh Nation who has, since its inception in 1999, slowly increased their months of operation – now closing at the end of December and reopening on May 1st. Tsleil-Waututh and Skwxwú7mesh youth are among those employed by this business, which provides the opportunity to share their cultural heritage while finding employment within their community.

Brochures, available throughout the Greater Vancouver area in local hotels and attractions, inform visitors that: “We have travelled the land and waters of our territory for thousands of years, and we wish to share our knowledge with visitors who appreciate wild nature and authentic indigenous heritage.”

In 2002, when I was working with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation on behalf of the Vancouver Museum, Takaya Tours staff mentioned plans to eventually expand the business by developing a pier and camp facilities at the mouth of the Indian River – the site of an ancient Tsleil-Waututh village. While this expansion project has not yet been realised, recent press releases report the opening Takaya Tours Cates Park Paddling Centre on June 15th 2007, and the signing of a management agreement with Deep Cove Kayak both of which have enabled the eco-tourism venture to further expand its services.

The Tsleil-Waututh have also found other ways to increase their public profile, and now host an annual Cultural Arts Festival at Whey-ah-Wichen (Cates Park), a
municipal park located adjacent to their present day reserve lands. The festival, advertised on their Nation’s website, in local newspapers such as the North Shore News, and through posters and leaflets, is described as follows:

The Tsleil-Waututh Nation’s 3rd Annual Cultural Arts Festival, held each year on the traditional territory of Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen along the Burrard Inlet in North Vancouver, will be held on Sunday, August 17 from 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The festival is family focused and is meant to be both a celebration of culture, instilling pride in our young people and honouring our elders, while also educating the broader public about the past and present culture of Aboriginal people on the West Coast. We are inviting traditional dance groups to share their songs and dances and Aboriginal musicians to share their contemporary music and rhythm. Some of our people will sit among the trees and share their skills in weaving, beadwork, drum making and carving. We will light the fires that cook the salmon and share in traditional and contemporary foods. We will entertain the little ones with storytellers and art projects (Tsleil-Waututh Nation website, August 17, 2008).

The Cultural Arts Festival, like Takaya Tours, utilizes Cates Park as a departure point for cultural experience, demonstrating the importance of establishing a good working relationship with the local municipal government.

Tourism also provides a means for other Coast Salish communities, including Chehalis, Holmalco, and Tseycum to gain control over their representations while creating economic opportunities for community members. Tseycum Canoe Tours offers cultural interpretation within the vicinity of the Southern Gulf Islands, Holmalco Wildlife Tours allow visitors to observe grizzly bears along the Orford River in Bute Inlet, while Sasquatch Tours takes visitors on cultural excursions to Harrison Lake and the Harrison River. Several of these Coast Salish cultural tourism ventures, and others such as the Khot-la-chah Art Gallery and Gift Shop in North Vancouver and the Stó:lō Artisan Centre in Chilliwack, advertise in brochures published and distributed by the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia.
The Stó:lô are particularly interested in the opportunities posed by eco-tourism and cultural programming, as T’xwelátse notes:

Some of our local businesses are centering on cultural tourism. Sasquatch Tours for instance is a business – a new business, just started up that deals with cultural tourism. You know, using the historical [background] and naming sacred sites that we have in the area. We have a tour that goes around and we have young people there… That’s my cousins who run that – the Charlie family. They’re very well versed in the history of our people and they share it in a very hospitable way. It’s a good tour to take. I’ve taken the tour myself and enjoyed it (Herb Joe Sr., Interviewed July 27, 2006).

Naxaxalhts’i (Sonny McHalsie), Co-Director of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, adds that cultural tourism is being considered by several other communities within Stó:lô traditional territory, stating:

I know there’s a number of First Nations who have also expressed interest and actually looked into it – into establishing their own interpretative centres. Like for instance a few years back I sat on the advisory committee for Sumas First Nation, because they were looking at establishing a longhouse and the main targeted audience was going to be the school districts. But at the same time they wanted it situated some place where they could run off the tourists too. So they were looking at a longhouse right next to – It’s a rest area about three kilometres east of Abbotsford, or just a couple of kilometres east of Whatcom road. There’s a rest area there, and they were looking at establishing it just across the water from that rest area… And they were looking at working along with the school district and there were representatives from the school district attending the meetings. They actually had some plans drawn up for a longhouse building and I think they were just looking for funding and it never really, never really fell through.

Chowéthel back in 1978, somewhere back then, they were looking at establishing an interpretative centre. Right there at the campsite, and also over across the river on the Island, and they’re looking into that and they didn’t get very far, because of the liability insurance costs and all of that. I guess there were a lot of requirements they would have to meet that would cost a lot of money. And so they never really ended up doing that. I know they’re still talking – most recently, they’re talking about reconstructing a pithouse. Right at the campsite there and coming up with some sort of interpretative programs there. Where they are with that, I’m not sure. I know when I was talking with them and we were talking about the petroglyphs and the potential for establishing an interpretative centre there [at the archaeological site] is huge. I mean you’ve got the pithouses that are there, there’s a lot of what do you call – a lot of development that has happened
over the years that kind of destroyed a lot of what’s there. You’ve got the petroglyphs that were situated right up the rock bluff near there, so those could be brought into it and then there’s so much to talk about around there, like looking at the mountains – names of the mountains, resource gathering areas like the berry picking areas, the hunting grounds (Sonny McHalsie, Interviewed July 27, 2006).

These examples show that in their existing interpretative sites, and those that are in the preliminary planning stages, place names and land use are at the forefront of Stó:lō cultural representations. Material culture is part of sharing cultural knowledge, but it is not prioritised as it is in museum settings. Instead culture is shared by exploring places and their histories with informed community members.

The Stó:lō have two cultural centres that are currently in operation, both target schoolchildren and tourists with their current programming. The first of these two centres is Xá:ytem Longhouse Interpretative Centre, located near the town of Mission, BC. Xá:ytem is a Stó:lō transformation site and the locale of an archaeological village, first occupied about 10,000 years ago (Ormerod 2009: pers. comm.) This village site appears to have been abandoned about 5000 years ago, the occupants gradually moving away as the nearby Fraser River slowly shifted its course (Fortney 2001; Ormerod 2009: pers. comm.).

Xa:ytem Longhouse Interpretative Centre is run by a non-profit society, the Stó:lō Heritage Trust, that draws its membership exclusively from the Band Chiefs (or their nominees) from the twenty-four communities that comprise the Stó:lō traditional territories. Linnea Battel, the Director of Xá:ytem, is also Director of the Board (see Fortney 2001). In 2001, when I interviewed staff at Xá:ytem, for a report on cultural centres in British Columbia, they stressed the importance of having community members greet visitors and guide them through the site. For visitors to walk around the site
unescorted was viewed as a breach of protocol – visitor experience was designed to be an opportunity to share in Stó:lō traditions. Local Stó:lō people, particularly youth, performed the role of hosts and interpreters. Visitors were guided through displays and activities in the Longhouse Building before being taken outside to the site of a Transformer Stone representing three ancient Stó:lō Chiefs, whom we were informed were turned to stone by Xe:Xals (the Transformers) because they had failed to share the gift of writing with their people. Along the way interpreters shared stories about local mountains and the excavations that occurred at the site. At intervals throughout the tour visitors were also given the opportunity to try their hand at traditional skills, such as making cedar bark rope or using a D-Adze to carve a cedar canoe.

If visitors want a more intensive experience they may register for one of the centre’s workshops offered several times throughout the year. Workshops are 1-2 days in duration, and are offered on basketry, loom weaving, beading and drum-making. While attending a workshop in 2002, I observed that they were popular options among local school teachers looking for workshops to take on their professional development days.

The Stó:lō also operate an Interpretative Centre on the Coqualeetza grounds in Sardis, B.C. The grounds are the centralised location for many of their administration offices and governance structures. Shxwt’a:selhawtxw (The House of Long Ago and Today) consists of educational displays and a gift shop located in a concrete building with an ethnobotanical garden and traditional longhouse adjacent to the centre. Stó:lō cultural experts and artists assist with the programming, discussing traditional arts such as basketry at tables set up inside the longhouse. As part of a program I observed in
2000, local schoolchildren learned basic cedar bark weaving techniques by using strips of paper to create their own woven mats. *T’xwelátse* (Herb Joe) notes:

*Shxwt’a:selhawtxw*, yeah it’s still operational. It’s not quite as busy as it maybe once was, but we think now that the tourists are going to be expanding. Especially with the Olympic Games coming and the emphasis on promoting tourism, that cultural tourism will become much more important. And we think that *Shxwt’a:selhawtxw* will probably be one of the recommended stopping sites because it gives a sort of a bird’s eye view, or thumbnail sketch, of who the Stó:lō people are, particularly those who are involved in the Coqualeetza complex here.

You know, in that it was initially a residential school, a Methodist residential school, and after that it was transformed into a hospital for tuberculosis patients from all across BC, and then after that it was a housing site for the army. The Royal Canadian Engineers, all of their students were housed in that building and then they attended school down at the base, down at CFB Chilliwack. And then of course, after that, we reclaimed it – the Chilliwack Tribe, Stó:lō Nation. And we renovated the buildings and made offices for staff. So, there’s a history there and part of the history is *Shxwt’a:selhawtxw*. Actually I was sort of involved in a task group that were looking at how to use the buildings, and that used to be – *Shxwt’a:selhawtxw* used to be just a parking garage. It was a brick parking garage. A parking shed, you know, with no doors on it or anything… So when they came around, “what should we do tear it down or use it?” I said, “Well why don’t you just put a façade on it, cedar plank façade on it, and use it as a display? Because with a cedar plank façade and roof, it would look exactly like one of our old longhouses. And they said, “What a great idea!” So that’s what they ended up doing. And it ended up being part of the longhouse, which was built – that longhouse was built as an educational facility. And now we have a program in the upper valley here, where all of the grade fours spend part of their year learning about local First Nations. So all of the grade four classes from the school districts around here all spend a day here, on the property with their students, going through a program that’s developed to meet the needs of grade four students. So, that’s still going on (Herb Joe Sr., Interviewed July 27, 2006).

In Chapter 2, I mentioned that Stó:lō leadership view physical ownership of their collections as requisite for telling their own history and sharing their culture in a museum setting. Material culture is only one aspect of that culture. They equally draw inspiration from the land around them – place names and sharing oral history create the framework for interpretative experiences developed by Stó:lō people for their own community members and others. This contrasts with the content of museum projects that they have
participated in, since in these settings representations are focused on telling the stories of objects – whether it is their creation, use, or cultural meaning.

**Strengthening Public Identities**

The Stó:lō first began to work with museums, in a strategic manner, in the mid-1980s when the Stó:lō Tribal Council first established an Aboriginal Rights and Title Department. *Naxaxalhts’i* elaborates:

I noticed that once Stó:lō Tribal Council became established, and especially under the guidance of Grand Chief Clarence Pennier – there’s a lot that he had to offer. When he was the Director of the Aboriginal Rights and Title Department and the key principle that he recognised was the importance of academic institutions. The importance of, you know, establishing those relationships with the various academic disciplines, not just anthropologists, not just archaeologists, but historians, genealogists. So that’s really kind of taken off. Especially when we look at the fact that a lot of the work that we do in the Aboriginal Rights and Title department has a lot to do with providing information to the general public about just what our history is and what is the relationship that we have to our land (Sonny McHalsie, Interviewed July 27, 2006).

Since the department has been established, *Naxaxalhts’i* notes:

We’ve established pretty good working relationships with some of the museums and those are the two examples that I can think of right off the bat – the Chilliwack Museum and the Museum of Anthropology. For the most part those are the main two. We’ve had some work with the Mission Museum, not too much. I know quite a few years back when [archaeologist] Gordon Mohs was still working with us… I think the situation arose because his wife was working for the museum as well. And so it kind of gave us a little bit of an in, and I know they kind of changed around the way they had their exhibits based upon some of the recommendations we were able to provide at that time.

The Chilliwack Museum, well they’ve been pretty open. We’ve established a relationship with them right now where if anyone comes into the museum with a First Nations artefact of some sort and want to donate it to the museum, well the museum refers them first to us right away. So they’ll come and see us instead.

You probably talked to Herb about *T’xwelátse*. The *T’xwelátse* stone, the Chilliwack Museum opened their doors because we don’t really have a facility right now that meets the standards to store *T’xwelátse*, and so the Chilliwack
Museum’s Ron Denman came forward and said that they are more than willing to provide the space for that. So we have a pretty good working relationship with them. Over the years there’s been a number of different projects that we’ve assisted them with, or they assist us with. Yeah we have a good working relationship with them.

Ron Denman secured some funding to get some signs put along Old Yale Road. There are various colonial history places along there that he thought was important to, you know to most, to the general public. And so what he did was, wherever there was a place that had to do with – I think one of them was the very first site that was gold, the other one I think might be churches, or sites of churches, or you know things like that. I can’t remember. There are 22 or 24 signs, something like that, and I think there are six or seven that have to do with First Nations. So he came to see us, and he said that he had a limited budget. He had a number – a certain number of signs. So, you know, we followed the route along and we were able to [choose] which places we thought would be the best places that would allow us to share a little bit of First Nations culture and history, by sharing the place name and sharing the meaning of it. Just kind of opening the people’s eyes the presence of First Nations and you know the importance of those sites to First Nations as well. So that’s the most recent project that we’ve had with the Chilliwack Museum (Sonny McHalsie, Interviewed July 27, 2006).

The Stó:lō community – and other Canadian Coast Salish communities such as the Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, and Snuneymuxw, have developed their closest relationships with the museums who are their nearest neighbours. Proximity seems to be one essential ingredient for developing ongoing partnerships.

In the examples discussed previously, it would also seem that Canadian Coast Salish communities are not only working with museums but are finding their own sites for interpretation. This is occurring through eco-tourism initiatives or the establishment of interpretative centres. Many nations reported that they are considering establishing their own centres when it becomes economically feasible for their nations, while others such as the Stó:lō, Skwxwú7mesh, and Quw’utsun’ have already achieved that goal.

The Quw’utsun’ were able to open their cultural centre following Expo 86, when they purchased some of the leftover buildings erected for the world’s fair and transported
them by ship to their community. Today, the Quw’utsun’ Cultural and Conference Centre offers: cultural interpretive tours, a mid-day salmon BBQ throughout the summer months, a film presentation on the Quw’utsun’ people, and a gallery and gift shop. By contrast, the Stó:lō have established interpretative centres using both existing infrastructure and through fundraising for new facilities, while the Skwxwú7mesh Nation partnered with the neighbouring Interior Salish community of Lil’wat (Mount Currie) to fund and develop their cultural centre, which officially opened in Whistler on July 10th, 2008.

All of the initiatives discussed above indicate that the interpretation of Coast Salish culture in Canada has been slowly gaining momentum. Interviews with community liaisons suggest that increased representational activity frequently correlates directly to treaty activity. Geraldine Manson of the Snuneymuxw First Nation on Vancouver Island notes that her involvement with museums began in the 1990s:

when I took the Cultural Stewardship program [at the Royal British Columbia Museum] and I believe our nation began to get involved with the museums when we started our Treaty process. Because as you know, part of our treaty process, one of the chapters relates to culture and heritage.

