

Tape 5, Side 1: November 20th, 2004

Session 1, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Brenda Macdougall – Okay, so we're back this morning, and we have a another guest seated at the table today, and I'll just introduce him for everybody. This is Roger Maaka, who is the head of the Native Studies department at the University of Saskatchewan. And he's going to be joining us for the conversation for certain this morning, hopefully this afternoon. There were some themes that emerged yesterday that we would like to focus on for the morning. And we've already discussed those themes, so we'll keep that as this morning's focus. And then, in the afternoon, we will deal with some of the specifics about protocols and methods and approach that people have used. And so, we wanted to just start off today with a, an organic conversation about those themes, and maybe the place to start is the accidental nature of coming to research and to getting a relationship started, and how much can actually flow from all of those things. And I thought, maybe, as a place to start, I would just direct it towards Winona and Maria because they had talked about a number of those things yesterday, and they could launch the conversation forward then.

Winona Wheeler – You're always making us go first, and then we talk a little bit. And then we remember other things after, and then we can't get to it, to expand on it.

Brenda Macdougall – But you will today.

Winona Wheeler – Okay, well, we will create a space for ourself to carry on. Organic nature of research. Maria can speak to her research experience beginning quite early in her life. And I can speak to the research that I commenced much earlier and, eventually, how we came together to do things. You started first. You want to go first?

Maria Campbell – Okay. I started in 1968, and I began by going to some elders because I wanted to get some stories on a specific thing. And when I went to them, they, I did my offerings, I followed all the protocols that I could remember, but nobody told me any stories. They sort of dragged me around all over the place. Took me to political meetings. Did all kinds of things, and I never got any stories. And after about a year, I finally I had one

old man that, that would talk to me. And so I was working for CBC, by the way, that's why I was collecting stories. They wanted some stories. So when I went to the old man. He agreed that he would work with me and I spent time with him, and then we set up a time when I could interview him. And I wanted to use a tape recorder (and if I'm wandering off of the subject, tell me). I wanted to use a tape recorder and he said no, I couldn't, that it would be too much work for, to transcribe into, from Cree, and he had all sorts of reasons. But I needed a tape recorder because I couldn't remember anything. Or I thought I couldn't. So he finally agreed after a lot of pressure from me, and I came with the most expensive tape recorder that I could find, did the interview, and when I got home all I had on the tape recorder were my questions on the tape. So then I thought something happened with the tape, so I went back to him again, and he just kind of laughed. And we did this whole, went through this whole procedure again, and I came back with, again, these empty tapes. I still have the tapes, by the way, with all my questions on them. But the second time around, I realized that I couldn't do this. And so that was my beginning, because I never ended up doing any of the stories for CBC. And he never really gave me the stories I wanted. I got all sorts of other information but not stories.

And I traveled with four old men in the beginning, and they would let me use notes. And I traveled around in a car with them all over northern Alberta, going to meetings, and I would do translations and things like that for them. And sometime I could take notes and sometimes I couldn't. But they, and if I would've, if somebody would have asked me what I was learning, I don't think I could have said this is what I'm getting out of this, this meeting. But now it's been almost forty years. There are, you know, things that are happening, that it's almost like a trigger. I remember the, the, and that relationship with those old guys lasted right up until probably about 1975. Then I met another old man who was working with me on something really specific. And his question to me one day was, "Where were you born?" And so I said Park Valley. And he said, "So, you're an English woman?" This was all a conversation in Cree. And I said "No, I'm not English." "Well then," he said, "why were you born in Park Valley?" So that was when it, I think that, that something really specific started to happen to me, and that was the first time that I started to work, to look at. I mean, I always thought that I knew the land because I grew up on it. But it was the first time that I started to look at specific places, and I had never really thought about the name of my community. I mean, I knew what it was, but I had never thought of it. So I ended up with a

whole lot of other history, and what they did that time that I spent with that particular old man.

And it was when I started to work with my father. Up until then I hadn't really worked with him. But I didn't, what it did is it helped me to look, to understand, to understand in a different way. And I don't know how to explain that because I was sort of caught up in, you know, in the whole words like colonialism and things like. And thinking in terms of, although I talked about, you know, things are holistic and we're related to everything. I didn't really, it was only up here. I didn't really understand that. And it also helped me to look at my language. And I've talked about that before.

I think what it did is it helped me to start to decolonize the language. Because I, when I realized that the land had been, had been colonized, it made me feel like I wasn't alone, and that sounds kind of strange, but it took the focus away from me to look at the landscape. And I started to see other things in, you know, in that. I started to look at plants, to look at relationships with things on that landscape. And then I started to realize that the Cree that I was speaking was really not Cree. I was speaking English Cree. Now I don't know how to explain that, except that this old man told me that if I were going to, if I were going to understand all of this stuff, I had to remember that I, to imagine that one leg was in an English place and the other leg was in a Cree place. And that I had to start using the foot was standing in the Cree place. I had to move to that, and it sounds really easy. It was one of the most difficult things that I ever, you know, processes that I went through. Because it was at that point that even things like ceremonies started to, it wasn't just a ceremony anymore. So for me protocols are all tied into that. And I realized that I can speak Cree fluently, but it doesn't mean that I'm thinking from an English place and I'm thinking from an English understanding of my own history and my own land.

And once, and I don't know at what point that he moved me there, but I also, the other thing they also told me is that I had to learn to laugh. Now, I thought, *What does this got to do with anything, learning to laugh?* And that took a long time. And then, one day I was doing something and I realized that I was laughing, you know. So for me that process was all important to understanding what, and I still didn't know what exactly I was doing. I didn't know where all this was heading and I got very frustrated sometime, and I wanted to leave. I felt like sometime I was trapped, like they had trapped me and I couldn't get away from them. I didn't want this information, whatever it was they were wanting me to. Like what I

wanted I wasn't getting, I was getting something else. So. I don't know if this is addressing the question. And I still don't know. I'm still not sure, you know. I just know that it's really important for me to share that knowledge with Winona, and for us to talk about those things. You know, for me to say I don't really know why, but I have to tell you this. But it's somehow it's important.

And I remember my father telling me one day, he said, "It's not important for you to know that stuff. Don't waste your time with it." He said, "It's important, you know. I mean let her deal with." You know, "it," whether it was my daughter or Winona, let them deal with it you know. Let you guys deal with it, that's not, it's just passing through you and you've got other things that you have to worry about. You know, just give it to them. They'll understand or they'll figure it out. So I really trust that, but sometime I get frustrated. Even today, I get really frustrated because I think, *What is this all about anyway?* So I think I'll stop there.

Oh. One more story. Very quickly. I worked with an old lady, and I mentioned her yesterday. It took me a year, almost, before that relationship started because she wouldn't let me, she wouldn't give me any, wouldn't work with me until I was able to tell her what her names was. Translate her name. She told me, "This is my name and I want you to tell me what it is." You wouldn't believe the miles I covered trying to find out what that name meant. And she was over a hundred, and once I did that it was like she untied this package and opened a door for me. Thank you.