With the Royal BC Museum we went to travel to talk about our concerns about how some of the objects that were on display, and whether we were against it being displayed or it was displayed wrongly… Some of the objects I can kind of put example to, would be the sacred masks. It could [also] have been a petroglyph image, or it could have been one of the artefacts found and handed over to the museum, which we considered sacred (Geraldine Manson, Interviewed October 22, 2007).

Geraldine Manson participated in the Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program in 1997.
This program was offered by the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) between 1993 and 1998. Participants were drawn from First Nations communities throughout British Columbia – six interns participated in the first year.

Throughout the six years of operation forty-one people of all ages attended the internship program. For some it was the first time they had been away from their communities. The RBCM worked with the First Peoples Cultural Foundation to set up the components with First Nations cultural centres. Unfortunately due to budget constraints the program ended in 1998 (Bin-Juda 2000:19).

The program involved museum training provided at the RBCM, followed by shorter visits to First Nations collections housed in repositories such as MOA and First Nations cultural centres located throughout the province. After completing the *Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program*, Geraldine Manson went on to work with the Nanaimo District Museum where she eventually became a Board Member and played an active role in the museum’s redevelopment and installation in the newly opened Vancouver Island Conference Centre in downtown Nanaimo.

Several other communities also reported that their museum work was directly related to the establishment of their Treaty Departments, events that usually occurred during the 1980s or 1990s. The Musqueam, whose experiences were highlighted in chapters 5 and 6, are unique in that they began to strategically explore the utility of museums several decades earlier. They, like their neighbours the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, initiated their museum work as part of an education mandate. However, since then Musqueam Chief and Council have delegated the responsibility to the Treaty, Lands and Resources Department, now under the Direction of Leona Sparrow – an original member of the *Musqueam Cultural Committee*. Table six provides a very brief chronology of
strategic (as opposed to less formal) museum engagement as identified by the communities mentioned above.

**Table Six: Overview of Active Engagement with Museums**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Onset of Activity</th>
<th>Delegation of Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musqueam</td>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>First initiated by the Musqueam Cultural Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stó:lō Tribal Council</td>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>Aboriginal Rights and Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skwxwú7mesh Nation</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo)</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>Treaty Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsleil-Waututh (Burrard)</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>Treaty Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this overview of Coast Salish Interpretations in Canada, a trend is evident – communities located close to, or in, urban centres are well-represented when compared to Coast Salish communities in less urban areas. These representations may be internally driven or the result of collaborations with local museums, businesses, or municipalities, but are generally well-publicized. The communities of Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, Tsleil-Waututh, Snuneymuxw and Sto:lo are all located near urban centres – Greater Vancouver, Nanaimo, and Chilliwack respectively. They are also represented in a variety of venues, not all of them museums, as is demonstrated below in Table Seven. Smaller or more remote communities, such as: Sechelt, Sliammon, Klahoose, Holmalco, Tsawout, Tsartlip, Malahat, T’sou-ke, and Tsawwassen were minimally featured (or completely absent) from the substantive list of museums exhibits and public programmes provided previously in chapter four.

What does this tell us about Coast Salish representations in Canada? It suggests that interpretation, for the most part, is community driven. Museum professionals work most closely with the communities who are their immediate neighbours (and thus most likely to be encountered on a regular basis) or those whose heritage materials are best
represented by their collections. Museums do not appear to be as relevant for Coast Salish communities that do not share proximity, since community members – specifically youth, have fewer opportunities to visit these repositories. Instead it would seem that those communities, such as the northern communities of Klahoose and Sliammon, direct their energies towards collaborations and research that will more directly benefit their membership – land use studies, documentation and preservation of archaeological sites, and oral history initiatives. Increasingly these communities are using websites to create a public profile and provide updates to community members and other interested parties residing off reserve.

The Stó:lō Nation and the Stó:lō Tribal Council provide an unique example for discussing representations, since together they account for 19 of the 24 Coast Salish communities who are known collectively as the Stó:lō people. Many of the constituent communities administered by these two larger governance structures are removed from urban centres, yet the Stó:lō are generally well-represented by museums. My research suggests that individual Stó:lō communities direct their interpretation efforts towards cultural tourism initiatives and other ventures that potentially will provide economic opportunities for community members. These types of interpretative activities emphasise local cultural knowledge and experiences. By contrast, the political entities – the Stó:lō Nation and the Stó:lō Tribal Council tend to be consulted by museums and other interpretative agencies to participate in exhibits and public programmes that invoke a more regional Coast Salish identity. In these types of representations the emphasis is determined by objects housed within the repositories, and tends towards providing a context for understanding Stó:lō culture using the framework of material culture.
### Table Seven: Sites of Canadian Representations organised by Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Interpretative Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musqueam</strong></td>
<td>- UBC Museum of Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(population 1371)</td>
<td>- Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vancouver Art Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- YVR International Airport</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Greater Vancouver Regional District, Parks and Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Stanley Park)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gulf of Georgia Cannery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- City of Richmond, Parks and Recreation (Blueberry House)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Richmond Museum and Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Canadian Museum of Civilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Seattle Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stó:lō Nation &amp; Tribal Council</strong></td>
<td>- Chilliwack Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(population 4805)</td>
<td>- UBC Museum of Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mission Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Langley Centennial Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vancouver Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Seattle Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Burke Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Xa:ytem Longhouse Interpretive Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shxwt’a:selhawtxw (House of Long Ago and Today)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skwxwú7mesh Nation</strong></td>
<td>- West Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(population 3545)</td>
<td>- City of West Vancouver (Ambleside Park)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- North Vancouver District Cultural and Heritage Services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- City of North Vancouver</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Capilano College, Arts Program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vancouver Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vancouver Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Greater Vancouver Regional District, Parks and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Stanley Park)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- City of Vancouver and National Film Board of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Seattle Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Burke Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Simon Fraser University, Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- North Vancouver Museum and Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo)</strong></td>
<td>- Nanaimo District Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(population 558)</td>
<td>- Gabriola Island Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Malaspina College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- UBC Museum of Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Seattle Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tsleil-Waututh (Burrard)</strong></td>
<td>- Takaya Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(population 1405)</td>
<td>- Greater Vancouver Regional District, Parks and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Stanley Park)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- District of North Vancouver, Parks and Recreation (Cates Park)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vancouver Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Storyeum (Closed October 2006)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Seattle Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Simon Fraser University, Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- North Vancouver Museum and Archives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Access to Collections:

Representatives from Coast Salish communities in Canada reported accessing Coast Salish collections in a diversity of museums, both local and foreign. The circumstances for the visits varied, ranging from community outings and Elders’ excursions, to consultations for exhibits and other museum-based projects, to research trips for Treaty or Education Department staff. Communities generally reported that these initiatives took place over the course of several years. By contrast, museum staff report more intensive activity. For example, a memo sent by MOA Collections Management staff on February 11, 1998, notes that the following Coast Salish communities visited the museum (or were visited by museum staff) between May 1997 – March 1998:

- Quw’utsun’ visit (to Duncan)        April – May 1997
- Quw’utsun’ Elders (to MOA)         August 1997
- Kuper Island Elders (to MOA)       August 1997
- Musqueam (cleansing – entire building)  September 1997
- Stó:lō Nation Cultural Committee (to MOA)  September 1997
- Musqueam (burning)                  October 1997
- Nanaimo Elder visit (to MOA)       December 1997
- Cowichan/Chemainus college student (2-3 hrs/week)  January – April 1998

During the same period, MOA also sent inventories of collections to the Quw’utsun’, the Te’mexw Treaty Association, the Sliammon and the Snuneymuxw; addressed queries from a Saanich student; provided information on Snuneymuxw objects for an individual conducting status research; and processed a repatriation request for a family from Tseycum on Vancouver Island. In addition to the Coast Salish activity mentioned above, First Nations from several other communities accessed the museum’s collections through information requests, museum visits, or repatriation requests during the same period. In this instance, the museum was both proactive and reactive in its dealings with First Nations communities – although the emphasis was on the latter type of activity.
Overall, the Canadian Coast Salish representatives I spoke with all reported gaining access to local museum collections when they requested it. When discussions moved away from institutions in their local area, representatives most frequently reported visiting larger Canadian and American institutions – although the cultural centres of other Tribes and Nations were also frequently visited. Among the larger North American institutions visited were: the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Glenbow Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of the American Indian, the Burke Museum, and the Seattle Art Museum.

In general, community member responses did not focus on the issue of access, but were more concerned with how objects were stored and displayed at such institutions. For example, Musqueam Elder Larry Grant was favourably impressed by the galleries he viewed at the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian, since their exhibits retained the cultural context of the objects being displayed. He noted that the existing visible storage galleries at MOA fractured cultures by comparison, and stated:

And that’s what I found disturbing here. The displays are not in context. I know that the area kind of dictates how you can put the displays up, but it’s like [the] Kwakwaka’wakw people have a mask and the cape for the mask is at the other end of display. So it really takes everything out of context, and isolates everything, and never really shows you the whole. Yeah it’s all fractured, fragmented all over the place…you can’t visualize it. There’s so much stuff in the museum, you can’t visualise exactly how it’s being worn. In fact they don’t even have a picture of how it’s worn along side of each belonging (Interviewed August 16, 2006).

This was a common concern for Coast Salish and other First Nations community members consulted about for the Museum of Anthropology’s renewal project in 2005. One representative went so far as to compare the current displays to a thrift shop, because objects were crowded together – sometimes stacked inside of one another. The overall
sentiment was that this conveyed a lack of respect for the objects and their makers. Now that museum professionals have become comfortable with facilitating access to source communities, it is likely that the next step in the process will be to incorporate cultural knowledge about the care and storage of such collections (Clavir 2002; Rosoff 2003).

**An International Perspective**

Skwxwú7mesh Artist *Tawxsin Yexwulla / Poolxtun* (Aaron Nelson Moody) was the only individual who discussed visiting European museums. He noted that visiting museum collections was extremely important to him as an artist, and reflected that for the most part his experiences were positive – the opposite of what he had been taught to expect during his early years in Upper Squamish, as the following interview excerpts reveal.

Well over here I’ve been to museums like the Burke Museum, and the Royal Museum in Victoria, the stuff they have at Cowichan, UBC, Vancouver Museum… I went to maybe half a dozen museums when I was in England and Scotland, or maybe fewer, maybe eight or nine altogether. And it was funny – in Scotland they were really helpful. They were really curious and some parts of England, most of England, they were really curious as well. They just wanted to know more about what they had. It seemed like most of the collections in small towns, places like Exeter, they had stuff that an old sea captain had – the family had found it in the attic and they had no idea what it was. So they would show me stuff and they were really curious about what it was, and they would just drag me downstairs and be pulling stuff out, “Do you know what this thing is? Do you know what that is?” Some of it wasn’t native at all, but they just had no idea what it was and on the off chance that I might recognise something… But really fine collections and really nice stuff, because I guess there was a lot of sea faring people that had their summer homes there… southern England.

But in London itself, it was a whole different attitude. Everything was theirs. And you know I’d never really come across a really strongly colonial attitude before. But the guy thought of everything as his – said that everything was his... I had a very short time, but I kind of stuck it out because you know it was a chance to see some things. He didn’t bring me back and show me anything behind the scenes. It was a photograph through the glass kind of thing. He pulled
out one or two things, just some paper things he happened to have handy, but he had no interest in taking any time to show me “his” stuff. You know that’s what he told me… I’ve run into one or two other people in my research who were like that, but for the most part people were looking after stuff that they loved. And they felt very strongly connected to it, which I was surprised by.

… It was actually nice to go to places, and it was kind of a healing actually to go to places, and to find out that they actually respected aboriginal culture, and respected our stuff and actually were feeling things from pieces. They were feeling spiritually moved, they were feeling emotionally attached. They were feeling a connection to the land and what it was representing. So that was, you know, that was a nice moment for me when I started to realise that (Aaron Nelson Moody, Interviewed August 16, 2007).

**Repatriation:**

Experiences with repatriations seem to largely involve human remains for Canadian Coast Salish communities, although objects of cultural significance and a stone Ancestor have been returned to specific families from British Columbia. Repatriations have been made by both Canadian and American museums to Canadian Coast Salish communities.

Of the two repatriations to families, the one involving a Canadian institution was most quickly resolved. The Jacks family of the Tseycum First Nation, located in Saanich on Vancouver Island, successfully repatriated several family belongings sold to the UBC Museum of Anthropology by a collector from Vancouver Island (Brown 1996:3). The family made their repatriation request in 1994 and received seven of the requested items in 1995 and an additional three the following year.

By contrast, it took fifteen years of petitioning the Burke Museum in Washington State before the descendents of Stone T’xwelátse were successful in bringing their
ancestor home in October 2006. Several months before the event occurred \textit{T’xwelátse} (Herb Joe Sr.) described his family’s quest as follows:

Initially, my relationship with the Burke Museum in Seattle was not a very good one at all. They just put up all kinds of road blocks for me with regard to the repatriation application… I’d gone down there on two or three different occasions, just on my own, with my own family, and I went down there with a medicine man that one time to have him check out our statue. And at one time we initiated a meeting between the museum director, the curator – the curator of the department where the statue was, and my grandmas – actually all my grand auntsies. They’re all gone now, the ones that went down there. Passed on now. But we brought them down there to meet with the staff down there, basically inform them that the statue was ours. And that we had plans on… a repatriation application. And we met the curator of the department where the statue was at that time. His name was Dr. James Nason.

Yeah, he’s an Apache. An Apache Indian and I thought, “An Apache Indian okay he’ll be sympathetic to… my situation and help me, support my application for repatriation.” But as it turned out, he was the main roadblock in the whole process. Whenever the questions came up, it was always “No.” “No.” “Do you think our application would be a successful application?” “No! It doesn’t apply… None of the conditions that you’re talking about apply to a repatriation situation so you’re not going to be getting him back.”

That was right about the same time that NAGPRA was passed. And actually it was Dr. Nason that suggested that, “Maybe we should wait until after the policies and protocols have been established for NAGPRA.” And I said, “Oh okay, that’s understandable.” So I basically sat back for a year or two, and then before I started the process again and still got very negative feedback from… the Burke staff with regard to my application for repatriation. It wasn’t until after I’d been dealing with them for, I think, maybe four or five years that one of them happened to say, “Well under NAGPRA we don’t recognise any Canadian tribes anyway. So you don’t even qualify to apply.” So I said, “Well, nice of you to tell me that now. I mean you could have told me that, you know, three or four years ago.” And he says, “Well. We didn’t think that it was really important, because you know under the conditions that are stated under NAGPRA you don’t even… qualify to apply for repatriations. So we didn’t think anything of it…”

And it was right after that that I asked, “Well who do you recognise?” And they said, “Well, the legislation says that this Act applies to all federally recognised Indian tribes in the United States.” So I said, “Okay well that’s fine. At least now I’ve got something to work with.” Well I thought, “I’m a tribal member of the Nooksack Tribe and the Nooksack Tribe is a federally recognised Indian tribe in the United States. So I went and we’ve got family in the United States, direct descendants of the statue \textit{T’xwelátse}, who live in and are members of that
community. Besides myself. So I called a meeting of those members of our family who live there, and they said, “Well let’s go for it. Why don’t we talk to the cultural committee?” So we talked to the cultural committee. The cultural committee says, “Well, we’re willing to support you. Why don’t we talk to the Tribal Chairman?” So we talked to the Tribal Chairman and the Tribal Chairman at that time said, and there’s been a number of Tribal Chairmen since then, but the Tribal Chairman at that time said, “Just bring your application to me and I’ll sign it.” He said, “I think it’s time that we started reclaiming some of our historic artefacts and property.” So he was all in favour. So we said, “Okay, fine.” So we started the process then and he signed a support letter and all that. Signed on behalf of the Tribal Council, the tribe down there and all that. So we restarted the whole process, and it was probably six or seven years after that, and it just went nowhere.

It went nowhere until a little over a year ago when we finally, Dave [Schaepe] finally started making some inroads with the Burke Museum – staff turnover? With new people coming on stream. Dave knew some of the people who were hired down there, or knew of them. And then he met them at that conference over in Haida Gwaii. A couple of years ago they had a big conference, a repatriation conference at Haida Gwaii. Well, he met a bunch of the staff of the Burke Museum at that time and he connected with them, talked to them about our application, and it wasn’t until that time that we actually started to get some movement with the application. So up until that point and time – so 12 years? They just basically stone walled us. They just said, “No. No.” They kept on saying no. I got to thinking that the Burke Museum, their total vocabulary was just made up of “No.”

It was not a very positive relationship at all. Until very recently when Iona Campagnolo, the Lieutenant Governor of BC. Well anyway, she saw the movie that was done by Stó:lō Nation, The Lynching of Louie Sam, and decided to become involved in it at that point in time. She suggested that Washington State, and the Nooksack community – the non-native community, owed the Stó:lō people an apology for lynching an innocent boy – a 14 year old. So she connected with the Governor’s office in Washington State and they started things going and they started putting pressure... They decided to make it a public issue.

They went to the media and made public releases – the Governor of the State of Washington, I think his name is Davis. He made a public announcement over TV that related to a public response to the lynching of Louie Sam. And then the repatriation of our statue became a part of that. That whole, sort of public, media approach to the whole issues around repatriation. So we got a lot of publicity there, and that even – I don’t know if it had a formal effect, but it certainly made things move. So people started to speak out. People started to say, “Oh yeah well we’re in the middle of a process, that’s a repatriation process.” So the Burke Museum I think were forced to react to the political arena being activated, the public arena being activated through the media response to the Governor’s office
and all that kind of stuff. So it started a movement there that was more conducive to our side, to the repatriation application. But it started to go then, and March 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2006, I was told by Dave [Schaepe], that he had just been informed by the Burke Museum that the application had been approved for repatriation (Herb Joe Sr., Interviewed July 27, 2006).

The family of Stone \textit{T’xwelátse}, the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, and Bear Image productions created a documentary to celebrate the return of the stone ancestor after 114 years. The DVD, \textit{T’xwelátse Met’ókw’ Telo qáys / Is Finally Home}, is sold by the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre to help fund their activities. It is also available through the MOA gift shop, and staff report that it has sold very well since they began stocking it.

A year after the return, the family arranged for Stone \textit{T’xwelátse} to visit MOA for several months – before his departure he was joined by the stone \textit{q’aysca:m}, after she was reunited with the community of Musqueam (see Chapter 6 for more details about her rediscovery). A celebration was held at MOA to welcome Stone \textit{T’xwelátse} to the museum on Saturday, March 1, 2008. In attendance was \textit{Xwē li qwēl tēl}, the Honourable Steven L. Point, a member of the Stó:lō community and the current Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.
The Return of Ancestral Remains

Repatriations to communities, as opposed to individuals or families, seem to be much more prevalent in Canada. Several Canadian Coast Salish communities, including: Musqueam, Tsawwassen, Skwxwú7mesh, Tseycum, Chemainus, Sliammon and Klahoose, have received or worked to repatriate ancestral remains from museums. The American Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of the American Indian, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and the UBC Laboratory of Archaeology are institutions that have returned human remains to some of the aforementioned communities. In some instances the repositories were proactive – contacting the source communities and informing them about the presence of their ancestral remains, in other instances the communities initiated contact themselves.
In 2006, the UBC Laboratory of Archaeology (LOA) undertook a repatriation project titled: *The Journey Home* (Rowley and Hausler 2008). This project, funded by a Hampton grant, was a proactive effort to contact First Nations communities throughout British Columbia who had ancestral remains housed at LOA. In response to these communications, some First Nations sent delegates to visit the Lab and make the appropriate spiritual and mortuary arrangements for their Ancestors. For some of the Coast Salish communities involved in the project this meant working with the Lab to ensure the long-term care of their Ancestor’s remains, while for others it sparked the beginning of discussions about how to proceed in the future. For two Coast Salish communities the project ended with a “journey home.”

The June 1st, 2006 edition of *Neh Motl*, the Sliammon Community newspaper, reports on the different procedures that their community had to follow to achieve the repatriation of human remains from both the Canadian Museum of Civilization and LOA. The paper reports that the CMC required an official letter from the community and verification that there were no competing claims. To address this concern, Sliammon hosted a meeting with the neighbouring communities of Klahoose, Holmalco, and Hamatla (Comox), and it was decided that they would work together to bring their Ancestors home (Galligos 2006a:7). They subsequently sent a joint letter of support to the CMC. Their community newspaper reports this process differed from the one required by LOA, which involved the following steps:

1) In order to have this repatriation of our ancestors, we, the above mentioned First Nations had to draft up an official Band Council Resolution specifically requesting the repatriation of human remains. 2) We then had to place a legal notice in our local newspaper and in all the other communities surrounding the other Nations involved so that there would be no dispute as to where the remains were discovered and where the remains would return. 3) Official letters from our
neighbouring Nations stating that they were in agreement with the repatriation. As we the above mention First Nations were working together and informed UBC of that fact made this easier. 4) Forward all required documents with official letter requesting the repatriation of our Ancestral Human Remains (Galligos 2006a:7).

Dr. Sue Rowley, a representative of LOA, notes that the official letters from neighbouring nations mentioned above were not a requirement of the process, but something the Sliammon chose to do. Once the process was completed, on June 8th, 2006 two Ancestors were returned to the Sliammon and an additional eight Ancestors to the Klahoose. Remains from a third community were sadly left behind as no delegates were dispatched to accompany them home. This was a source of some distress for those present.

The Klahoose and Sliammon delegation brought cedar mortuary boxes to accommodate their Ancestral remains, which were transferred to the boxes by Elders and other community members in attendance, myself included. This event was preceded by a cleansing ceremony, conducted by John Louie, in the lab and through the passageways to the rear entrance of the museum where the delegation’s vehicles were waiting (Galligos 2006b:1). Those in attendance were also cleansed upon completion of this important work before the Ancestors were quickly transported back to Sliammon, where a traditional wake was held the same evening for both sets of remains at the Salish Centre. After the wake, the remains of the Sliammon Ancestors were interred in their home territory, while those of their Klahoose relatives continued their journey home for reburial (Galligos 2006b:3).

The Sliammon were also successful in repatriating a set of ancestral remains from the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 2006. The museum’s annual report for 2006-2007 also details that the Skwxwú7mesh Nation was the recipient of two sets of
repatriated human remains from Stanley Park, British Columbia. This repatriation reportedly caused some upset for the Musqueam community, who also claim Stanley Park as their traditional territory. This was the first repatriation of human remains to the Skwxwú7mesh Nation according to an article appearing in the Globe and Mail newspaper on November 25, 2006, which reported:

Chief Williams said this sort of repatriation had never happened before at Squamish Nation. Two special bent wood cedar boxes were made to carry the remains home, and a solemn Shaker funeral rite took place as the party accepted them from museum staff… “It is a chance to show our people the type of ceremony we have when someone comes back to us – a chance to learn the protocol and all those issues,” he said. (Atkinson 2006)

The Musqueam Indian Band and Tseycum First Nation have both been the recipients of repatriated ancestral remains from American Museums – the National Museum of the American Indian and the American Museum of Natural History respectively. The Musqueam were contacted by museum staff, while the Tseycum First Nation undertook their own research project to bring their ancestors home. An article in Canada’s Globe and Mail newspaper reported that:

Tseycum Chief Vern Jacks and his wife, Cora, are spearheading the delegation, which will repatriate 55 sets of human remains to their traditional territory. The Tseycum, which in their traditional Sencoten language means “land of clay,” live on 29 hectares of reserve land on Greater Victoria’s Saanich Peninsula. A total of 51 people will be making the trip, called “Our Journey Home.” “It means a lot,” said Mr. Jacks in an interview before departing for New York. “It’s part of the healing process for our people.” The bones were unearthed in the late 1800s by American archaeologist Harlan Ingersoll Smith, and sold to museums for as little as $5 for a skull and $10 for an entire skeleton. Some of the bones date back 2000 years. Mr. Jacks said he has known about the remains for years, first hearing stories about the illegal exhumations from his grandmother. She would tell of massive grave-digging campaigns, he said, where his ancestors would be dug up right in front of their relatives, with no regard for their feelings or protestations […]
The trip is being funded because of a unique partnership. With no money coming from the B.C. government, the Tseycum received help from 14 people outside of the band, all non-aboriginal, who formed a fundraising committee. The small group – made up of academics, students, and a lawyer – raised more than $50,000, which the Tseycum matched from their own resources (Langdon 2008:S2).

These repatriations are significant since the two nations involved fall outside of the repatriation requirements of NAGPRA legislation.

In another interesting example, the Chemainus Band successfully repatriated a burial box with human remains from a privately owned museum in Ladysmith, BC. The remains had been on display at the Black Nugget Museum for 28 years, when archaeologist Eric McLay of the Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group arranged a meeting between Chief Terry Sampson and the museum’s owner, Kurt Guilbride (Compton 2006). Fortunately, Guilbride was willing to return the remains, and they were subsequently claimed by an Elder. Songs and prayers were spoken over them to prepare them for a journey to the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria, where they are being kept until the community can arrange to re-inter them (Compton 2006).

In the end, clarity and legal precedence seem to be the two factors that influence the ease of repatriation. A clear provenance, including a detailed accession history on the part of the museum and an absence of conflicting claims on the part of the petitioning community, combined with a legal process on the part of the institution are required to facilitate a claim. In the case of the American Museum of Natural History, the Tseycum repatriation followed precedent set by the Haida in 2002, when they repatriated 48 ancestors illicitly removed from their community by a museum collector in the early 20th century. These repatriations differ from the circumstances of the return of Stone T’xwelátse by the Burke Museum, since staff at that institution strictly adhered to the
legal requirements detailed by NAGPRA. In that instance the return was facilitated by the fact that the main petitioner, T’xwelátse (Herb Joe), was also a registered member of a federally recognised American Tribe – the Nooksack.

**Training Initiatives**

Previously I discussed how Coast Salish exhibits and public programmes have been gathering strength since the 1980s. As Coast Salish representations have become more pervasive in the public eye, First Nations community members have had more opportunities to receive training at museums and other facilities. In general, training initiatives are entwined with ongoing museum projects – they are written into grant applications at the request of community liaisons. On the local level, training opportunities and internships seldom exist independent of such projects because of these funding limitations. For example, the *Native Youth Program* offered by MOA is dependent upon co-sponsorship from a local First Nations organization (www.moa.ubc.ca/pdf/Native_youth_program.pdf). This program provides placement opportunities for six high school students each year. However, applications always greatly outnumber the available positions.

On the National level, institutions such as the Canadian Museum of Civilization offers opportunities that are not project oriented, and are open to a diversity of communities from across the nation. Thus demand for the program can result in competition for the available positions.

The Skwxwú7mesh Nation has partnered on exhibits with several institutions and their community liaison, Director of Education Deborah Jacobs, ensures that whenever
possible these partnerships involve co-curatorships for community members. These opportunities can facilitate Nation involvement by ensuring that key content is included in exhibits. She notes:

The concepts were developed primarily in house. They were vetted through the Squamish Language Elders Authority. We had some discussion with the instructional team and the language team here, and the – largely the message that we wanted to give was “We own our own experience” and to give voice to our history and our continuing ongoing presence here on the North Shore and up through our whole traditional territory – so through the Sea to Sky Corridor.

So we [also] do referrals. For example, the Britannia Museum – when they do their Copper and Fire exhibit, do referrals on artists who might be willing to do demonstration work, or add pieces, to looking at the new collections (Deborah Jacobs, Interviewed June 12, 2006).

Since communities are more frequently subjected to requests for letters of support for museum projects and other cultural initiatives, to assist with securing funds from grant agencies, community needs are more frequently being addressed. For the Skwxwú7mesh Nation identified needs include training opportunities for younger staff and other community members – something that is being realized with more frequency through co-curatorships.

For example, Chepxímiya Siyám’ (Chief Janice George), completed formal museum training in the United States, and has since received additional museum training through an internship provided by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. She has also gained further experience working with the Maritime Museum, the West Vancouver Museum, and the Vancouver Museum on educational programming and exhibit development as a representative of the Skwxwú7mesh Nation. At the Vancouver Museum, she co-curated the exhibit Honouring the Basket Makers with N. Rose Point of Musqueam and Carleen George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Training for this project
included research of the museum’s collections, hosting an Elders visit to the museum, condition reporting on objects selected for exhibition, and writing exhibit labels.

Chepxímiya Siyám’ later participated in the development and delivery of the school program that accompanied the exhibit.

Other Skwxwú7mesh community members were employed by, or volunteered for, projects relating to the Skwxwú7mesh Sculpture Symposium. This public art forum and series of exhibits was hosted in partnership with the City of West Vancouver.

Skwxwú7mesh artist Tawxin Yexwulla / Poolxtun (Aaron Nelson Moody) assisted with the development of two Sculpture Symposium exhibits – a Progress Exhibit at the West Vancouver Memorial Library, and Stituyntm / Enduring Traditions, an exhibit of Coast Salish Art held at the West Vancouver Museum. When the museum was unable to borrow an important spindle whorl from the Burke Museum for the exhibit, the community’s liaison, Deborah Jacobs, coordinated a work study for the artist at the Burke Museum. Tawxin Yexwulla / Poolxtun describes the opportunity as follows:

That was a Bill Holm kind of a scholarship – a research grant. So that was two weeks. You know I guess there is this Bill Holm Center, and again it was sort of like I was [in the right place at the right time]… I mean there are more senior carvers. There’s people who have been doing it for thirty, forty years. The senior carvers, they asked probably two or three people tops, who would know Salish stuff. When those two couldn’t do it, they asked me. You know I’m a junior artist in a lot of ways, but they knew, 1) that I would be sensitive, and 2) I wouldn’t shoot my mouth off and say something dumb while I was down there, and you know, 3) I could execute the work. So, that was a really good opportunity, that trip.

I know Deborah Jacobs had talked to Robin Wright, but there’s an application process and what Deborah did from the band side was she had one of her staff members help me. Just because it was short timing. So she had her office simply help me put in my proposal, and you know things today, you really – especially for positions, they’re really looking for support from the nation. So if they hadn’t backed me, then it’s unlikely that I would have gotten it. So it’s interesting to see them working so closely together. You know because I hadn’t seen that before.
So anyways, I got sponsorship from both sides essentially for the two weeks work (Aaron Nelson Moody, Interviewed August 16, 2007).

After his two week visit to the Bill Holm Centre, the artist carved two spindle whorls inspired by the older piece in the Burke’s collections and created a limited edition print that was only available for sale through the Gift Shop of the West Vancouver Museum.