John Murdoch – I always thought of it as moving from one world or one domain to another. Like when Maria was talking about, you know, sort of consciousness of the heart and consciousness of the head. I suspect most people around this table are doing things in a competent fashion before they found a way to explain them in a competent fashion. When I first started teaching, I was in a classroom with my students in a domain that neither one of us felt especially comfortable in, but there were certain roles that had to be followed and certain things had to be met. And then I would meet them outside of the school at home or out in the bush in a camp. And there never seemed to be any problem in protocol, you know. I always had a sense that actually some things were a lot easier to talk about outside of the school because they were of greater concern. They were held to be more important out

in the bush in a family. But I don't think that I ever felt that it was accidental so much as being very different.

And I, you know, as the demands on me became greater from both ends, like as a school principal to deal with non-Aboriginal people who were, 3 o'clock in the morning, thought they were going crazy because they were isolated from the culture they'd left behind in the city, and at the same time trying to reconcile the children's comfort in those classrooms. Really got a sense of domains and different worlds, and what happens to people when they're going through the bends, making too quick a move from one world to the other. And, personally, I've always had, you know, an idea that I needed to, as quickly as possible, try to get some sense of the protocol or the pattern that was prevalent in the world that I now found myself in.

And when I started getting into academic research, and they told me to do field work beyond the James Bay territory, it appeared less and less like an accident as time went on. Basically I'd get off the airplane in a hunting community, mostly, and I'd have a limited amount of time to very quickly perceive what pattern, what things were important. And as quickly as possible engage in a fashion that didn't upset people, that people felt very comfortable with. So that I could listen to them and I could see them as they were in their own skin in their own world. And I thought it was kind of neat that I got a chance to do this. It's something sophisticated and I've been doing it most of my life, and now I can call it a methodology or whatever.

But I started, as I got deeper and deeper into graduate studies, I started becoming more and more conscious of it and doing a lot more field work. I've been in Greenland, all over the Eastern Arctic, throughout the Boreal forest, Outback in Australia and New Zealand, and it seems less and less like an accident as time goes on. And much more like me trying to construct some kind of an image, or some sense of the world that I'm heading into, and to try and intuit the patterns, the structure that people are actually living by. That they actually determine what they're going to do. And in Waskaganish, for example, it always blows my mind in terribly important moments, like the death of somebody or some, a wedding, or some major event. You've got upwards of 2,000 people with their hearts on their sleeves, all moving very fast in a direction, and there's no union, there's no police, there's no protocol imposed on that group, but people seem to do things with great precision. And, you know, and people are very much affected by that sense of community.

Certainly, the few days around the death of someone, and people are supposed to be, you know, wooden Indians if you read the literature. Standing up and saying things that they haven't, maybe, been able to say to a husband or a wife or a brother or a sister. But saying these things knowing full well that the husband, the wife, the sister and the world are listening. It seems even less like an accident then.

And when I did field work at the doctorate level, I really sort of discovered the devices that people had been using. There's a creek about ten miles maybe from Waskaganish called Dress Up[?] Creek. And it's where, in the old days, people used to arrive from the bush at Dress Up Creek and get cleaned up. And sometimes dig out of the ground or sometimes pull out of a bundle, European clothes. And they would put the European clothes on and go into the post. And I really believe that that was a device, it was something that people did so it made it easier for them to feel right doing what they needed to do right in order to get along at the post. And when they're visiting in the white man's domain was over they left the clothing, usually at Dress Up Creek, or they would take it along with them in a bundle. And they'd be in their bush clothes and they'd be back out on the land again.

And even today, I've seen all over the world, hunting communities where people will leave the village and you feel this sigh of relief as everybody falls into a pattern or into a protocol that's been there for thousands of years and nobody's been taught. It hasn't been written in books or anything, but you see the kind of integration of ages and relatives and so on. That's been happening in that place for thousands of years. And I felt that with ten children who were seen as basket cases and kids that had been, didn't have the support from their families because their parents really had only been through what they were now going through the generation before. And there was just a calmness as they had less and less of white people's protocol in their face and were allowed, you know, to breathe and to relax and start intuiting the pattern that's always been there. The pattern of people's movements together unified in a competent fashion, synchronized with the land that they're living on.

And now, with Leroy Little Bear as a mentor, as a supervisor, and him presenting to me law for the first as a set of protocol. As the rules that apply in the world of the court and from the point of view of somebody who doesn't necessarily feel comfortable in that world, but has learned to develop comfort in order to achieve important things for the real world, the world for him.

I'm reminded again—and my attitude is based on this notion of domains and damned if when I saw in **Phipsons (Unknown Spelling)** the reasons that the Supreme Court was giving for admitting oral traditions of Aboriginal people. It had to do with an authenticating audience. And **Phipsons (Unknown Spelling)** is in its fifteenth edition now, I think, you know, so it goes back many years. And, basically, oral tradition has been admitted by white people into their world because they recognize the value of an authenticating audience in protecting the truth of those stories.

Well, that seems pretty close to what I've heard people talking about, you know, in how the truth of those oral traditions is protected. So my research strategy is basically taking the attitude that works very well in beautiful downtown Waskaganish, where you try to perceive or intuit patterns, and in spite of the fact that they believe the world is wild and an imposed structure. White people have patterned the way that they live. Truth is something that is provoked by people's patterned behaviour, and I assume that, you know, I mean these people can't all be bad. There's got to be something positive. There's got to be something ideal/supportive in that court. And if I can find the pattern, if I can find the pattern to people's behaviour that I can speak to, that I can engage with, then I can say to a judge, "See, just as people do here in this community, this is the same thing they are doing in that community."

And it seemed to me when I read the judgment reasons of the Supreme Court Justice's in Delgamuukw, that's exactly what they did. They took traditions from the history of common law and saw in them something very similar going on with the people of the Nass River Valley. And they said these are the same thing. Therefore these oral traditions are admissible hearsay. Well, it goes beyond that, because when you get across, past the stereotype of Aboriginal people being disorganized and you, especially if you come knowing how organized people actually are, and you start looking for an equivalent appreciation of that, you don't have to look past the rules on evidence. And if you really read the rules on evidence and what they say, fundamental personal knowledge of the facts underlying the opinion, that's an elder. So elders' testimony is admissible in court because the elders themselves qualify as experts. And by the same token, the expert witnesses that the court is presenting with devastating effect in the lower courts are not qualified because they have no connection with the Aboriginal community, they don't have personal knowledge of the facts. And any lawyer who can get beyond the stereotype of Aboriginal people being unstructured

or without protocol or without patterns, and can make themselves aware of the facts will take a half hour instead of two and a half years on a court case, and simply ask the judge. You know, “Your honor, we ask that you apply the same rules of admissibility of evidence and qualifications of experts that have been in these courts for over 150 years. We would like the Crown’s expert witness to demonstrate their personal knowledge of the facts upon which their opinions are based.” And they can’t.

Brenda Macdougall – It strikes me that, while an important avenue for dealing with oral traditions are going to be courts, that this isn’t all just about necessarily litigation, and the experience of knowledge and research actually goes deeper than that. That that’s one format, but it’s, and we have to look at some of the wider implications beyond even getting a grasp on it before it even gets to the stages of issues of court and law and process. And so, maybe that’s one of the things to address because there are these sort of realms where this information ends up, and to look at those realms.