Musqueam community members have held internships with the Vancouver Museum, the UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA), and the UBC Laboratory of Archaeology (LOA). The opportunities provided by MOA and LOA have been more intensive (daily involvement) and of a longer duration than those offered at the Vancouver Museum. In some instances these internships have led to longer employment opportunities or other types of ongoing relationships with these university institutions.

Since its inception several Musqueam community members have participated in MOA’s Native Youth Program, while others have applied for specific opportunities posted through the Band’s weekly newsletter. Most recently, interns from the community have participated in the development of the museum’s *Reciprocal Research Network* (see Chapter 6 for more details). Interns from the Stó:lō Nation and the U’mista Cultural Society also received similar training, to recognise their communities’ involvement with MOA’s renewal project – their status as co-applicants on the Partnership of Peoples Grant awarded by the Canadian Foundation of Innovation.
Musqueam has also had interns at the Vancouver Museum – for older community members such as N. Rose Point, an Elder, the experience was discussed as a positive one. However, for one younger community member the opposite was true. In 2002, following the installation of the *Honouring the Basket Makers* exhibit, a Musqueam student was hired as an interpreter to assist with the development and delivery of the school program. The intent, as detailed in the original grant application, was to hire an interpreter from each of the three partner nations (Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, and Tsleil-Waututh).
However, when it came to implementing the program, the museum’s Education Programmer was not supportive of mentoring younger community members. Before her first tour began, the Education Programmer challenged the young interpreter’s preparations and cultural knowledge (on the basis of age). Once the program began, the Education Programmer stood with arms crossed during the delivery of the program. The result was that the young woman from Musqueam was reduced to tears and had to leave 15 minutes into the program. She never returned to the museum.

In general, this type of experience was not typical, most community members report having positive experiences during their museum internships. Geraldine Manson of Snuneymuxw speaks favourably of the training she received through the RBCM’s now defunct Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program. The Cultural and Language Elders Coordinator, and an Elected Council Member, recalls:

I did an internship [in 1996-1997]. It started off with the Royal BC Museum. I think it was for 6 months, during that time, at the end we were able to travel to other museums: MOA, U’mista, Queen Charlottes. We were able to stay a week at those locations to study the different types of areas that we were studying (Interviewed October 22, 2007).

She notes that she continued her training in 2000 at the Nanaimo District Museum, and adds that:

The Nanaimo Museum I was fortunate to be a summer student there, where I was actually part of their exhibit [development] and how they displayed objects. And we were able to share with them about the archaeological material, there was plenty of it. So we were able to put it to perspective – how someone seeing it for the first time, would come into the importance of how objects were made, and why they were made. And then we went into the basketry, were able to share a bit about the history and what they should be sitting next to […] We talked a bit, but because they don’t have too many of the sacred objects, we just kind of left that but we told the significance of whenever they were to receive any, this is how we wanted them to be cared for. We work with the Nanaimo Museum, like I said, on a regular basis because of being on the board and also being…making sure that the new museum carries our vision (Interviewed October 22, 2007).
Implementation (Funding)

In previous sections I have discussed increased opportunities for Canadian Coast Salish communities to be represented in museums, and other cultural venues. This increase obviously goes hand in hand with funding; since today most museum exhibits and projects are determined by successful grant applications. In Canada, many museums attempt to access the Aboriginal Museum Development Component of the Museum’s Assistance Program to implement such projects, since any museum is eligible if they can demonstrate support from a First Nations community or organization. In my experience adjudicating these applications in 2005, peer reviewers looked for applications that showed direct benefits to First Nations. Thus exhibits of First Nations art or culture that did not directly employ or consult First Nations were not selected for funding. Since the Museum’s Assistance Program will not fund 100% of any given project, successful projects also had to include budgets that relied upon other funding sources – contributions in-kind or funding awarded from other granting agencies.

In the Vancouver area, local communities reported being co-applicants on these types of grant applications, but noted that once the grants were awarded the funds went directly to the partner institution. Snitelwet i Siyamiya, of the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, commented:

In most cases, when we jointly applied for funds, the funds go through the municipal government as opposed to coming directly through our own organisation. The lead has always been the institutions and the accessibility of funding, or resources, is directed primarily for them. I think that had we other avenues that we could pursue, we could have enriched projects (Deborah Jacobs, Interviewed June 12, 2006).

When First Nations community members are employed by these projects, museums often release funding in instalments to their partner communities for the payroll of interns (and
other related project expenses agreed to at the onset of the project). This is a common arrangement since First Nations community members who are deemed to be working in their own communities (on reserve) are tax exempt, while those employed by an outside agency are subject to all forms of payroll deductions, including income taxes.

Thus the distribution of funding to the museum or other partner agency is an area of operations where inequity is most visible. First Nations communities give their support to enable projects to secure funding, but are not given equal control over the monies that are garnered. Instead museums dole out those funds in a manner similar to a parent giving a young child their allowance. This was certainly the case for the *Honouring the Basket Makers* exhibit developed at the Vancouver Museum in 2002.

Funding is also still identified as the main obstacle to the establishment of cultural centres for many Canadian First Nations communities, and remains an ongoing concern for established centres trying to stay in operation (see Fortney 2001). Most museums in Canada operate with the assistance of a core funding provided by government allocations, whether these are derived from municipal, provincial, or federal taxes – or a combination of the three. The Glenbow Museum in Calgary, which has been the focus of a “Case Study in Urgent Adaptation” reduced its reliance on public funding from 70% (municipal, provincial and grant monies) to 48% during the early 1990s when faced with the immediate need to reduce operating costs or close the museum’s doors (Jane 1997:211). Glenbow emerged with a new management model, one that embraced self-sufficiency, yet it still receives almost half of its core funding from public monies.

First Nations cultural centres, by contrast, do not have core funding. When they are dependent upon grant writing to acquire the funds needed for their annual operating
budgets this can become a serious issue. In remote communities it is especially difficult to attract skilled grant writers, and other professional staff, required to secure such funding. While for some communities acquiring clean drinking water and adequate housing must, by necessity, take precedence over funding cultural resources (see Fortney 2001:60).

For those who would like to realize the dream of having a cultural centre in their own community, the associated expense of operating a facility with a museum environment is not lost on them. Snuneymuxw Council Member Geraldine Manson notes, for example, that:

This is what First Nations communities don’t understand. The community members think, “Well go and get our museum. We want our objects back. We need to have them in our own community.” But to explain to them the funding is the only thing keeping us from doing it. Fiduciary obligation is with the government, but they’re keeping that wallet really tight.

I don’t have any concern with working with [museums], but down the road our own community – communities throughout BC, or wherever, eventually will get their own museums. The RBCM will just be the Royal BC Museum, First Nations in the community will have their own museum cultural centre for interested individuals to go and approach and understand more clearly. And that’s where we would like to be one day. And you know what? To be treated just as the Royal BC Museum, or UBC Museum, or the Civilization museum. Whether large or small, we shouldn’t be struggling for funding. And I think that’s the downfall of every nation, not being able to get that funding secured. Because look at – isn’t Cape Mudge Museum down because of no funding? (Interviewed October 22, 2007).

In response to this query, “Yes.” The Kwaguilth Museum and Cultural Centre at Cape Mudge, a Kwakwaka’wakw facility, was closed in October of 2000 for renovations, but was unable to re-open for several years after expected funding did not come through. A miscommunication from a representative with the Department of Canadian Heritage led the Nuyumbalees Society to expect the funds were forthcoming, and so they packed the
entire collection in anticipation of pending construction (see Fortney 2001). When the funding did not materialise, the cultural centre had lost its ability for revenue generation since its galleries and gift shop had been closed for several months, and they no longer had the funds to rehire staff. Fortunately, Board Members remained persistent in their efforts and the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre reopened on May 13, 2007 (www.nuyumbalees.com).

Canadian Coast Salish Communities and Museums Today

In this chapter, the five principle recommendations of the “Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples” were used as a framework to assess current relationships between Canadian Coast Salish communities and museums. In the first section, concerning “Interpretation,” the discussion was extended beyond the doors of museums into the communities themselves. The overall implication being that Canadian Coast Salish communities, at least through their leadership, were becoming increasingly sophisticated at working with existing opportunities for generating and controlling the public identities of their respective communities (and with creating opportunities of their own).

Their increased involvement with museums trickled down to their membership, with the result that artists, other cultural experts, and youth – from within those communities, became increasingly knowledgeable about protocols for access. This combined with training and other employment opportunities, created through museum exhibits and other projects, have positively changed community perspectives about museums. Some younger community members now view museums as welcoming
institutions (Point 2006; Moody 2007). While older individuals may share this perspective, they also remember the difficult steps required for regaining access and influence over their heritage resources. Those involved with museums for more than a decade, recognise the growth that has occurred but view the process of reform as incomplete.

Of the five recommendations explored – interpretation, access, repatriation, training initiatives, and implementation (funding), the last three seem to be the areas of least progress. At this time, many Canadian Coast Salish communities choose to focus upon representation over repatriation, since cultural centres are expensive propositions when the competing needs are providing adequate housing and food for community members. By contrast, establishing a public profile assists efforts to protect (or re-establish) aboriginal rights and title and has immediate benefits for younger community members (Hendry 2005).

Training is still very much a project-based initiative for many museums, the result being that Coast Salish community members (and other First Nations) receive training in heritage preservation and then are expected to return to their home communities. While this speaks to capacity building, it also means that museums, for the most part, have retained control over “their” collections of First Nations heritage materials. The daily presence of First Nations people within a museum creates opportunities for internal protocols and practices to be challenged, and for First Nations people to voice community driven priorities at staff meetings. For example, at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary in the 1990s, the presence of staff from Siksika and Kainai facilitated greater, and more frequent, access for Nitsitapiisinni community members. It also provided the impetus
behind new attitudes towards the conservation of ceremonial objects. The result was that sacred medicine bundles were segregated into restricted areas of storage, ethnology department staff were “painted” by community members for their protection – in ceremonies held within closed storage, and daily smudging of sweetgrass (and sometimes fungi) occurred at various sites throughout the ethnology collections.

On the Northwest Coast fewer First Nations people occupy permanent or long-term staff positions in museums. Since 1996 MOA has employed Curator Pam Brown, a Heiltsuk community member, while LOA more recently hired Wayne Point of Musqueam as a database researcher. In the example of MOA, Pam Brown represents one of 28 permanent staff. Whether her presence can be attributed to the influence of the Task Force Report is questionable, since First Nations people – particularly artists, have been engaging with this particular museum for decades (Hawthorn 1993).

Despite these few examples, First Nations are still not well-represented amongst the permanent staff in museums across Canada today. Nor have many institutions admitted First Nations people to their Boards or other Governance structures (Bolton 2005).

Likewise, communities lend their support to museums for securing funding for joint initiatives, but the museums are the institutions that gain control over the funds. What type of a process would occur, in terms of exhibit or public programme development, if partner communities had control over these funds? The projects Hands of Our Ancestors and Proud to be Musqueam, initiated through funding acquired by Musqueam community members in the 1980s, provide a brief glimpse.
Today the relationship between First Nations and museums, on the surface, appears to have achieved some balance. However, the decision to represent a community, increase access to collections, and repatriate objects or ancestral remains, is still very much controlled by the ethics and policies of museum staff and their funding agencies. This is evident from the Vancouver Museum’s recent decision to exclude the communities of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh from the 2008-2009 exhibit, *The Unnatural History of Stanley Park*, and instead focus on individual First Nations artists such as Ellen Neel. For them, this was the path of least difficulty – one that did not require any flexibility on their part. In Canada, many museums choose to do these things, but they are not required to. Thus a change in philosophy could result in a loss of momentum, or even a change of course. What this tells us is that on the surface everything appears harmonious, but underneath a storm may still be brewing.
Chapter Eight: Alternative Routes,  
Coast Salish Representation in the United States

I believe the art and culture that a people generate comes with time and can’t always be understood as it happens around us. I hope to do my best and serve as a bridge between the community members who remain rather removed from the outside urban world, and those in it. I felt this strongly as a young man, in the beginning of this journey to become an individual who can share and relate experiences across boundaries which need not be there, while maintaining the beautiful culture – an ever evolving one in its growth and transformation.

Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson), Puyallup Artist, Interviewed October 22, 2007

The tribe would like to continue, or begin in some cases, to build strong and equal relationships in an effort to protect, preserve, and perpetuate our unique cultural heritage.

Heather Johnson Jock, S’Klallam Tribal Council Member, Interviewed August 20, 2008

Museums are places that tell stories. Whether they are told by people about themselves – or by others on their behalf, these stories are selective in nature. Someone must decide which key points or events form the thread of the narrative; someone gives order to the experience. When we investigate how narratives in museums are constructed we investigate sources of power, since history and education – apparatus of the state, are a means to perpetuate the ideologies of those in power (see Althusser 1971). In the last few decades, scholars have begun to deconstruct ideas and histories presented as “common-sense” rhetoric to explore inequalities within our nations (Giroux 1992). This critique of culture has likewise infiltrated into museums transforming their institutional practices (see Karp and Levine 1991; Ames 1992; Peers and Brown 2003).

The writings of North American museum professionals now reveal changing attitudes, and policies, that enable the inclusion of source communities through increased access to collections. This access has been furthered by innovations in public programming that bring museum staff (and their skills) into these and other marginalised communities, creating learning opportunities for both community members and staff
(Karp and Levine 1992; Seattle Children’s Museum et al. 2000). To some extent these changes reflect a theoretical shift away from the longstanding vision of the museum as a library of collections towards the idea of a museum as a community meeting place – a forum for contemporary issues.

The success of these types of initiatives was reflected in responses given by members of Canadian Coast Salish communities, who, in the previous chapter, reported little difficulty accessing heritage materials in museums throughout North America. Several individuals went so far as to describe their experiences as “eye-opening,” while others commented upon initial feelings of “disconnect” that through perseverance (on their part) grew into meaningful engagement. Musqueam community members, in particular, felt their community exerted control over exhibit content and programming at the nearby UBC Museum of Anthropology.

Cultural experts interviewed from Coast Salish communities in Washington State were also well-versed with museums, but when it came to access their comments suggested mixed results – some communities (or perhaps specific individuals) were much more successful at accessing and being represented by museums than others. Puyallup artist, Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson), correlated an ease of access to growth in his own personal knowledge of museums, noting:

I have been fortunate in most cases to know the staff either directly, or somewhat, so that the process isn’t so removed or out of reach. But I did feel that way when I started 10-12 years ago. Part of that was my own fear, of what I didn’t know, perhaps (Interviewed October 22, 2008).

He reflects that the exchange of information now flows both ways, stating:

I know that in my development [as an artist], museums as a resource, served to be a staple in understanding the basis of my studies. Now I see the importance of interacting with them directly, when possible, to provide clarity where there might
be room for misunderstanding or interpretation. With there being practically no wall between the tribal society and the collector now, there is an opening where there once was not.

I have worked with the Burke Museum, Stonington Gallery, The Legacy Ltd. Gallery, Tacoma Art Museum, White River Valley Museum, Seattle Art Museum Museum of Art and Design New York, and Washington State History Museum on various levels of involvement for such projects small and large (Shaun Peterson, Interviewed October 22, 2008).

_Qwalsius_ has also been exhibited at venues within Canada, most recently in the _Transporters_ exhibit of contemporary Coast Salish art held at the Greater Victoria Art Gallery in 2008. His personal involvement with museums was more extensive than that reported by the representatives of the Jamestown S’Kallam and Duwamish Tribe – both of whom are also artists in their own right. For example, Heather Johnson Jock, now serving her “second term on the Jamestown S’Kallam Tribal Council,” noted, “I am also a tribal artist doing Salish weaving, cedar weaving, and design.” _Shla’dai’_ (Mary Lou Slaughter) likewise identified herself as: “a Native American master basket weaver and a Tradition Keeper.”

Heather Johnson Jock reported that the S’Kallam tribe had been given: “access to local collections [held by] some of the Tribes of Washington State, in State museums, and some University collections,” but that, “Access has not been unlimited.” She was less able to give specific details about her tribe’s engagements with specific institutions, noting that:

Our tribal cultural program staff would better be able to answer as they are well versed in the history of our relationships with various museums. Tribal leadership at Jamestown encourages cooperation amongst various entities, such as museums, when there is potential for us to protect and perpetuate our heritage (Interviewed August 20, 2008).
Unfortunately, cultural program staff were unable to respond to these queries within the timeframe of this project.

On a previous occasion, at the Seattle Art Museum, Heather Johnson Jock mentioned that museum liaison work was not assigned to a specific council member within her community but rotated amongst them all on a project by project basis. At a later time she noted that to ensure continuity and cultural accuracy, “Whenever possible, we like to include Elders, our Cultural Committee, and cultural program staff, to help leadership determine content.” The strategy employed by the Jamestown S’Klallam for engaging with museums is an interesting one – its benefit being that it creates a community whose leadership is well-versed with local museums (and the community’s cultural resources in general), conversely those experiences may at times be general rather than detailed in nature. For her part, however, Heather Johnson Jock noted:

I can say that I have been satisfied with the [museum] partnerships I have been involved with, but I will have to let other cultural staff and other experts in my tribe speak for themselves on this topic. The extent of my personal relationships with museums has not been as broad as it has been for others in my tribe (Interviewed August 20, 2008).


Shla’dai’ (Mary Lou Slaughter) of the Duwamish Tribe – also involved with the S’abadeb exhibit, reported that access and inclusion in museums was a relatively recent achievement for her tribe, and also not a universal one. In 1989, the Duwamish were invited to participate as members of the advisory panel for the Burke Museum’s A Time of Gathering. However, at the time she was interviewed, Shla’dai’ had personal
knowledge of tribal involvement with only two museums – the Museum of History and Industry (MOHI) and the Seattle Art Museum (SAM). She notes:

The Museum of History and Industry has been wonderful to the Duwamish Tribe. In 2006 they asked me to be in the museum as Artist of the Quarter. I did and they sold a lot of my work. They then asked my son, Michael Halady, to show his work there and he has been there for 4 months and is still there until September 2007 (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).

It would appear that the situation is slowly changing for the Duwamish Tribe, as their visibility increases through partnerships with high profile institutions such as the Seattle Art Museum and the opening of their own cultural centre on January 3, 2009. Shla’dai’ also recently established a new relationship through a commission from the Renton History Museum in 2008.

However, when asked if she felt that her tribe’s status as a non-recognised tribe affected their working relationships with museums, she responded:

Yes, I think it does. Not with people after they get to know me – and my willingness to help in whatever way I can. But I feel that they could ask more people who do Puget Salish Art to be a part of the show. My son – Michael Halady is a wonderful Native wood carver, yet they haven’t asked him for a piece of his work yet at Seattle Art Museum, but he did have 20 pieces at MOHI for the past four months. We are like the new kids on the block; we don’t do art like the Northern style that is here in our city. We didn’t paint everything up and we didn’t do totems, we carved house posts.

I did have a bad experience with a Gallery in Seattle. The curator looked at my basket, and she looked down her nose at me and said, “We don’t do contemporary.” Everything in her gallery was contemporary. She must have thought I was some sort of dummy! I walked out of there wondering what happened? I just got snubbed by a gallery owner that looked and treated me like I was a second class citizen! I never went back. They are still in business (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).

In conversation Shla’dai’ mentioned encountering difficulties with other commercial galleries throughout Washington State, including the theft of a basket left on consignment by a gallery owner in the Port Angeles area.
For Shla’dai', it is extremely painful to be excluded from exhibits in the city of Seattle – the heart of Duwamish traditional territory. She recalls that one of her first exhibit experiences was with:

The Stonington Gallery, where I was invited to be in [the show] at the last hour, due to someone telling them that the Duwamish were going to expose them and their “snubs” of the artists in the Duwamish Tribe. So to save face they called me and said they wanted to purchase some of my baskets to be put in the show. This was two or three days before it opened. They purchased $1,998 of baskets, and took around 20 baskets on consignment. I wasn’t too thrilled by the way I was asked to be there at the last minute. They had a list of artists in the area, way before the show opened, and they never asked any of them to participate. So when they were in trouble they called me. I, of course, said “yes,” and took my baskets over for the exhibit. That was two years ago and I’m still selling there. I’m glad I’m there, but I wish it had been under different circumstances…

(Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).

In this instance, participation involved filling in a blank. The Duwamish were not able to contribute to the development of exhibit themes or select the types of objects that should be included within the display. This approach is not uncommon for exhibits produced by commercial galleries as opposed to public ones. What is more significant in this example is the “last minute” invitation to participate.

When considering key messages that they would like to convey in future projects, Shla’dai' states:

I think the message for me and my tribe is “we are still here” even though we are not Federally recognized we are Native and would like to be included in the Galleries as we are just as important, if not more so, as we try to keep a presence in this city of Seattle. We are not going away! We would like to be included… We have beautiful art work to show and share with the public (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).

The above examples suggest that federal recognition directly influences access to, and representation by, museums for Coast Salish communities residing in Washington State.

Puyallup artist, Qwalsius (Shaun Peterson), who reported the most ease of access to
museums and their resources, belongs to a tribe that gained federal recognition in 1854 – when the Treaty of Medicine Creek was signed. The Jamestown S’Klallam tribe also accessed the collections of a number of repositories within the state (although sometimes difficulties were encountered). They too are a federally recognised tribe. However, the Jamestown S’Klallam previously lost their recognition in the 1950s, and only regained it in 1981 according to tribal history provided on their official website (jamestowntribe.org, September 21, 2008). Duwamish Tradition Keeper Shla’dai’, representing a federally unrecognised tribe, reported the fewest interactions with museums and expressed the most difficulty achieving representation. She felt that the two were directly linked.

In Washington State, several Puget Sound Coast Salish communities do not have federal recognition. Their communities either were not signatories to the Point Elliot Treaty of 1855, or they subsequently lost their recognition in 1979 when a Washington State judge ruled they no longer met the seven requirements for tribal status (Thrush 2007:193-4). This means they do not have reserve lands for their communities, they do not share in the resource rights guaranteed by those Treaties, nor do they have access to federal monies for infrastructure and capacity building. Unrecognised tribes petitioning for federal recognition must fundraise to provide services to unify community members, who might otherwise disperse due to economic need and geographical distance.

The Duwamish deliver services to their Tribal membership, such as a food assistance program, a drug and alcohol program, a women’s health program, and youth cultural programs, through a non-profit organization. Funds are raised through annual membership fees ($5 per adult, and $2 per child under 17 years of age) and strategic
fundraising activities. The Duwamish Tribe’s website provides the following overview of their current status:

In 1983, after more than 100 years of broken United States treaty promises, the Dkh’w’Duw’Absh established Duwamish Tribal Services as a non-profit 501[C]3 organization to provide social and cultural services to the Duwamish Tribal community. In the absence of federal recognition, funding, and human services, Duwamish Tribal Services has struggled to provide numerous social, educational, health, and cultural programs during the past 25 years. The Duwamish Tribe currently has around 600 enrolled members. Many more people have Dkh’w’Duw’Absh ancestry, but have chosen to enroll with federally recognized Tribes, in order to obtain health and other human services.

For nearly 30 years, Cecile Hansen has been the elected chair of the Duwamish Tribe. Cecile Hansen is the great great granddaughter of Chief Si’ahl’. Cecile Hansen is also a founder and the current president of Duwamish Tribal Services. In 2004, Duwamish Tribal Services created Duwamish Management Corporation as a For Profit business owned by the Dkh’w’Duw’Absh. Its purpose is to create businesses whose profits will fund activities and programs that strengthen the economic well-being of the Dkh’w’Duw’Absh community and our cultural way of life. Our goal is subsistence, our natural human right to feed our families and to care for ourselves, our community, and our ancestral homeland, both physically and spiritually, using the resources of our people, the land, and the sea.

We have created programs that help our culture to survive. Our cultural heritage group T’ilibshudub (“Singing Feet”) teaches traditional oratory, dancing, singing and ceremonial practices to our community, other First Peoples, and the public. We have observed that T’ilibshudub helps Dkh’w’Duw’Absh children to better succeed in school, helps preserve Lushootseed language, dances, and songs, and helps support our Native artisans and our elders, who are our Tradition Keepers. Seattle's First People, the Dkh’w’Duw’Absh, welcomes support from all sources, public and private. Contributions to Duwamish Tribal Services, a 501(c)(3) organization registered with the State of Washington and the IRS, are tax-deductible (www.duwamishtribe.org, September 7, 2008).

In recent years, fundraising for a cultural centre has been a primary goal for the Tribe, as it provides a place for the community to gather together – an anchoring point from which the Tribe can begin to re-assert their presence within their traditional territory. Their efforts were rewarded when the Duwamish Longhouse officially opened on January 3, 2009.
Despite the tribe’s ongoing struggle for recognition, Shla’dai’ remains optimistic for the future noting: “We are looking forward to a positive presence in the community, and we are on that path, and we hope it will grow with time, and will be a good thing for our tribe and the city which was named after our great Chief Si’ahl” (Mary Lou Slaughter, August 19, 2007).

Exhibiting Coast Salish Culture across Borders

Since a diversity of experience was reported by Coast Salish community members from Washington State, what happens when we compare their experiences to those of communities residing in Canada? When it comes to Coast Salish representations, created on either side of the Canada/US border, are there key differences in who constructs narratives and the sites where these stories are told? In the United States, the Suquamish were one of the first Coast Salish communities to open a cultural centre in 1983 – after their first centre burnt to the ground before being completed (Jones 2006:72). It wasn’t until the mid-1990s that cultural centres were being established by Canadian Coast Salish communities.

The need to be recognised as a distinct people with unique and valued cultural traditions was a common theme expressed by community members from both sides of the Canada / US Border. For Coast Salish communities located in Canada, ensuring accurate portrayals of their public identities was entwined with the ongoing struggle to obtain treaties and enforce existing aboriginal rights. Many communities have been petitioning for treaties since the early 1900s (the exception being 14 communities occupying reserves in Esquimalt, Saanich, Metchosin, and Sooke, on southern Vancouver Island). Coast
Salish identity is very much about extended families and their prerogatives. However, today neighbouring communities are often in competition for the same lands and resources. Establishing firm boundaries has become necessary for meeting modern day treaty negotiation requirements. For example, Stanley Park, located within the heart of Greater Vancouver, is featured on the traditional territory maps of four Coast Salish nations – the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Skwxwú7mesh, and Stó:lō.

In Washington State, similar forms of competition have arisen out of colonialism, since bureaucracy has created a situation whereby the federal government has elected to recognise some Coast Salish tribes and not others. The requirements for recognition do not stem from the communities themselves, but instead are determined externally through government policy. Since Coast Salish marriage rules favoured exogamy, genealogies are not restricted to specific communities, but often overlap into many. This has created a situation whereby some tribes now claim to have absorbed those without federal recognition. By doing so, they increase their membership and their allocation of federal monies and resource rights. However, those they “absorb” also benefit by having access to services, such as health and education, delivered by these recognised tribes to their members.

Tribes without federal recognition do not receive monies for the health and welfare of their community members, but do sometimes receive other types of distributions such as surplus federal commodities (cheese, powdered milk, etc…). Members of some unrecognised tribes in Washington State are also eligible to receive healthcare through *Seattle Indian Health Board (SIHB)*, “a non-profit, multi-service community health center chartered in 1970 to serve the healthcare needs of American
Indians and Alaska Natives living in the Greater Seattle/King County region of Washington State” (http://www.sihb.org). However, measures such as these do not compensate for the advantages that stem from federal recognition.

For example, federally recognised tribes within Washington State may also benefit economically from owning a casino(s), since 1988 when the Congress enacted the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (see Light and Rand 2005). By operating a casino, federally recognised tribes provide employment opportunities for their community members and fund tribal infrastructure. According to a list released by the Washington State Gambling Commission Tribal and Technical Gambling Division, in June 2008, of the twenty-nine federally recognised tribes in Washington State, twenty-one of them are currently operating twenty-seven casinos. Casinos can, themselves, be venues for showcasing tribal artists as is the case with the Tulalip Casino which has commissioned several monumental pieces in recent years for a commercial gallery housed on the premises, while members of their staff have been trained to deliver tours (Palmer 2009: pers. comm.).

In Canada, it is more difficult for First Nations to acquire a gaming license to operate a casino. In 1997, for example, the Musqueam Indian Band was unsuccessful in its application to establish a casino on their Sea Island reserve (adjacent to the Vancouver International Airport). The initiative was loudly opposed by council members from the City of Richmond with complaints ranging from social ills to the need to provide infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, streetlights and better roads (DaSilva 1997). While the city of Richmond objected to the Musqueam proposal, they did permit Great Canadian Casinos to open the River Rock Casino in their city in 2004.
Today, the Quw’utsun’ are one of two Canadian Coast Salish communities currently developing a gaming centre. According to the “Business Ventures” section of their community website, they recently entered into a partnership that will see a locally operated Casino expanded into a new facility to be built upon their lands (cowichantribes.com, September 21, 2008). In addition to the Quw’utsun’ expansion project, the Skwxwú7mesh Nation has recently partnered with “Boardwalk Gaming and Entertainment Inc. to introduce a licensed gaming centre with bingo hall, artisans’ gift shop and about 100 slot machines at Highway 99” (Paillard 2008:np), the route between Vancouver and Whistler. At the Opening of the Traditional Territories (2008) exhibit, in the Cityscape Community Art Space in North Vancouver, members of the Siyamin Artist Cooperative announced that their artists would have a home in this new gaming centre. It was noted that this will be in addition to a kiosk recently constructed in the Park Royal South shopping centre, located on Nation lands, in the city of West Vancouver.