John Murdoch – Well, knowing what I know now about the court, it’s going to be a lot easier for me to have the expert elder treated as such in the classroom, in an educational setting. I really felt that I needed to get to the bottom of this in court. The people that I’m, you know, ambition when I finish, probably in another year with the journey that I’m on. If I need to go door to door and gather proxies from the people who feel they have been short changed, it’ll be, to have the elders in their proper place in what feels a lot more like a natural setting for a person to be able to learn, a fully accredited, fully respected high school education. So that an ambition of a parent of having somebody eighteen years old with an entrance requirements to either a bush life or a college with the cultural support of the positive personality, so that those dreams can be met. And I think what I’ve understood in the last day or so is people’s frustration in trying to separate white people’s protocol from the protocol more appropriate to the elders that they very much want a relationship, a meaningful conversation with. And it’s, for me, it’s the same.

I’ve needed to explore both worlds well enough so that the honest, the kind, the good people among white people find the reasons to ensure the appropriate respect for the protocol in the other world. So that they can do like the Supreme Court Justices did in Delgamuukw, and say this is the same as this, and then from that point on respect it. And

when the elders in the communities have the privacy to do what everybody knows needs to be done, afforded to them by that respect. Then, I think, you know, the business of getting a master's degree because that represents qualifications. I'd like to take a short cut. I'd like to see people who in our hearts and our minds we know are fully qualified, respected as such. When I'm in a camp in the bush, Ph.D's don't cut it. I haul water, I cut wood, I do whatever else I've demonstrated competence at. My peculiar skill has value in a camp very rarely. Mostly my skills are relied upon to ghostwrite letters and to represent something that feels very natural in a Cree domain with an equivalent respect in the domain of white people. I get people out of jail, I get people into better custody agreements than what was there before. And it has to be done with the full respect for the protocols lived by in both worlds.

Winona Wheeler – You see, that's part of the reciprocal relationship though. You know, I have a Ph.D., too. It's a teeny weeny part of my life. It's not all that I am. I come with much more than that. And to be identified as just being a Ph.D., I think, is very minimalizing and belittling because it's just, like I say, one part of me. But the skills that I acquired in attaining that degree have been invaluable in all sorts of environments.

Remember that sweat lodge we were in, in Northern B.C. And during the rounds we were having a discussion between the Catholic and the Protestant church. And there was a bunch of old people in there wondering how come these two churches, if they have a common Bible, that they all begin with, why do they hate each other? And so you're a historian. Well, I got to have a great time in there. I talked about Henry VIII, I talked about syphilis. I had a great time, and they were totally enthralled with my ability to tell them this story, you know. And it was me giving a little bit back to them that I have acquired in that realm, but at the same time being able to haul rocks with them. And to sing with them and to pray with them. And so, I think it's, that's part of the reciprocity.

When you're talking about, you know, how we got started. I began doing oral history as a land claims researcher. Specifically, to enter into a dispute and to take on the government. I mean, I began as a warrior, that's what I was trained to do. Get in there and get better, better evidence than they could get so that we could give them a licking. But that took me, I mean that's the place I began. But it took me to a totally different place, eventually, and the accidental—I don't know so much if accidental is a good term. I don't believe in this finitely defined concept of fate, but I do believe in paths and I do believe in

the Creator and the grandmothers, and the grandmothers taking you to where it's a good place for you to be given all that you come with, or you're there to learn.

And so I began as a land claims researcher, ended up in university to get accredited to do it with more skill. And at the end of my undergraduate degree, ended up doing a local history of the community that I married into previously. Discovered a few specific claims potentials when I was doing a paper on the community history. So I went racing out to the reserve to the chief, and said, "Look, you know, we got, there's these specific claims here," and the chief at that time wasn't interested. But I left the paper there. Lo and behold, a few years later there was a new chief, as there usually is, you know how these things happen. And he gave me a phone call and said, "Hey, we got this paper that you wrote. We're interested in talking to you about this claim." Well, so they brought me back out. I had a good time, you know. I brought maps and overheads and showed them, you know, where the Order in Council had said this, but another one came along and said this, but this one. And showed them where all of the losses happened on the reserve and how the Treaty Land Entitlement hadn't been fulfilled and had a wonderful time.

At that time I was a student, so they were sponsoring me to university, and they asked me if I would like to come and work on the reserve for the summer and do this research. So I said sure. So, with the education people, we applied for some grants to hire more university students and we started an oral history project to hear from the old people about the land. So I went into it as a land claims researcher and I came out of it with a heckuva lot more than that, and so many unfinished projects still to this day. I went in there to learn about how we lost this land, how we lost, and I got taken out on the lake. I got taken moose hunting. You know, I was searching all over the place trying to find silk threads for old ladies who wanted to do embroidery on moose hide, and it was a wonderful experience that lasted about seven, for seven summers. I'd go back to the community, bring on new university students, train them up. And came out of it with just an amazing wealth of experience and insight.

One of the projects we did was an elder's genealogy workshop. I don't know if any of you have ever got more than fifteen elders in one room together, but it was a hoot. And we did it in collaboration with the Provincial Archives of Manitoba because they had an oral history collection and they had technology that we didn't have. And so we made a deal with them: Okay, we'll house our original tapes with you for protection, but they're all restricted

access—and we had all sorts of restriction notes there—but we want your archivist, your guy who, your techie, that does all the sound recordings, we want him to work with us. So they lent us this little guy who had never been on a reserve before, had never hung out with old people before, and we plopped him in the middle of the reserve to help us.

And the way we set up this genealogy workshop is we had it in the hall. We had about fifteen, maybe twenty elders in there. We had community volunteers to work with them. And we had this little archivist and myself and the students for the summer project. And we had big sheets of rolled brown paper. Big rolls of brown paper. We just taped it on the tables and we plunked down one volunteer down with one old person. And then on the wall, I drew them a little map of the symbols, you know, men, women, married, not married. And then people started to visit with each other. And the volunteers started to sketch out this person's genealogy, going back as far as they could remember, and coming forward to covering their great grandchildren. And it was the most hilarious and fun experience because you had old men sitting there like this talking about you know, their serial monogamist relationships. And then you had old ladies yelling, "Never mind, you bugger. What about that one down in Selkirk? Everybody knows that's yours. That's not mine!" So you have all of these kind of subtext going on there, that students were taking little notes over in the corner on the papers. And over the course of two days, man, we mapped out the genealogy of that community going back prior to Treaty. It was amazing.

This little archivist from Manitoba, about three old ladies decided to own him. They really liked him. And he had a nice little car with soft seats, so he spent the entire time driving little old ladies all over the place. He was a little frightened. He says, "These, the elderly want me to drive them to town." And I said, "Do it, just go with flow. They love you." And he did. He took them shopping, he took them all over the place. And he was just reveling in their affections. They teased him unmercifully. But that was, those kind of projects came out of what began as a land claims case. And it's still on going. I still haven't finished writing the book. You know, we did a, we have a historical photograph collection gleamed from the community that's over 450 turn-of-the-century photographs. It's an amazing collection. But I had to go for training to learn how to catalogue, and categorize, and critique, and analyze historical photographs, and then train students to do it. So it was a huge ongoing project.

I ended up in Saskatchewan and I carried that love of working with old people. And I'm pretty good working with old people. I can be bossed around really good. I don't resist. And I can drive really good, too. And these are two major credentials for working with old people. And I enjoy it. I thoroughly enjoy it and I think that, as part of, you know, the methodology, I think personal characteristic, I think personal affinities and comforts is the foundation. My grandmother was always very bossy with us girls, and so we learned how to please old people. And look after old people really young. We learned the difference between looking after an old man and looking after an old lady and what they enjoy. We learned what kind of gifts they like to receive. We learned how to ingratiate ourselves with old people, like because there was really good payoffs and benefits when you're a kid. And so it was just a love that I had. I just felt so much more comfortable in many contexts, hanging out with older people. And being the kid and I'm still, forty-six, I'm still the kid. And doing the potato peeling, you know, while they're doing the more important work. And so it was a, kind of a natural connection between Maria and I. Because I had this love. I love hanging out with people with a few more grey hairs than myself.

Maria Campbell – You're so sweet.

Winona Wheeler – I know. I learned well how to ingratiate myself. But I really do enjoy it. And so I don't know about accidental. I think it was just a natural flow that you develop relationships, and so when we came together, we came together in many ways intellectually, because we had questions. And that's one of the beauties of working with Maria is that she has just as many questions as I do. And some of them, most of them haven't really been tackled before. And it's just a safe place to ask questions, where you're not, you feel safe to ask. You know that nobody is going to cut you down or call you an idiot or say are you crazy. It's a safe place, and so through the, you know, the times we've been able to talk about things that are potentially controversial and could get us tarred and feathered in some context, we have this freedom to be able to talk to each other about these things and question each other, and, "What do you think about this?" And then that takes us searching for questions elsewhere. Searching for answers elsewhere.

And we've traveled with one particular gentleman for quite a few years and just had a wonderful time with him. Talk about accidental. You know we'd be going out for a

ceremony and it would be over at five in the morning and we'd be driving back down, and they would start talking. Well, holy smokes, I mean this is an, I am an audience. I'd be with my head between the two front seats just straining to keep up with the conversation between them. And then I'd have a chance to pop in and ask questions every once in a while. And, oh my god, it was a phenomenal experience.

And so you're talking about organic, you're talking about totally unstructured, you're talking about no concrete one-two-three methodology. You're talking about relationships. And I think relationships and love is the fundamental foundation for knowledge building. That you truly have to love what you're doing. You have to have a relationship with the people that you work with that is based on love and respect and trust. We've had some interesting experiences. One day, when we're super duper old, maybe, we'll be able to write some of them down.

Dick Preston – Post-retirement.

Winona Wheeler – Post-retirement, there you go. But when I was working, especially on my dissertation, Maria was invaluable. Absolutely invaluable. (A) because she understood what I was going through emotionally and psychologically in this process. That was so lonely. And she kept me grounded. She kept me speaking and she kept me listening while I was trying to write by myself. And gave me so much direction and guidance that I needed to probe myself. And that's another one of the beauties of our relationship. One of the tremendous benefits that I get out of it is that she trusts that I have the intellectual capability to reach my own understanding. If I don't, she slaps me and I start again. But she still, she trusts that I'm capable of figuring things out. I'm not treated like an idiot. I'm treated like a growing being that has capability. And that's something you don't get in the education system. You know, that's, again, one of the unique beauties is that, that respect, that reciprocal respect. And when you're with a teacher who has faith in your capability, it's very empowering, you know. It allows you tremendous space to grow. So. Yeah, to me that's, is that answering that first one, that accidental nature of doing oral history? You started with one idea and ended up doing another.

Brenda Macdougall – I believe it's answered a lot of questions.

Ida Moore – My experiences are very similar in that it isn't, it wasn't accidental in nature. At the time, I was frustrated with it, but in retrospect I see how what I had in mind of what I needed to do for my research wasn't what I needed to do. And so other doors opened, you know. When, once, I had come to the conclusion that I needed to do some research and I identified a person that I could work with and who could be my teacher, and she was a good teacher. But what happened, as a result, was she had one role in helping me to learn about protocols and ceremonies and teaching me those kinds of things, and giving me stories on healing.

And in that process, at a ceremony, I met Jackie. And then, from there, we got, we gained a friendship, and then the other person who was supposed to be my guide in this process, something happened and she couldn't do it. So, then, but it, I was, I was in the same community that Jackie come from, which is Nelson House. And here I was, frustrated, and I thought, *What am I going to do because my, the money that I spent on doing this research was my own money.* I didn't have anybody helping me to do this. And there was Jackie and her mother, Jackie and her mother comes along, and said, "Oh well, don't worry about it, I'll take you to my grandpa." You know. And that started that whole relationship.

And so it was, I had all these set ideas on who I wanted to research. But it ended up that's not who I needed to talk to. I was taken to where I needed to talk to because when we walked into her grandfather's house, he just laughed. He said, "Hey, I know you. You came to see me last night in my dream and this is what you need to know. Come here. Come sit down," he said. But this is all in Cree, hey? And he made me sit down at his table and he sat down next to me, and he started talking to me. And he told me, he gave me the exact information that I needed, and then he said **(Speaks in Cree for a few words)**, you know. And he didn't say anymore. And I, and he said, all he said was, "This work that you want to do, you're going to finish it. You need to know that. So don't give up. Just keep doing it." And so, based on what he told me, I just kept going there because I realized that I needed to get information from different places. So then I started to trust the process, and just went with the flow that whoever I needed to talk to would be there for me to talk to.

Dick Preston – I really liked what Winona and Ida have said. But I want to put in a plug for accidents. Natural flow, I think, is a really important way of looking at it. But there are things in life which we don't intend to have happened and they do make a difference. When my

first wife died of cancer, a friend of mine—who's wife I am now married to—had a mid-life crisis. Okay. The timing was fortuitous. We've now been married for twelve years. That's an accident, okay. It's a major event in my life and it's an accident. That happens, okay. There are little accidents that happen. When I'm listening to John Blackned and writing the thing down and tape recording it and so on, and I'll be thinking about what's happening. I'll say, "That makes sense," kind of thing or, and then I'll get a surprise. "Oh, I didn't think it was going to go that way. Well, that's really important." You know. From the standpoint of what I can understand at the time, that was an accident. If I had been bent on one way of looking at it, I would have missed it. It would have just gone right on by me and been a wreck instead of an accident you might say. And so, I think from the standpoint of students thinking about how they're going to do what they're going to do, the idea of keeping open to being surprised is really important, because if you don't get surprised you're probably not learning much. And so, and the other thing is a couple of things that my friend Willy Wishgee said during my first summer there, and that was never get excited, don't lose your nerve. Okay. That way you don't, you drive carefully. I just wanted to add that as a kind of a PS.