In chapter four I demonstrated that commercial art galleries and cultural centres played a more significant role in the representations of Coast Salish tribes from Washington State. In Canada, First Nations operated cultural centres in British Columbia and other provinces encounter difficulties acquiring core funding, since they do not receive it from municipal, provincial, or federal governments, and many communities do not have the capacity to fund such centres themselves (see Fortney 2001). It would appear that this is less of an impediment for federally recognised tribes in Washington State, since many of them have access to revenue from tribal casinos – as is demonstrated in Table Eight.
Table 8: Coast Salish Communities with Cultural Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Status of Centre</th>
<th>Casino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skwxwu7mesh Nation</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Opened in 2008&lt;br&gt;New Facility</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stó:lo Heritage Trust</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Opened in 1995&lt;br&gt;New Facility</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xáytem Longhouse Interpretative Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stó:lo Nation</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Opened in 1994&lt;br&gt;Located in Tribal Center, Coqueletza</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shxwt’a:selhawtxw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quw’utsun’</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Opened in 1990&lt;br&gt;Buildings Purchased from Expo 86</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quw’utsun’ Cultural and Conference Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sechelt Tems Swiya Museum</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Opened in 1996&lt;br&gt;Located in Hewhiwus (House of Chiefs)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duwamish</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 2009&lt;br&gt;Construction almost complete</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squaxin Island</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 2003&lt;br&gt;New Facility</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squaxin Island Museum Library and Research Cen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suquamish</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 1983&lt;br&gt;New Facility to open in 2009</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suquamish Museum and Cultural Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skokomish Tribe</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 1983&lt;br&gt;Located in Tribal Center (Cultural Resources Department)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skokomish Tribal Center and Museum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lummi Nation</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 1970&lt;br&gt;Located in Tribal Center. (Library opened at Northwest Indian College in 1984).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lummi Nation Archives &amp; Records Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puyallup Tribe</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 1942&lt;br&gt;Located in Tribal Center (formerly the Cushman Indian Hospital). Center opened when new hospital built.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puyallup Tribal Museum and Archive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinault</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 1992&lt;br&gt;Located in Tribal Centre</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinault Cultural Centre, Museum and Library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samish Nation</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Collection being developed in 2008.&lt;br&gt;(Samish Indian Research and Archives established in 1952.)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samish Coastal Salish Cultural Interpretative Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulalip Tribe</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opening in 2009?&lt;br&gt;Construction underway in 2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulalip Tribe Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural Preserve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steilacoom Tribe</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Opened in 1988</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steilacoom Historical Museum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The benefit of having a cultural centre is that it provides a permanent exhibit space for sharing tribal history and culture. Community members can determine the themes of the exhibits, so younger people are exposed to positive and accurate representations of their cultures. There is also the opportunity for educating those outside of the community, such as local families, school groups, and tourists. There may also be opportunity for artists within the community to promote themselves, and to thereby gain the recognition needed to secure additional commissions at other venues.

Figure 14: Weavings created for the Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre (SLCC) in Whistler BC by the L’hen Awtxw (Weaving House).

Photograph Courtesy of Bill McLennan, 2008.
Skwxwu7mesh Nation weavers, featured in the newly opened Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre (SLCC) in Whistler, were also commissioned to produce weavings for the Seattle Art Museum exhibit *S’abadeb*, and recently won a competition to create several massive weavings for Simon Fraser University. Weavers from the *L’hen Awtxw (Weaving House)* link these recent successes to the promotional opportunities provided by the cultural centre, noting that their weavers are really busy – even though they have not undertaken any formal marketing strategies (George 2008: pers. comm.).

The opening of the Duwamish Longhouse provided a forum for *Shla’dai’*, and other tribal artists, to spotlight their work while giving them the opportunity to socialise with art collectors and other potential clients – the result was immediate sales (Slaughter 2009: pers. comm.). Basket makers and weavers, such as *Shla’dai’*, often relate that it is important for them to know the person who will take their work home. A cultural centre provides a place for these types of connections to occur, especially when they also provide work space and employment opportunities for artists and other community members.

**Content and Storyline Development**

Although there are differences in the types of sites employed for public representations and commemorative activity by Coast Salish communities living on opposite sides of the Canada/US border, museums remain at the forefront of Coast Salish representations. Limitations of these museum representations depends upon the protocols for consultation employed by an institution’s Curatorial staff, since community
involvement is diverse, ranging from reacting to pre-selected themes to co-development beginning at the grant writing stage of the exhibit process.

Responses given by community members to the question, “Who determines content of exhibits?” directly correlated to their level of experience, regardless of the nation of residence. For example, Shla’dai’ (Mary Lou Slaughter), who acknowledged that she is relatively new to museum consultation, succinctly stated: “I believe the Curator of Native American Art is, and has, the final say.” Community members with slightly more experience gave similar initial responses, but then qualified them with additional information. For example, Naxaxalhts’i of the Stó:lō Nation observed that:

For the most part it seems like it’s the museum. Then again, you know, I think it has to mostly do with – because they pretty well have everything. We don’t have everything that we need. Like right now, I’m sure if we thought about it, there’s probably some kind of an exhibit that we can do. A limited exhibit, but I’m sure that there’d be other objects out there at various museums that we would probably have to try and make arrangements to borrow, to do our own, you know. So I think that’s why they have that role (Sonny McHalsie, Interviewed July 27, 2006).

While Geraldine Manson of Snuneymuxw noted:

I think in the beginning, the individuals who are working in the museums [determine content]. Like they will introduce themselves, they’ve been in this position for many years and etc… But then after they take the lead in it, we more or less just kind of gently say that, you know, as First Nations with our cultural teachings of traditional values, this is how we would like the museum to take the next approach (Interviewed October 22, 2007).

Communities well-versed in museum collaborations reported that they had developed a relationship(s), with at least one local institution, that could be viewed as a “partnership.”

As a partner, they have input into all levels of exhibit and program development – from involvement with the grant application, to storyline development and venue selection, to object selection and label writing, and the development of related programming.

Community artists, educators, and/or interns are employed at the host institutions
throughout the process and the community becomes the recipient of materials, such as commissioned artworks or educational kits and curriculum.

Experience working with museums also corresponded to internal protocols for developing content, and prior identification of key messages that the community wished to convey. For example, Council Member Heather Johnson Jock notes that for the Jamestown S’Klallam, key messages are:

Respect for our culture, educating others of our unique heritage, and our vision for the Tribe are all key factors. We have consulted our people in various ways, through membership meetings, surveys, and interviews, to identify the vision of our people including what the community felt are key messages to portray (Heather Johnson Jock, Interviewed August 20, 2008).

For Qwalsius acting as an artist rather than an official liaison for his community, the messages he tries to convey are more personal in nature. He notes:

I do my best to convey where I am coming from in my work, whatever way I can, as I can truly only speak for myself. I fear some artists mismanage their responsibility in speaking too boldly on behalf of others, in a leadership role rather than as a member of a community, when given the opportunity. But that balance is difficult.

I have a good relationship with the museums and galleries I’ve worked with. I have learned a great deal by working with them interchangeably, an inside point of view from one to the other is a unique opportunity. Overall business and education (or understanding), are subjects that wrestle with one another in all venues I believe. Not everything can be so easily explained or summed up (Shaun Peterson, Interviewed October 22, 2007).

While, for the Duwamish, as a federally unrecognized tribe, the key issue for the community was establishing a presence. Protocols for consultation are gradually being developed as the tribe gains ground with museums and galleries. Shla’dai’ notes:

Well, we are working on it today. This is a new start for us in just the past five years, and only the last two years for my son (Michael Halady) and I. We have been the first to be recognized for our artwork (Mary Lou Slaughter, Interviewed August 19, 2007).
Other Coast Salish communities have also gained ground with museums at the same time that individual artists from their community have risen in visibility, examples include: Susan Point from Musqueam and more recently Xwa Lack Tun (Rick Harry) of the Skwxwú7mesh Nation. While artists may contribute to raising the public profiles of their communities, it is the museum liaisons who negotiate with museums to determine how their respective cultures are portrayed.

Establishing protocols for working together is a process involving both parties engaged in exhibit development – the museum and the source community. As individual communities gain experience and begin to identify their key priorities, the museums they work with must also re-examine their protocols and procedures to anticipate community needs. Partnerships arise out of ongoing relationships, and smaller exhibits and programmes often play a significant role over time as they provide the means to work through particular issues (Holm and Pokotylo 1997). However, when it comes to public perception, it is the larger initiatives that gain widespread attention and public acknowledgement.

Previously I compiled a list of Coast Salish exhibits and public programmes, identifying 80 examples predominantly from Canadian and American venues. Of those listed, the Canadian exhibit: “Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth (1980),” curated by Dr. Michael Kew, was the earliest comprehensive exhibition of Coast Salish material culture featuring more than 100 objects from museum collections worldwide. Many of the larger pieces in this exhibit were showcased against a background color reminiscent of red ochre, or tumulth (a ceremonial paint made from decaying red cedar), a color frequently selected by Coast Salish delegates for contemporary exhibits in Canada.
Large archival images depicting the featured objects *in situ* – accompanied by original owners, or in use, helped to interpret this groundbreaking exhibit (see Figure 5 in Chapter 4). Exhibit text was highly descriptive and characterised by the anonymity of academic voice. *Visions of Power* was followed by a number of themed shows and education programs on Coast Salish weaving, archaeology, and contemporary art on both sides of the border.

In Washington State, where Salish peoples are the predominant indigenous peoples (as opposed to British Columbia where they occupy only the south-western corner of the province), there have been several larger shows of Coast Salish culture: *A Time of Gathering* (1989), *Awakenings: A Gathering of Coast Salish Artists* (2005), and, most recently, *S’abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists* (2008). All of these exhibits (with the exception of *A Time of Gathering*) included works created on both sides of the Canada/US border – all featured both historic and contemporary objects and were accompanied by museum notes or exhibit catalogues. *A Time of Gathering* and *S’abadeb* displayed 150 and 175 objects respectively, while *Awakenings* featured multiple works by twenty contemporary Coast Salish artists. Exhibits created since the 1980s in Canada differ from these examples in that they are smaller in scale and often concern only a single community or focus on an individual theme – contemporary art, archaeology, or specific aspects of local history.

The consultation processes employed for the comprehensive exhibits created in Washington State also differ – *Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth*, as was the convention of the day, spoke in the voice of its curator. Almost a decade later, when the Burke Museums’ *A Time of Gathering* was unveiled a new process was in place – both
native and academic advisors were consulted and their knowledge blended together to create both the exhibit and its catalogue (Wright 1991:15). One exhibit review notes:

the important achievement of a Time of Gathering was an effective outreach program that gave native people voice and power in determining the interpretations of their history, ethnography, art and politics that would be presented. To that end many strategies were used. An active Native Advisory Board was formed to represent native American concerns and share responsibility for curatorial decisions. Protocol Officer Cecile Maxwell [now the Honourable Cecile Hanson] was hired to negotiate with the thirty-five tribal organizations in Washington State on behalf of the museum. It helped that she was the leader of one such group, the Duwamish tribe of Seattle. A native American, Roberta Haines was appointed co-curator early on and joined in curatorial decisions, as well as organizing an art competition and arranging slide presentations to native elders that helped document and assess artifacts and themes. Other native American staff and advisors also participated in the development of the show (Singleton 1990:943-44).

While the state centennial exhibit, *A Time of Gathering*, established a template for working with Native Americans, it was also a highly political one – especially since “most native Americans saw little reason to celebrate the origins of the state; some Washingtonians resented indigenous prerogatives” (1990:943).

In addition, the process used for exhibit development created a situation where those consulted reacted to proposed themes. It has been noted that:

Some native observers on the board were less enthusiastic than the non-native museum professionals about its power and achievements. The board was not constituted until the basic proposals for the exhibits had been considered and accepted. There was no serious opening for a serious consideration of repatriation of native cultural treasures taken from the Indians’ ancestors. Objects to be borrowed for the exhibition from the British Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, and many museums and collectors in Europe and America would not be returned to the dispossessed tribes (1990:944).

Despite the difficulties encountered during the development process, the resulting exhibit has been described as a “powerful” one since native voices interpreted the featured objects, and relayed contemporary concerns. One area where the influence of the native
advisory council was most evident was the Masterpeice Gallery where contemporary works were included at their insistence (1990:948).

A Time of Gathering appears to have been highly influential, since subsequent Coast Salish exhibits held at museums and commercial art galleries throughout Washington State utilised similar processes and resulted in publications reflecting the same approach. These include: Carving a Legacy: Innovation in Coast Salish Art (2005), Awakenings: A Gathering of Coast Salish Artists (2005), SQ3Tsy'a'yay: Weaver’s Spirit Power (2006) and S’abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists (2008).

S’abadeb – The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists

S'abadeb is the largest and most comprehensive exhibit of Coast Salish material culture to date. Planning for the exhibit took approximately 8 years and in the early stages involved consultations with staff at other regional museums, such as the Burke Museum, the UBC Museum of Anthropology and the Royal British Columbia Museum. Renowned Upper Skagit Elder, taqʷšəblu (Vi Hilbert), worked closely with the exhibit curator to identify the key themes of the exhibit throughout the exhibit process. In the last year and a half of the process, consultation was opened up to community members and academics residing on both sides of the Canada/US border.

As a Canadian museum professional attending the planning committee meetings for S'abadeb, I initially found the inclusion of non-native academics and researchers surprising. Among the Coast Salish scholars who attended S'abadeb planning meetings, and shared their viewpoints, were: Keith Thor Carlson, Bruce Granville Miller, Jay
Miller, Alexandra Harmon, Astrida Blukis Onat, Robin Wright and Nan McNutt (a local educator). The inclusion of non-native specialists along with the Coast Salish community members was an approach that differed from my previous experiences with community consultation at Canadian institutions such as the Glenbow Museum, MOA, the Vancouver Museum, and the West Vancouver Museum. In Canada, outside scholars are now generally only included in such meetings when they are accompanying community members (as their employees).

One Canadian exhibit which employed a similar approach to the one used to create S’abadeb (2008) was The Spirit Sings (1988). However, adverse reaction to aspects of this exhibit – largely pertaining to its sponsorship, provided the momentum for change in Canadian Museum practice that led to the identification of new ways to include source communities in their public representations. The outcome of which was the 1992 Task Force Report on Museums and First Nations, released jointly by the Canadian Museum Association and the Assembly of First Nations (discussed previously in Chapter 3). The timing of these changes also reflects the advent of post-modernism and the de-centering of authoritative voice in the social sciences.

On the surface, consultation at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) began in a similar manner to other community consultation initiatives I have experienced as a Canadian museum professional. At each of the planning meetings, staff at SAM invoked First Nations protocols – something that is also done in Canada at museums, universities, and during relevant professional conferences. Coast Salish delegates, and other guests, were officially greeted by members of the local Tribe who acted as host community. In this instance, Duwamish Tradition Keeper Shla’dai’ (Mary Lou Slaughter) welcomed guests
and presented each with a small gift she had woven from cedar bark. Afterwards didahalquid (Michael C. Evans), Chair of the Snohomish Tribe, accompanied by Thomas R. Speer, a Board Member of the Duwamish Tribal Services, sang a welcome song.

SAM staff members also acted as traditional hosts, providing food and shelter for their guests, and distributing small gifts to those in attendance – on one occasion books about the museum’s new galleries and its sculpture park.

Attendees were formerly invited to participate in the exhibit’s development, and were treated in a deferential manner. Attention was given to following Coast Salish protocols at all three community planning meetings (held on June 8, August 10, and December 7, 2008), and those in attendance were pronounced “advisors” recognising their skills and leadership roles. Special care was also taken to publicly recognise and acknowledge the Elders in attendance – taqʷšəblu and Kwulasulwut.