Jackie Walker – I just wanted to acknowledge you people. You have such passion for your work, and I think that's, that's one of the greatest teachings that we get as we do our research, is we start to learn, especially when we're working with our old people. We start learning more about ourselves and where we belong. And so, when you're doing research, like even for myself, when I was in the process of developing this community initiative with the Rediscovering Families Project, and I wanted to go back. Well, it was, it was directed by the elders of our community that that's the process that we need to take. And then, when we started the program, and when I started doing the research with the community elders, there was a lot that needed to be done. And one of the greatest, I think, one of the greatest teachings that I've gotten, even through my grandfather—and I'm not insulting John or anything, but I heard you mention that we use elders as expert witnesses. My grandfather never claims to be an expert. When I hear the elders speak, they talk about, when they introduce themselves they say, "I don't know much. This is how much I only know and this is what I can only give you." But when they start sharing, they're sharing their life, their

experiences, and they're also sharing the other ancestors, or the Creator that works through them. So that, you know, that alone is, needs to be acknowledged in that way.

My grandfather, who is also works with his hands. He is a healer and he never once claims that he's doing that work. That he's working through, the Creator is working through him. So, I guess when we talk about protocol, I think that's one of the things that we need to start looking at and respecting that, because we are all taught certain values, certain family values, certain community values like respect, honesty, truth. And those are the things that we learn as we do our research or as we do community development. And then, from there, once we're at that point where we learn those, then I think that's really, we get that passion from. So I just want to acknowledge that. A lot of you people here that have such passion. Thank you.

Winona Wheeler – I just wanted to pick up on that point because I'm kind of a, protocol referencing. We're not doing this topic by topic are we? We're jumping in aren't we?

Brenda Macdougall – No, go ahead.

Winona Wheeler – Is it when, when I was asked to be an expert witness on the Sampson case? I, oh man, I could get a licking if I try to call myself an expert. You know what I mean, that's ridiculous. I'm like in my forties, I'm a kid. You know, I don't speak fluent Cree. I am certainly not an expert in oral history. It's what I do and what I'm learning, and so I refused to have my expert witness defined as being an expert witness in oral history. I flat out refused, which left the lawyers kind of distressed because that's what they wanted. And it took considerable thinking and strategizing on, well, how, what kind of expertise do I have that I can actually claim some legitimacy? So, one of my research assistants actually helped me out. I gave her dilemma. Again, because, you know, if, how dare I presume to be an expert? I mean who the heck am I? I can just imagine my grandmother going "shoo," you know, and just looking at me in disgust, right. And so, eventually my research assistant found quite a good area for me to be an expert in. She said I was, "Well, aren't you an expert in Native American Studies with a special emphasis on Indigenous oral histories?" Yeah, I can do that! Right. Special emphasis. I can do special emphasis. Yes, my expertise is in Native American Studies. That's a nice general, broad field. That should cover me. But it was very

difficult because there is an assumption when you have a Ph.D. that you do, you are an expert in that chosen field. And that's part of the dual roles we play.

You know in the western academic realm, I am considered an expert with an area of specialization, and I can publish and speak to this area with authority. But in the community, I know diddly squat. I'm a baby. And I'll be a baby for a long, long time. I'm just learning. I don't have the right to speak as if I know. In fact, if I said I know, you know, I'd get this disgusted look surrounding me, you know. I can say I've heard, I've been taught, I understand, but to say I know is to **pestilize (Unknown Word/Spelling)** myself. And so you end up in this kind of dichotomous contradiction, this place of contradiction when you're an Aboriginal person in the academy. The academy wants you to be an expert, tries to make you an expert, but that's not where you're at in the community, and so you have to be that intermediary. You have to create a space for yourself and what you bring. To meet all the prescriptions that you're forced to live by. It's a really challenging place to be. But it's one that we need to be consistently cognizant of.

John Murdoch – I find when you're living in that place you really can't afford to have too many accidents.

Jackie Walker – How would you go about integrating the two, like the western approach and the Aboriginal. How do you integrate those?

John Murdoch – I live in one world and visit in others. And when there's a conflict between the protocols that the world I live in and the world I'm visiting in, I go home. I don't find it happens too often, because the worlds don't understand each other very well and don't engage each other. It happens most often, for example, when I've got to work as a guidance councilor in the school with non-Aboriginal teachers on one hand, and students and their parents on the other. But, basically, it's geographical again. You know, I know who I am and when I'm not sure of who I am, I go back to the company of the people who know who I am. And, you know, being with them and doing things with them, everything seems to settle back into place.

Winona Wheeler – The reminder. The thing is when you are...

John Murdoch – I have to pick up my laundry and do all of the other things that a person with a doctorate degree doesn't have to do in beautiful downtown Saskatoon.

Winona Wheeler – Oh yes we do. When you're an Indigenous academic, you have to walk those roles together. That's reality. And one of the beauties, I think, about being in Indigenous Studies is, as opposed to a conventional discipline, is that we've got the room to maneuver and create a space for what it is we do. We don't get a whole lot of respect by the other conventional disciplines, but that's their problem. We are in the process of developing and growing, and that is our job, is to mediate and to translate. And to walk a tight rope sometimes and to straddle fences sometimes. That's what we get paid the big bucks to do. That's what we've chosen, whether we've chosen that or not, that comes with the career path that we've taken on. That's tantamount.

And we have to, I think for myself, I am constantly in a place where I am every single day mediating my existence here and the work I do. And it's a, I don't know how to delineate or deconstruct it into a methodology that you can teach as a package to your students. What I'm finding is that we teach by example. That, for example, Maria and I when we co-teach, we're in a classroom together, you know. And I'm the wicked witch from the west that does the grading, and I, you know, crack them on the footnotes, right. And Maria comes in with that special softer side. But it seems to work out okay. It seems to work well. It's not a contradiction to the students whose experiences has also been one of contradictions or discomforts. And you work with it. Well, that's what I think the primary role of our discipline is, is that place of mediation.

John Murdoch – You should read the e-mails that I got from anthropologists when I went from a Ph.D. in anthropology to a master's in Native Studies. And I thought long and hard about it, but what I really wanted was a relationship. And one where I could expect certain kinds of experience. In fact, I think this symposium, there isn't a lot of protocol out there to suggest to you how to come up with material that's current for dealing with oral traditions in a Native Studies department. So you've created an experience. But I really think that as people sort of get, one of the first good things that I felt when I started reconciling the two

worlds and figuring some way of surviving, moving back and forth between the two is what a relief when you don't have to defend the one world to the other.

And this guy here, I come out of the elevator one day, and he's standing in a corner of his office. He didn't notice me yet, and he's going through his mail. And he's going, "Ahh, not going to bother with this one, you know. Ahh, I'll bother with this one, you know." I asked him, "Can you do that? You know, can you just ignore the things that are not worth the energy and devote your energy to things that are worth it?" Seemed like a dumb question but it was a pretty important one to me. I thought you had to take on all comers. I thought everybody, whatever they got out of bed with in that morning that had a criticism, you had to answer every single criticism. And, wow, this means great things if you don't have to waste your energy on people whose criticism is kind of flippant and not very well intended anyway. And then you can use all your energy. Wow. I guess I knew that before I stepped into a university. That's the efficiency of emotion that I'm used to at home.