During the meetings community members were advised that they could shape the exhibit, and were asked to consider their community needs. We were repeatedly assured that “nothing has been decided.” However, despite these assurances the questions being asked at these early meetings were very specific in nature. For example, at the first meeting, held on June 8th, an information package was distributed. It included: an inventory of objects accompanied by thumbnail images (in colour); an overview of the exhibits themes; and a gallery plan that identified the arrangement of themed spaces and the placement of interpretative technology (see Chapter 2 for discussion). Using a power point presentation, the curator directed community members’ attention to the types of potential objects she wanted to include in the exhibit. Those in attendance were informed
that selections had to be made soon, since it would take at least a year to process these international loan requests.

At this meeting, emphasis was placed upon identifying specific pieces from a list of pre-selected objects. Images of the objects were highlighted while less attention was given to the information accompanying them, which was not always accurate. For example, the inventory included the wrong catalogue numbers for several objects, including some pieces I personally recognised from the collections of the UBC Museum of Anthropology.

The inventories provided for the meetings also contained images of spiritual objects such as syelmuxwtes (ritualist rattles), shaman’s figures, and a contemporary spirit canoe installation. These objects, more than anything else, provoked lively discussion amongst those in attendance. Questions ranged from should they be included to, if so, how could they be displayed in a respectful way? Some in attendance cautioned that these, “objects are used on the other side, [and we] have to remember that.” One Vancouver Island delegate suggested that only First Nations should be given access, and noted: “Sacred objects shouldn’t be boxed. They need a special space – to be able to breathe.” Others felt that the rattles would need to be sequestered in a special room, and that an Elder or other spiritual person would need to be present or provide an explanation in first person narrative.

These concerns were not resolved at this first meeting, and reappeared during the August 10th meeting during the morning session when delegates were to discuss “possible art works to include in the exhibition.” taq”šəblu (Vi Hilbert) attempted to resolve the issue through a discussion of the concept of forbidden – by equating it with fear. She
suggested that such fear was “detrimental to all of us,” and noted, “We’re positive people. We honour the gifts we are given to share.”

It was suggested that the book, *Ways of the Lushootseed People*, be used as an example of the way that such information could be shared (and was later distributed to participants to facilitate the process). Reflecting on this publication, the Exhibit Curator asked those in attendance to consider: “How do we convey that each community has its own teachings? Convey heterogeneity?” This sparked a discussion concerning oral traditions, the importance of families, and the role of the potlatch. It wasn’t long, however, before discussion returned to the inclusion of spiritual objects in the exhibit. When the Exhibit Curator queried, “No masks included, but what about other things?” One Washington State delegate responded by suggesting a screened off area for objects of power, to educate the public about their nature. This sparked more discussion, which ended just before lunch when *taqʷəblə* reaffirmed, “Spiritual is not forbidden, it’s individual, it’s private… Spirituality is who we are. There are no words to explain how important it is to our culture. You don’t talk about it, you either are a part of it or you’re not.”

During the afternoon of the August 10th meeting, delegates met with Education department staff. Despite the lack of resolution as to what objects should be included within the exhibit, we were asked to consider what should be on the introductory video, whose voices should be used for the audio tour, and “Do these two mediums work or should they be something different?” We were also asked, “How should the galleries be? Should they be quiet? Should there be music?” Discussions of interpretative strategies eventually brought discussion back to the topic of what should be included in the exhibit
and who could speak to specific objects. I was unable to attend the December 7th meeting, but was informed by several of the Canadian delegates that the discussion was continued at that meeting as well.

In the background to these meetings, work was being done to keep the project on schedule. Emailed queries to individual committee members for information regarding local collections were quickly translated into loan requests. Museum staff at Canadian institutions, such as the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Vancouver Museum, and the UBC Museum of Anthropology and UBC Lab of Archaeology, began reporting that they had received loan requests from the Exhibit Curator. Individual artists received commissions, and some were interviewed on video, while the exhibit catalogue was edited and submitted for publishing. This work was done outside of the advisory meetings (and without the use of working groups), contrary to the process originally outlined at the first Advisory council meeting. Instead exhibit development involved individual encounters between the curator and those who had agreed to participate. Thus the Exhibit Curator became the common thread that tied the exhibit together. In the end, she selected the objects, the words, and determined their final placement, thereby retaining control over the process. Some minor accommodations to the original plan were made, reflecting some of the advice given at the advisory meetings, but the overall approach remained very similar to that proposed at the initial meeting in writing and in schematics. For S’abadeb, community involvement was very much limited to supplying content for a pre-determined storyline. It was a collaborative process, since community “advisors” did affect some small changes on the final product, but it was not a partnership – the exchange of information and ideas was very one-sided.
The objects selected for the exhibition traditionally served many diverse purposes, yet they are unified throughout the exhibition by the method of display which spotlights their aesthetic qualities against white backgrounds. The exhibit is a success in that it accomplishes one of its stated goals – uniting Coast Salish heritage objects residing in ethnographic collections near and far (from museums and private collectors throughout Canada, the US, Britain and Scotland). It celebrates what has been previously overlooked – by those outside of the featured communities. However, it does so using the rhetoric of “art,” perhaps not in the words selected, but definitely in the manner of display. At the Gala Opening, didahalqid, the Chairman of the Snohomish Tribe, appeared to find this approach disquieting, stating: “these aren’t art objects. That isn’t what they were made as.”

At the Gala Opening to the exhibit, held on October 21, 2008, Chiyo Ishikawa, SAM’s Deputy Director of Art, informed the museum’s guests that Curator Barbara Brotherton had previously worked with Bill Holm and Robin Wright, “two of the greatest experts in native art.” This statement positioned community members outside of that expertise, relegating them to subjects rather than participants in the research and creation of the exhibit. Similarly, the major exhibitions of anthropologists/curators Michael Kew and Robin Wright were overlooked when the show was positioned as being the first of its kind. Guests were then informed that S’abadeb shows “no signs of conflict, only resolution,” a statement that was met with much applause. Since the museum’s mission is to connect art to life, this exhibit is going to be used as an example by SAM staff in presentations to colleagues from institutions in Europe, according to the Deputy Director.
First Nations presence at events held for the Gala Opening was muted, since those involved with the exhibit were invited to a Blessing Ceremony held earlier in the day. In a departure from protocol, the Duwamish – the city’s local tribe, were not asked to conduct the Blessing Ceremony. Instead community members from the Canadian community of Skwxwú7mesh were invited to organise this ceremony. An email invitation was distributed to all of the Planning Committee members saying, “You may attend as an individual or, if you would like your group to offer a song during the ceremony, please let us know as soon as possible.” Shla’dai’, who was overwhelmed by seeing so many heritage objects together in one place, was less enthusiastic about the protocols surrounding the Blessing Ceremony. She stated:

When you aren’t recognized, and you haven’t practiced a lot of your ceremonies in years, I can understand why THEY [the Canadian community] did it. But it was not their place to do so. But I had no say so about that part of the program. I got to meet the press and talk about gathering cedar bark […] It was ok, but I think Tom and Mike [a Duwamish representative and didahalqid – the Snohomish Chairman] could have sang and drummed (2008: pers. comm.).

After the community event many of the delegates left, so that First Nations representation at the evening’s Gala event was minimal.

Representatives of the Duwamish Tribe, whose traditional territory includes the city of Seattle, participated in all of the day’s events. At the Gala Opening, time was allocated for the Honourable Cecile Hansen, Chairwoman of the Duwamish Tribe, to address those in attendance. She used the opportunity to make an appeal for assistance to open the Duwamish Longhouse, which was nearly complete but couldn’t pass its building inspection because the Tribe couldn’t navigate the bureaucracy of the city and the national parks service to have their lights turned on. She told those in attendance, “We need the lights on in the longhouse to inspect it, so it can open.” If they could get the
lights on, she invited everyone in attendance to visit the longhouse. Her tongue-in-cheek request was greeted with amusement by many of those in attendance and led the Exhibit Curator to call her “the ever ready bunny.” However, this interlude speaks to an undercurrent of inequality – SAM patrons and membership are able to attend a well-catered members’ only event to view an exhibit of aesthetic objects of Coast Salish origin, while community members continue to struggle for public recognition and a place to call home in their own lands. By overlooking the exhibit in her greeting, the Chairwoman indirectly suggests that it has little relevance to the daily lives of her people.

This raises the question: “What are the benefits of participation to the communities represented in S’abadeb?” Individuals benefited short term from the project, through commissions or contracts to write chapters in the catalogue, but who does the exhibit ultimately speak for (and to)? At the Gala Opening, the expertise of SAM staff was very much at the forefront. Visitors congratulated the Exhibit Curator on her achievement. Her expertise was celebrated. This contrasts sharply with events held at Canadian institutions where community members take a lead role in the celebrations (public and private), and strong community presence demonstrates ownership over the final product. For example, in the instance of the MOA exhibit, *Kaxlaya Gvilas: The Ones Who Uphold the Laws of Our Ancestors* (2002):

Over 700 guests, many of them Heiltsuk, filled to overflowing the Museum’s Great Hall. Sixteen hereditary chiefs, community members, artists and dancers from both the urban and the reserve Heiltsuk communities dressed in ceremonial button blankets, carved frontlets, and other regalia entered the Hall to begin the evenings ceremonies. In accordance with First Nations protocol, they requested permission to enter Musqueam territory and to share their culture from the chief of the Musqueam First Nation on whose traditional lands the Museum and University are located. The Heiltsuk guests then became the evening’s hosts, and, for a night, the museum’s foyer and major exhibition gallery effectively became a Heiltsuk ‘big house.’ The speaker formerly announced the names and titles of the
chiefs, displayed the inherited privileges of important families through song, dance, and masked performance, and publicly recognised the contributions made by the different individuals through the presentation of gifts. The hosts offered a feast of wild salmon and home baking to all the guests whose collective witnessing of the proceedings had conferred on them the essential validation (Phillips 2003:156).

This was a major undertaking for the Heiltsuk community, who privately fundraised to provide the feast and to transport a large portion of their membership from their rural community south to Vancouver for the event. Their strong community presence, and their assumption of hosting duties, speaks to their status as co-creators of the exhibit – they did more than offer advice, they participated in all aspects of exhibit development and subsequent programming. This type of an event contrasts sharply with the S’abadeb Gala Opening, where community representation was minimal and some of those given the opportunity to speak had more pressing community concerns on their mind.

Employing Coast Salish protocols invokes a long-term relationship between a museum and its advisors. Anthropologist Bruce Granville Miller notes:

Ritual work marks out the continuation of a relationship, one that has a past and a future. This, in turn requires that the parties conduct further work to continue to cement the relationship; there is no unilateral ritual work (2006:8).

However, as the S’abadeb exhibit progressed museum staff relinquished many of their obligations to community members. They failed to continue with consultation meetings or working groups, they divested themselves of the need to host community members at subsequent museum events, and they failed to adequately recognise the role and responsibilities that should be awarded to the host nation. These types of breaches in protocol are significant – to do something incorrectly is to contravene your original intentions. This is why there are specific rituals for reconciliation prescribed to address specific types of grievances amongst the Coast Salish (see Miller 2006).
For museum workers, and others who wade into cultural waters, time is perhaps the most significant factor when it comes to a successful outcome. Whenever possible, timelines need to accommodate flexibility so that the development process can be community oriented rather than project oriented. Flexible time lines allow museum staff to identify and understand culturally appropriate protocols, and to develop relationships with the appropriate people to carry the project forward to successful completion.

Ultimately, *S’abadeb* is both a success story and a failure. It brought people together from many communities and provided a forum for celebrating the artistic traditions of their ancestors and emerging artists from their communities. What it didn’t do, but intended, was to allow community members to shape the experience. The Exhibit Curator rather than the advisory committee determined the storyline and selected the objects, so what was selected represents what she deemed most significant (or aesthetic). Missing is the vibrancy that accompanies community driven commemorations, the colourful palette associated with red cedar, blue waters, and dark green landscapes and (at the time of my viewing) community voices and song. However, this absence of installed sound may have been intentional, since Skwxwú7mesh delegates compensated by singing and drumming for those assembled as they left the Auditorium and proceeded upstairs to the entrance of the gallery.
Chapter Nine: Final Thoughts,
Creating Coast Salish Memory and Identity in the 21st Century

Regardless of the degree to which these artists utilize classical design elements, they all share a deep-felt respect for Salish visual language and history. They also honour the role of the artist within Salish culture and outside of it, in a globalized context. In addition to the pleasure and knowledge we gain from viewing works that speak to traditional stories and intelligence of Coast Salish peoples, the art represented in this exhibition compels the viewer to bear witness to the artists’ concerns and convictions about political and social inequalities that impact the lives of indigenous peoples, our human relationship with the natural environment, and cultural appropriation. (Andrea Walsh and Cathi Charles Wherry, Transporters exhibit label, Greater Victoria Art Gallery, 2008.)

Stories enliven the worlds of Native cultures, and the arts beautify them. They are both gifts… These gifts are timeless yet are set in specific places in tribal homelands. Like the earth itself, they have adapted to new conditions and to various audiences in a multitude of languages. At their most traumatic and creative, they live on even as their original tellers pass… (Hilbert and Miller 2008:6)

I don't think you can compare today’s art to the art of our ancestors. The work created by our ancestors was primarily for ceremonial use. Not to make this question sound negative but what we do as artists today is to make a living from the art, where as back before European contact it was more for Ceremonial and Spiritual use. Now please don't misunderstand me, we still create art for Ceremonial and Spiritual use but it's different from the art we create for the commercial market. I can't speak for every artist out there today, but I'm sure if you asked them most of them would say that the work of our Ancestors has GREATLY influenced our work today both ceremonially and commercially! (Maynard Johnny Jr., http://dev.stoningtongallery.com/current.php, February 15, 2009)

Representation is a two-sided coin, since how we understand ourselves is often vastly different from how we are perceived by others. Both perspectives have validity, but the continuous prefacing of one type of representation over the other speaks to the power relations between the two parties. Constructions of indigenous identity, in museums, films, and literature, have until very recently been largely authored by outsiders with mixed results. This is problematic since the representations created by museums, as sites of public education, are often viewed uncritically by the visiting public (see Butler 1999; McLoughlin 1999).
Museums are sites of education that have only recently become self-aware. By this I mean that museum professionals have only recently come to realise that their representations of other peoples, whether past or present, in the guise of art, archaeology, history or ethnography, are coloured by their personal perspectives, values, and beliefs. Although post-modernism has opened the doors to the subaltern, creating spaces for indigenous voices, curators still frequently retain control over themes, funding, and venues of exhibits. It is inescapable that selection will always be a part of the creative and narrative process, whether one is curating a museum exhibit or authoring some other form of documentary, as it is simply not feasible to include everything – someone must decide what to include and what to omit. In the arena of cultural studies what is of interest is who decides what representations will be included, and why.

We might ask the question, “If museums are becoming more inclusive, why do so many First Nations communities now express the desire to have museum-like institutions of their own?” Whether such facilities are called cultural centres, interpretative centres, or are known as a house of treasures, each of these museum-like venues shares the common purpose of storing heritage materials for the well-being of the community and ensuring they are available for educating future generations (and when appropriate other interested parties). The expressed need to have such institutions within the community, as opposed to working in partnership with existing museums, is driven by a number of socio-economic factors as well as proximity to such institutions, but ultimately speaks to aspirations and needs not being met through current relationships. In previous chapters, we have seen that these may encompass the health and well-being of the community through cultural awareness initiatives targeting youth and the disenfranchised, and/or
employment opportunities for band or tribal membership. Creating a positive public profile is also necessary for establishing business partnerships, and for asserting aboriginal rights and title – to be invisible is to be without rights or the ability to protect them (see Hendry 2005).

However, the consequence of adopting museum-like models of cultural preservation is that, in many ways, it removes the responsibility for preserving the past from individuals, and their extended families, and places it with the governance structure of the Band or Tribe. For example, in Coast Salish communities it is not uncommon for different family groups to tell different accounts of past events – origin stories, flood stories, or historical events (see Bierwert 1999). These discrepancies are known and accepted, although they may be a source of gossip between families. However, written histories, whether published or not, tend to include only one version of an event – sometimes an editorial choice to avoid redundancy, sometimes because families are unwilling to share their histories in such a widely accessible format. The consequence of the selection process is that the resulting “official history” becomes a master narrative that opens up the door to future discussions of authenticity. Written histories deny the fluidity of oral histories, obscuring the performance aspect, in particular how the intended audience or occasion for storytelling can alter the delivery (see Sarris 1993). Museums likewise vary in their ability to create exhibits that can overcome the challenges of written histories, since text is often minimal (to accommodate the attention span of visitors) and the selection process also eliminates items perceived as redundant.

Regardless of these limitations, many indigenous peoples and developing nations have come to recognise the utility of museums, or museum-like institutions, for
rebuilding their nations and gaining respect from former colonizers and future economic partners. Throughout the world:

Western-style art museums are now deployed as a means of signaling to the West that one is a reliable political ally, imbued with proper respect for and adherence to Western symbols and values. By providing a veneer of Western liberalism that entails few political risks and relatively small expense, art museums in the Third World [and also the Fourth?] can reassure the West that one is a safe bet for economic or military aid.

So in 1975 Imelda Marcos put together a museum of modern art in a matter of weeks. The rush was occasioned by the meeting in Manila of the International Monetary Fund. The new Metropolitan Museum of Manila – it specialised in American and European Art – was clearly meant to impress the conference’s many illustrious visitors, who included some of the world’s most powerful bankers (Duncan 1991:88-89).

The above is clearly an example of flattering the West, but in First Nations communities – the so-called Fourth World, museums are also viewed as economic opportunities, sites for tourism, or for marketing the skills and resources of a community. Beyond that they speak to a community’s ability to represent themselves, often serving a key role in the education of new community members. Many in leadership roles in the Coast Salish world feel that they have no choice but to embrace museums (see Chapter 2), in order to speak to younger generations who have been educated using foreign – in this instance westernised, education models, unlike those they were raised with themselves. Museums are seen as a means to reach out to youth, and those without fluency in their native language, to transmit cultural experiences in a way that can be appreciated and understood by all; an example of cultural change – borrowing what is useful, and making it our own.

What has been demonstrated through my research is that the transformation of museums is still ongoing, regardless of the nation of residence. Coast Salish
communities on both sides of the border report different levels of access and representation. Federal recognition, proximity to an urban centre, and the willingness of individual museum professionals were identified as the factors which shaped the type of relationship a community experienced with particular institutions. Increasingly, Coast Salish communities are attaining greater control over their representations and heritage materials in museums settings, but some areas of museum practice remain difficult to penetrate. Access to funding and museum governance remain largely at the discretion of the host institution, whereas training and interpretation – areas where museum staff can still provide “guidance” and “expertise” demonstrate more flexibility.

My research has been presented as a critique of museums and is intended to provide a moment of reflection for museum professionals. First and foremost it is a reminder that intention does not always translate into practice. It is important for us, as museum professionals, to acknowledge that setbacks and difficulties we encounter as they provide opportunities for re-examination. This process enables us to identify new ways of moving forward. Sharing is an important component of Coast Salish culture, and many in the community have demonstrated a willingness to persevere in their museum partnerships. It is time for the museum community to take the next step forward, considering not just their own research interests and needs, but how their work can also benefit source communities – to ask their “partners” or “advisors” about community aspirations.

Many First Nations communities continue to struggle to obtain (or defend) their legal rights to their lands and resources, for education and healthcare, and other daily necessities. When they provide museums access to their infrastructure – community
members with university and/or cultural training which makes them suitable candidates for consultation, an investment is being made in the museum. Often the work these individuals do is being facilitated by other community members working behind the scenes in the nation’s archives or other research facilities. I urge museum professionals to consider the question: “If communities are expending their resources to work with museums, what are they getting in return?” To remain relevant, museums need to reposition themselves away from an object-centred approach to a people-centred approach or risk losing their visitors to cultural centres and other emerging (competing?) sites of commemoration and celebration.

Figure 15: The Newly Opened Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre in Whistler, B.C.  

What has been demonstrated throughout this thesis is that the many communities that comprise the “Coast Salish” are now engaging in commemorative practices within
and outside of their own communities. As re-emerging nations, or those still pursuing federal recognition, they are concurrently seeking public recognition and the means to establish cohesive social identities for their members. For these reasons museums have become increasingly relevant for Coast Salish (and other First Nations) communities. Opportunities to work with museums are still responded to with an investment of time and resources, but more importantly communities are now initiating projects to exhibit their respective cultures and histories at a multitude of venues. Cultural centres, publications, school programs, public art initiatives, filmmaking projects, and public festivals— all provide mechanisms for Coast Salish communities to actively managing their relations with surrounding communities, while creating sites of social memory that unite their membership. If museums are to continue to be integral for indigenous (and other community) representations, they need to engage in community consultation with long-term goals as opposed to project specific ones.

At the beginning of this thesis, I questioned whether increased access for source communities to museums and their resources reflected a new willingness on the part of museum staff to be inclusive, or whether First Nations have found something in museums that serve their own needs. I have demonstrated, through this Coast Salish case study, that many communities have found something in museums that serves their own aspirations – whether or not they have the resources to develop a repository of their own.

Although Coast Salish communities have realised varying degrees of agency in their respective museum encounters, a level playing field still does not exist. What this tells us about museums is that power relations are still imbalanced – in the absence of a formal written agreement on how, and when, consultation will occur, museums retain
discretionary power. This extends to all areas of museum practice: exhibits, public programs, funding, staff, internships, gift shop merchandising, board membership, and in Canada – repatriation. To move forward in a more democratic manner we need a de-centering of that power, this can only be achieved if museums open their doors (or at least their governance structures) to the diverse communities that they serve and represent.

Representations created for First Nations cultural centres frequently undergo many stages of consultation and review by cultural steering groups, including Elder’s committees. Cultural protocols are an important part of this process. Sometimes this is not apparent in the final product, which may superficially resemble the displays of their museum counterparts, but this often has more to do with the professionals hired to facilitate fabrication of cases, and installation of exhibit components, than actual intent. Increasingly First Nations languages, and other forms of cultural knowledge (not just material culture) are being privileged, and cultural centres are emerging as strong alternatives to museums.

At many cultural centres visitors can connect with community members directly, try their hand at traditional activities, and/or sample indigenous cuisines. The experience is interactive – sharing is occurring between interpreters and visitors. This same type of sharing must occur between museums and source communities if we are to continue to forge new partnerships, and redefine museums so they can become vibrant places of learning and exchange, rather than stale libraries of the past.
For many years, researchers have been commenting upon the power that museums wield in their representations of source communities. Art historian Moira McLoughlin, for example, has noted:

The very nature of the exhibited Other or culture – which separates seer from seen in judgement – implies an imbalance in power. The exhibition, like the oil painting or advertisement, grants interpretative power to the collector and bearer of the gaze. Recontextualization in the museum objectifies the exhibited culture, removing its ability to speak or act directly and granting subjectivity to those who move freely (if in a directed fashion) through the galleries… There is no return glance, no visual challenge; but the process and the relationship nevertheless seem natural – that is until something unexpected disrupts it. I have noticed (in myself and other non-Native visitors) the surprising curiosity, and even discomfort, that occurs when one recognises that a fellow visitor is of Native ancestry. The atmosphere of the gallery subtly changes, becoming less secure and comfortable and there is a decided sense that we have been “caught looking.” The disquiet that I have witnessed so many times emerges I believe, from two unfamiliar experiences. The first is the sudden confusion between object and subject: the sudden shock of seeing the character come to life. How can we make any connection between what lies behind the glass or the ropes and this unexpectedly vibrant human being? Instinctively one makes the inevitable search for signs of “Indianness,” for support that this visitor fits within the system as we know it. The second, and perhaps the most strange for the non-Native visitor, is the sudden experience of themselves as objects of the gaze (McLoughlin 1999:21-22).

This type of visitor experience may still be typical of some museums – those retaining their status as institutions of the elite, but today visitors who travel to cultural centres and engage in other interpretive activities, such as eco-tourism, are looking for a different type of experience. The expressed goal of such visitors may be to encounter “authentic” or “unique” indigenous cultures, but, regardless, they are looking to interact with living people – not as voyeurs, but as guests and participants. By assuming the role of host nation, source communities now demonstrate their agency and through such encounters have the opportunity to reshape or replace external stereotypes with cultural portrayals of their own making.
My intent in writing this thesis was to provide participating communities, and other First Nations, the opportunity to learn about how neighbouring communities undertake their work with museums (but also within their own communities). Some communities are at the beginning of the process, while others have long histories of partnership and program development. Each of the participating communities has specific aspirations, and this shapes how they approach their museum work as well as the cultural programs they develop for their own community members. By sharing their respective experiences, I hope this research facilitates the process for those who are at the beginning of the journey, while providing an opportunity for those with more experience to reflect upon their current relationships and consider what their next steps might be. Although, as I said in my introduction, “one size doesn’t fit all,” time can be saved if you don’t have to “re-invent the wheel.”
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MacNair, Peter  

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Marr, Carolyn  

Marshall, Daniel  

Mason, James D.  

Matson, R.G. and Gary Coupland  
Mawani, Renisa  

McHalsie, Sonny  

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McMaster, Gerald (Editor)  

McMaster, Gerald and Lee-Ann Martine (Editors)  

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Meikle, Margaret  

Messenger, Phyllis Mauch  

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Nicks, Trudy

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Rowlands, Michael  

Rowley, Sue and Kristin Hausler  

Roy, Reginald H.  

Roy, Susan  


Ruby, Robert H. and John A. Brown  
Salish-Pend d’Oreille Culture Committee and Elders Cultural Advisory Council
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Sarris, Greg

Scarangella, Linda

Seattle Children’s Museum, Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center, and the Experimental Gallery.

Shaw, Patricia

Shelton, Anthony

Siebert, Renate

Simpson, Moira G.

Singleton, John

Slaughter, Mary Lou
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Spradley, James P. (Editor)

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Taussig, Michael

Taylor, Philip M.
Thom, Brian

Thompson, Laurence C. and M. Dale Kinkade

Thrush, Coll

Trope, Jack F. and Walter R. Echo-Hawk

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph

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Appendix A: Behavioural Research Ethics Board Certificate

Certificate of Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Projects</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Ethical Approval Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowley, S.</td>
<td>Anthropology &amp; Sociology</td>
<td>B06-0166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The application for ethical review of the above-named project has been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Approved on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board by one of the following:
Dr. Peter Stanford, Chair,
Dr. Susan Bowley, Associate Chair,
Dr. Jim Harper, Associate Chair,
Dr. Arminime Kienjijan, Associate Chair.

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the experimental procedures.
### Appendix B: List of Coast Salish Peoples

Table 9: Coast Salish First Nations from British Columbia

| FEDERALLY RECOGNISED COMMUNITIES: | NON-RECOGNISED COMMUNITIES (KNOWN TO AUTHOR\(^1\)):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuxalk Nation (Bella Coola)</td>
<td>Hwlitsum (Lamalchi)(^2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comox First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holmalco First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Klahoose First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sliammon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shíshálh (Sechelt)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skwxwú7mesh Nation (Squamish)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsleil-Waututh Nation (Burrard)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musqueam Indian Band</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kwikwetlem (Coquitlam)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stó:lō Nation:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aitchelitz</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lakahahmen</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Matsqui</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Popkum</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Skawahlook</td>
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<td>• Skway</td>
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<td>• Skowkale</td>
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<td>• Squala</td>
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<td>• Sumas</td>
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<td>• Yakweakwioose</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tzeachton</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stó:lō Tribal Council:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Chawathil</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cheam</td>
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<td>• Kwanten</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Kwaw Kwaw Apilt</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Scowlitz</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Seabird Island</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Soowahlie</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shxw’ōw’hamel</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chehalis First Nation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peters First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skwah First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union Bar Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yale First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tsawwassen First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semiahmoo First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katzie First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snaw-naw-as (NanOOSE)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. Additional federally non-recognised Coast Salish communities may exist. This table reflects the author’s current knowledge.

### FEDERALLY RECOGNISED COMMUNITIES:
- Quw’utsun’ (Cowichan Tribes):
  - Quamichan (Kwa’umutsun)
  - Comiaken (Qw’umiyiqun)
  - Koksilah (Xwulqw’selu)
  - Somena (S’amuna’)
  - Clemclemaluts (Lhumlhumuluts’)
  - Khenipsen (Xinupsum)
  - Cowichan Bay (Tl’lulpalus)

### NON-RECOGNISED COMMUNITIES (KNOWN TO AUTHOR):
- Penelakut
- Lyackson
- Halalt
- Malahat
- Tsawout (East Saanich)
- Pauquachin (Saanich)
- Tsartlip (South Saanich)
- Tseycum (North Saanich)
- Songhees
- Esquimalt
- T’souke (Sooke)
- Scia`new (Beecher Bay)
Table 10: Coast Salish Tribes from Washington State:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEDERALLY RECOGNISED COMMUNITIES:</th>
<th>NON-RECOGNISED COMMUNITIES (KNOWN TO AUTHOR³):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nooksack</td>
<td>Snohomish Tribe of Indians, petitioned 3/3/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lummi</td>
<td>Duwamish Tribe, petitioned 6/7/76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samish</td>
<td>Steilacoom Tribe, petitioned 8/28/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Gamble S’ Klallam</td>
<td>Mitchell Bay Band of San Juan Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown S’ Klallam</td>
<td>Marietta Band of Nooksacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swinomish</td>
<td>Kikiallus Indian Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Skagit</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillaguamish</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Snoqualmie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauk-Suiattle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puyallup</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nisqually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Squaxin</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Skokomish (Twana)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Suquamish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muckleshoot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quinault</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tulalip</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chehalis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowiltz</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

³ IMPORTANT NOTE: Federally non-recognised tribes and bands exist on both sides of the Canada / US Border. Due to historical circumstances it is difficult to create a comprehensive list – others may exist that do not appear in the above tables. In the last century, colonial governments in Canada and the US reorganised conglomerates of village clusters transforming them into the Coast Salish tribes and bands we know today. In Washington State, the inhabitants of specific village clusters were sometimes resettled into more than one “tribe” by government officials. Sometimes their descendents accept these tribal identities, and sometimes they press for separate recognition.

The situation is complicated when federally recognised tribes claim to be the “successor in interest” of a non-recognised tribe previously acknowledged by a Treaty. This declaration, if accepted in the courts, enables a recognised tribe to share in the resource rights that were allocated (to the non-recognised tribe) by the Treaty in question. In some cases, the non-recognised tribe still exists in some form, but is hindered from establishing their aboriginal rights and title due to their specific historical circumstances, such as: forced dispersal, depopulation from epidemics, and/or inability to afford legal representation.