If I had asked, you know, any one of the elders, you know, this is the situation that I'm dealing with. And by elder, I mean somebody a year older than me. Somebody who is more experienced than me. And you know, which seems silly to them. That because of some protocol that they were unaware of and didn't make much sense anyway, that I was willing to basically bleed on the floor for something that was hardly important enough. But I really think that the basis of organization is there. It's perceived and it's felt in an Aboriginal world, whereas in a non-Aboriginal world it's imposed. So when you're in an Aboriginal world, whether it's in the Outback of Australia or, you know, in the boreal forest, the trick is to as quickly as possible engage with people in a way that will suggest to you very early on what important organization is going on. When Jackie was talking about relatives and, you know, the organization that you work with and everybody has a relationship. There is a network of relations and that's what you work in terms of, that's organization to me, and it's something that I assume is there each time I go into a Aboriginal community...

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John Murdoch –...sort of a historical understanding of what's going on. But I recognize that among non-Aboriginal people that organization is imposed, and I damn well better find out what the rules are first or you may not be allowed there very long.

And then, as you get to know the imposed rules, then you can start getting some sense of the important relationships. But I never discard anything. It's just that some things are really not worth because they're not relevant. Getting too upset about or, you know, devoting too much energy to it. I'm helping somebody right now who is an extremely confident person. Has put together a video, which is usually what somebody with a doctorate degree does next, and she's done it before finishing her doctorate degree. And now she's got this problem of trying to reconcile a very confident act with a thesis. And I promised her, you know, I'll spend an hour a week and, you know, we'll incorporate that into a body of something that people recognize as a thesis. So we'll figure out what, of the honest requirements for a Ph.D. thesis, what isn't clearly addressed in that video production on restorative justice that she's done, and we'll put it in as a guide book. So the introduction, the discussion of the literature, you know, the other parts of the protocol while finishing that doctorate degree goes in there. And that's not a problem. That's worked very well for me, and she feels very comfortable with it, relieved that she's able to sort things out in two piles and not waste an awful lot of energy and emotional energy, especially on something that she really doesn't feel is as important as it seems to have been made.

Maria Campbell – I'm going to cut in, I'm sorry, because we're getting off, I think, on videos, and I'm kind of, I would like to know from Sonny how, like, if it was accidental for you, too. How did you end up in your work? And, I'm sorry, I mean no disrespect, John.

John Murdoch – No, no.

Sonny – Well, it was accidental, actually, because I was working as an economic development researcher for a First Nations group, and we had developed an endeavour where we constructed twenty-one concrete raceways, and we were going into the rainbow trout industry, and I decided to take some time off work to go take up business management. And as I mentioned earlier, the only reason I got the job that I did was

because I had an archeological background, even though that only meant for two weeks of one year backfilling trenches. It still, it still was on my resume.

So I ended up getting this job, and I was only supposed to work there for two months, and in September I was going to go back to, back to taking up my business management course at the college. But, come September, my bosses came and offered me better pay than the minimum wage I was making for the summer, and they asked me to stay for another year, and that year turned out to be nineteen years. So, and it is a job, I think, that is kind of very unique. A cultural researcher who, you know, there is no other job like it, and even when they got the job title “Cultural Advisor,” it didn’t seem like there was any other equivalent positions around. Like people would call me and say, “Is a cultural advisor, where are you?” And so other First Nations were saying, you know, asking me to send them my job description and talking to me about some of the different things I was doing, and then their First Nations group would end with hiring a cultural advisor as well.

But there are other things for sure. I know that we need to remember that our elders constantly remind us that we’re constantly learning things. Things that we might take for granted at one time might be of some importance later on. And, you know, that part of it is still there. But at the same time, there are times where you could be doing some research and you end up stumbling upon something, or accidentally discovering something, I guess. And one thing I remember is a bit of a funny story, because when I first started this job in 1985, it was actually to document all the different important heritage sites along the CNR right-of-way, because they were planning on twin-tracking it back then. And we approached the elders and asked them, “What is the most important, or sacred site within Sto:lo territory that we should protect.” And they told us this place, they said there’s this place where the **(Unknown Word)** mask, which is an important mask of our people, where the **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)** mask came out of this little lake in the river. And so they explained to us where it was, and we went looking for it and we couldn’t find it. Couldn’t find this little lake. We found a little creek and there was the river and we went into the bush, looking through the bush. We went up the creek and couldn’t find any little, like we were looking, we found some little ponds and that.

Went back to the elders and told them what we had found, and they said, “No, no, no, it’s not those little ponds. It’s not in the creek, it’s in the river. It’s a little lake in the river.” So we went back there again and looked and looked. Could not find it. And we were

so embarrassed. We didn't want to go back to the elders and say that we couldn't find it. So we kind of just left it alone for awhile. And then we got a call from a First Nations group claiming that next to that place where we were at was some logging was happening, and there was, they were uncovering some artifacts. So we went to investigate that, and while we were there we went to this little trail overlooking the area where the little lake was supposed to be, and lo and behold there it was. There was the, the river had dropped and then there was a little lake in the side channel of the river. And so there it was. We had stumbled upon it. And you know, so then we took, we followed the elders' instructions and that, and made sure that was a place that we should continue to look after.

Also reminds me of another story of when we were doing place names and we read Brent Galloway who's a fellow who was doing a lot of research with our elders and recording all these names and, in his research he had recorded two names for one mountain. And he says, Agnes Kelly, the late Agnes Kelly, said, (**"Unknown Word."**) And Susan Josh Peters, the late Susan Josh Peters, says that (**"Unknown Word."**) And so this other fellow that I was working with, Randall, the two, him and I, we were both wondering, what is the more accurate name? And we started looking into the backgrounds of these elders, thinking that, *Well, let's look at their background and one of them has to be pronouncing it the proper way and one of them must be mispronouncing it.* So we looked at Susan's background, and we said, "Well, she comes from a village just up the river of the place. She has a very clear view from her village of that mountain. Her elders probably have the proper pronunciation." And then we looked at the other elder and said, "Well, she's from way down river where she's from. She can't even see the place. So more than likely she probably has the wrong pronunciation." But then when we were doing our fieldwork, taking the elders out. Well, Susan was already passed on, we took Agnes out. And so we thought we'd ask her because we still weren't sure, because we got out to the mountain and she said, (**"Unknown Word."**) And then we were thinking, *Well, Susan said* (**"Unknown Word."**) So we thought we'd ask her. So we said, "Agnes, why is it in back in 1977 when you went out with Brent Galloway you said (**"Unknown Word"**) which you said today, but Susan Peters says (**"Unknown Word."**) Like, what is the proper pronunciation?" And she said, "Oh, that day we went out with Brent Galloway, Susan forgot her teeth at home." So, you know, there are other examples like I think, for instance.

Another one was this. One anthropologist, who spent some time with a few of our elders, and especially she mainly spent most of her time with one family in particular, and a

couple of the elders from that family. And in the book that she had published, she had stated that our people did not have, we didn't have a, what is the term that she used now? She was talking about the stories that we have. She was saying we didn't have a whole big oral history. Like she was saying that we just had these small little stories. And I wasn't of that view because all the elders that I had spoken to had said that they remember as children when they would sit down and listen to their elders sharing the stories with them. That it would go on for night after night after night. So, she was the saying, so the elders were saying that all these stories are one big long story. But this anthropologist was saying that all we had was all this small little stories. And so, then, I kept that in my mind, and I knew I had seen something.

As I mentioned, yesterday, that, you know, there is this one book that I have read over and over and over, and I remember seeing something in there. And sure enough I went back to that book and there, in there was the connection where one of the elders, one of the elders that Keith was mentioning yesterday, the late Bob Joe, and Edward Louie, the two of them had both mentioned, they talk about these stories about the origin of **(Unknown Word)** and then they talked about how that is connected to the lake. Like the birds that were transformed from that story. Some of them went to the lake where the origin of the **(Unknown Word)** is, and some of the birds that were transformed from the men also went up, hooked up with beaver and mouse, and they just hooked up to the, it was connected to the origin of the sockeye salmon. You know, then, also I find that, I know the sockeye salmon story, and then that one anthropologist is correct in some, to a certain degree, where some elders have little stories that they remember, especially within their community.

And there's this one place on the river **(Unknown Word/Words)**, meaning "all those baby baskets," and there's a story there about when, and I believe it's the sockeye baby when they're bringing the sockeye baby up river. They stop there, ask the **(Unknown Word)** to give them, an Indian doctor or shaman or whatever, to give them to feed that baby special food so that it will grow and carry on up river on its own, and then when they did that, they left the baby basket on the rock. And so there's always baby basket. So I see that story there as connected to the other one, and all three, they're all connected. Just because that one anthropologist said that that we didn't have a, what is it, a narrative. What is the word that she said? Collective narrative, I think she was saying.

Keith Carlson – Umm, if I could jump in for a bit? Umm, when Sonny and I were working together as employees of the tribal council, we would get assignments. This was the research project that the chiefs had identified. Or sometimes an elder would come and say, “We want this done,” and the chiefs would approve. You can spend time on that because it was money, right, it was going to cost money to the tribal council. And it was interesting, I think, because Sonny was, this was going through Sonny’s mind that these stories were interconnected in ways, and this sort of reaction to this anthropologist construction of this model of little **ikesolates, (Unknown Spelling/Word)** you know, story isolates.

And I was, I wasn’t aware. Sonny and I hadn’t talked about that, and I was interested in the way that men, in particular, kept referring to tribes. Because the Sto:lo, depending on how you define it, there’s between twenty-four and twenty-seven Sto:lo tribes that people have talked about, all these groups together. And the men, and most chiefs are men, talk about tribe and this tribal boundary and our hunting territories and this is ours. And it would always cause a bit of trouble before Treaty negotiations with the federal/provincial government because there was this sense of, “Well, we want to negotiate collectively with the outside groups, but internally how are we going to divide up what’s there?” And that’s the term that some chiefs would repeatedly use. “Like, how are we going to divide up what’s ours? What’s yours?”

And women, in general—I know that I am making large generalizations here—but there was a pattern, a very clear pattern. Women would talk about this broader region, right. They didn’t talk about tribes and they didn’t talk about tribal boundaries. And there was, there seemed to be two types of political meetings that would take place. Treaty negotiation meetings and fishing meetings. Men. And then child welfare, education meetings. Women. And there’s supposed to be political representatives from every band at all these meetings, but it was inevitably women who showed up at the one and men at the other, with a few exceptions. And the women were talking about what they wanted at the end of the Treaty process. And they were saying, “We want something where children from this tribe, where my sister lives, and children down here, get the same education, the same opportunities. Or if there is an instance of a dysfunctional family up here, and those children have to be taken out of that family for safety, we want them to go with their family in other places, these other tribes. We don’t want them being sent out to the non-Native world.” Which was what was happening then because the Department of Indian Affairs band system, the tribe

system, was sort of being adopted some ways, informally, by the provincial child welfare system.

And so, I was being struck by these two competing discourses about what is the boundaries, what is, how does it hold together. And I started to look for some historical explanations, you know, being a historian, and it occurred to me. Well, in the past you have polygamy in this area, and there's a pattern of, men tend to live high status, men with hereditary names who are linked to transformer stones that are very prominent within tribal territories tend to live in those places, the men who inherit those names. So they can say that that stone over there is my great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandfather, and they'll then, they'll tell you the genealogy. And then they'll tell you, they'll focus on the story often of that place. And women will tell the story and in the past with, especially a polygamist society, but a patrilocal society, women typically, high status women especially didn't live where they were born. They lived in their husband's village, but they had sisters who would be there, and there, and because of polygamy they had other wives that they were sharing domestic space with. And these women would be telling the stories that link this big area together. And then, when it came to modern fishing and tribal land claims rights, the men, of course, were emphasizing their stone, their fishing spot near their home, and the women were emphasizing places where all their sisters came from.

So it struck me that there was a gender dimension to this. And it wasn't till later that Sonny told me how his interest in stories, in particular in how these stories inform one another, that, and then I guess my historical interest in a similar topic, it was very accidental. It came together and we were working on it. Well, neither of us was working on it as a project. It wasn't one of the projects that was sort of, you know, our job to do. But it was a big accident in a way. And what sort of emerges is this idea that, you know, you can operationalize broader affiliations and identities and smaller ones. And that they have, depending on what the issue is and how people raise them. And for women, in general, they tend to emphasize more of a certain type, and men more of a certain other type. But we both sort of came to the same place through very different research methodologies. And then the atlas was basically an expression of the coming together of those ideas in many ways. How do we bring these together and show, show the overlaps and share them with people and have them respond to it? In a way, that does honouring to the more local notions and the bigger notions.

Sonny – Well, even with the atlas itself, I know when we first started out there, was going to be the place names chapter, there was also going to be the chapter that talked about **(Unknown Word)** the Transformer, those **(Unknown Word)** stories. And those are the only two chapters that we had decided early on as an editorial board. And then it, when, when I went to the elders and told them about the two chapters that we wanted to include in there, and we were talking about how we were going to do that, and talking about some of the different details, some of the questions that I, that I needed to answer for those two chapters. And then that's when the two elders, we were talking at one time about these other two things about the **(Unknown Word)** and talking about the movement of **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)**.

Keith Carlson – It's the mask.

Sonny – The **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)** is the mask and it's, it's a very protected area, like there's a protocol that we have to maintain where we can't talk about the **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)** and we can't talk about the winter dance. So if you go through our three books, you'll, you won't see anything in there about that. We'll make references to it, but there's nothing that's really particular or specific to it because it's really very protected like the, the ceremony. You're not allowed to take pictures, you're not allowed to have a tape recorder, you're not allowed to record any of the songs, and it only happens at a certain time. There's so many protocols involved with it that. It's really something that's very protected, so we don't have any of that in our atlas. But when we talked, spoke with those elders, and then we talked about the movement of **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)**, and they said, "Yeah, that's an important thing that should be in there." Like, we're not allowed to talk about the **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)** in itself, so there's specific details, but still the story's about its origin, stories about how it made its way from one lake, and how it made its way to other villages. And the fact that other elders were talking about that and had their own stories about those movements, that that was important to be included. So we included that.

And the other thing that we included in there was **(Unknown Word)**. **(Unknown Word, Same as Previous)** are kind of like, I guess if you, from a western societies

perspective, if you use the word “supernatural creature,” which, even then, that’s not the proper word, as well. Because it would take the Sasquatch and include the Sasquatch if you’re from Western society. But within our society, Sasquatch is something that is considered to be very real. And I got my hands slapped from the elders for even suggesting that the Sasquatch was a **Slolakum (Unknown Spelling)**. And same with a Thunderbird right, **(Unknown Word)**. The linguist had included the Thunderbird as a **Slolakum (Unknown Spelling)**, so when I suggested that to the elders, again I got my hand slapped, again saying, “No, the Thunderbird’s not a **Slolakum (Unknown Spelling)**, Thunderbird’s real. You know its something that’s still out there. Just the young people don’t understand it, and they need to understand it.” So that’s why those two chapter were included in there.

Brenda Macdougall – We’ve got about fifteen minutes before the tape runs out, so you want to **(inaudible, voice drops off)**. I’m trying to use my brain, and I’m caught up in stories right now. So ... please.

Winona Wheeler – Can I just pick up on one point you mentioned because. Thank you for giving us that teaching, because it’s so vital that in the work that we do, we discover the categories in between. The categories that don’t exist in the Western paradigm. And that those, and they’re not even considered categories, and sometimes they’re considered grey zones and people don’t really want to touch them. Those are so much a part of our reality. In fact, those make up the majority of the kinds of knowledge that we find when we’re doing community-based research. The knowledge that doesn’t fit into those almost binary categories. True stories, fiction stories. And I think, from my part, that one of the beauties of the work that we’re all trying to do is discovering or re-discovering those areas that don’t fit anybody else’s categories. And breathing life into them by reclaiming them and owning them and taking pride in them. When for generations and generations we were humiliated and shamed and punished for them. And I think that’s something really significant that’s going on in cutting edge scholarship, is that appreciation, that expansion of the concept of research. That expansion of the concepts of knowledge. And the totally blowing out of the water notions of what is reality. And I think that’s work that we’re on the cutting edge of doing. And to me, that’s one of the most exciting intellectually and spiritually exciting components of the kind of work we do in oral history.

Ida Moore – (inaudible at beginning, microphone too far away) ... what I found is that, I, when I was in academia, I started learning things about that I had never. I thought, *I don't know what these things are like, the seven sacred laws, the seven sacred teachings like. Like what, like I've never heard of these things what are they?* And here, and I found that sometimes even elders or teachers were using these concepts in them. And I thought, *I don't understand this.* So then, once I went back home and I started working with, talking to community people and old people there, their terms like respect. **(Speaks in Cree)** You know, like, and I'm not, it's such a cold thing. Like, I don't know if the word is cold, but when you say respect, it doesn't have the same meaning as when you say **(Speaks in Cree)**, you know. Like it doesn't have the same teaching and how, there's a sense of, it's what you were talking about, how it's more supernatural, like Sasquatch. Like when white people, sorry, when white people talk about Sasquatch's, like it's not real. But like when I, this one time I went out into, I went to do, I was working with this one community, and one of the workers said that people had seen Sasquatch, and she said, "Come on, I'll take you to where he was." And she took me out to this lake and said, "Here, see, there's his footprints. And yet the newspapers were reporting it like ha-ha kind of thing. And, but for this community, it was very real, you know. And so, just the different world views, I guess, and how they play into that relationship. And I think that's one of the things that I admire about the two of you, is that you've negotiated that so beautifully.

Winona Wheeler – Notions of truth. And notions of fact and real. Realism. Doctor Preston also addressed those in his book, which is what made me giddy about your book. Oh, he can see between the lines, this is so cool.

John Murdoch – How much of your work is in the school, in the community?

Sonny – A fair bit. All three of them are.

Keith Carlson – Yeah. The published stuff are—there's other things that are more academic or else more technical that aren't, but we've tried to put it in. When you, one of the things just before I came to Saskatoon and started working here, there was a person from the Ministry of Forest, I believe it was, that came to our office at Sto:lo nation, and they were

helping fund studies to demarcate grizzly bear habitats, and how that might affect forest management. And they wanted Aboriginal consultation, participation, and then they would, there's another group from SFU [Simon Fraser University] studying the Giant Pacific Salamander, this rare salamander that's apparently about this big. Lives in fast moving creeks. And they want to protect areas like where they live, and grey, you know, spotted owls and things. And Sonny and I were sitting with the fellow from the Ministry of Forest, and I was thinking about what Jimmy, Jimmy Charlie from Chehalis.

Chehalis is the community where Sasquatch is really a big part of their, it's the Sto:lo community where Sasquatch is a big part of their history. And then he would always talk about, "Oh, Sasquatch place, and the place where Sasquatch comes to drink and place." All these Sasquatch places. He was talking about his time down near Vancouver when he was a young child and saying, "Oh, we went here and I saw Mutt and Jeff"—you know, the Vaudeville team—"and then I saw Harry Houdini over here when I was a kid. And this is where the Sasquatch was." And it's all like downtown, all together, you know these wonderful stories. So we turned to the fellow from the Ministry of Forests and said, "Could we get funding to demarcate Sasquatch habitat zones, and that could affect forest developments?" And he just sort of looks at us—and you could see he was trying to be, first are we joking, I think. And then, secondly, *If they're not joking, are they serious and do they really think I'm going to give money to this?* And he just sort of smiled, and I said, "Well, maybe we can talk about it more later." I didn't want to get off on the thing. And I don't think, he never did come back later.

But that would be something that is generally really important, and when the consulting companies come in and they say, "Oh, you know we're doing this for you." They basically come in with a biology model, you know. And even if you want to talk about folk taxonomies, you know, like the fact that for the Sto:lo black bear with a white spot on its chest is a different animal than a black bear without a white spot. They're not. It's not just another type of black bear, it's a different animal. It has a different history and these things. And so they need to be accounted for separately, you know. And then Sasquatch would be another, another species within an Aboriginal zoology. Not mythology, right. So.

But it's hard to convey those ideas to the people that have the power, right. And yet that guy probably has a, if not himself, a mother, brother, sister who probably goes to church on Sundays, and takes a little piece of bread and believes that this is a transformed

piece of bread that is now, the substance has become the body of Christ. And you think how, if you can reconcile that in your society. If you're a Catholic and you believe that the Virgin Mary ascended into heaven in bodily form, not just her spirit but her whole body. That's an infallible statement from the Pope that apparently 30% of Canadians adhere to in some way. But you won't even consider that there's a Sasquatch. That doesn't seem very respectful, right.

Winona Wheeler – And that's the bottom line.

Cheryl Troupe – Well, I think that's a good place to stop.

Winona Wheeler – We've run out of tape.

Cheryl Troupe – **(Inaudible due to laughter)** ... so we may as well stop now.

Inaudible chatter.