

# **AAG INDIGENOUS PEOPLES SPECIALTY GROUP'S DECLARATION OF KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT RESEARCH ETHICS WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES**

## **Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group (IPSG) of the Association of American Geographers (AAG)**

[www.indigenousgeography.net/ipsg.shtml](http://www.indigenousgeography.net/ipsg.shtml)

The Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group (IPSG) of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) works for five specific goals: 1) service to Indigenous communities; 2) service to the field of geography; 3) service to Indigenous geographers; 4) bridge the gap between Indigenous communities and geography/ers; 5) investigate what ethical research means in relationship to Indigenous communities and help guide researchers in conducting such research. We, the IPSG, believe that Indigenous communities are highly capable of determining their own research needs, and as researchers who work with Indigenous communities, we see an important role for geographic tools, methods and theory for facilitating such research.

However, we also believe that in doing so, the discipline of geography must overcome its distinctly colonial heritage, and its continuing relationship with power structures that define how knowledge is created and reproduced. This introspective process will require acknowledging how a historic sense of superiority and entitlement affects how geographic research is conducted.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is a larger purpose to the re-examination of ethics protocols with Indigenous peoples. *Geography--and geographers--are being tested*. Will we as a community pass the test, in the eyes of Indigenous peoples? Our academic work is often full of moral ambiguities, complexities, and contextualizations. There is, however, also a time and a place for *moral clarity*. We feel that the 2010s are the time, and Indigenous nations are the place.

The process of decolonizing knowledge requires having a critical understanding of how colonial-based relations of power and knowledge production shape research practices, and reshaping these practices based on principles of Indigenous self-determination. These principles are outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which requires that Indigenous peoples have “Free, Prior and Informed Consent” of any actions that may affect their well-being, and makes clear that this principle applies to the taking of “cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property”<sup>1</sup>

In her book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains, “Self-determination in a research agenda becomes more than a political goal. It becomes a goal of social justice which is expressed through and across a wide range of psychological, social, cultural and economic terrains... The processes, approaches and methodologies ...are critical elements of a strategic research agenda.”<sup>2</sup> To Smith, Indigenous decolonization “has not meant a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge. Rather, it is about centring our concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes.”<sup>3</sup>

The IPSG believes that recognizing the sensitive nature of research relationships with Indigenous peoples does not need to halt geographic research with Indigenous communities. To the contrary, this is the very reason geographers should begin building mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous nations -- to bring more integrity to our field, and to enrich geographic inquiry. Many communities welcome researchers who work with integrity on Indigenous terms, and some have established their own boards to review research and to negotiate with the researcher about under what conditions one can proceed with his/her research. As the Akwesasne Research Advisory Committee states, an Indigenous review process “should not be viewed in a negative way or be seen as an impediment to research. It has been developed to serve as a guide to improve relations...and to promote collaboration within a framework of mutual trust and cooperation.”<sup>4</sup>

The new paradigm of “collaborative” research goes beyond “participatory” research, by making the community and its own ideas and self-determination processes central to the project. Constructing power relations in which the academic researcher acknowledges that Indigenous communities and people also produce knowledge is key. Moreover, as collaborators Indigenous peoples are no longer treated simply as ‘informants’, but knowledge-holders and experts on particular topics in relation to their own identities, histories, environment, and definitions of self-determination. Knowledge *about* Indigenous peoples is not the same as Indigenous knowledge, which is held by the people themselves. Mapping Indigenous lands is likewise not the same as Indigenous mapping, which uses Indigenous methodologies. Simply put, research about “the other” can be superseded by collaborative research relationships.

Certain principles can guide a collaborative relationship between researchers and Indigenous communities. Working with Indigenous communities and nations brings up many cultural, political, ecological and spiritual questions that are rarely addressed in conventional ethics boards or statements—such as collective decision-making, diplomatic protocol and reciprocity, oral consent processes, protection of sacred sites, concepts of time and predictability, and the use of data for exploitation or repression.

Conventional ethics guidelines and board processes (such as the Institutional Review Boards in the U.S.) have proven inadequate to building collaborative relationships, because their primary purpose is to protect institutions from legal liability and financial recriminations of research projects. *We maintain that the primary purpose of ethics guidelines (for academics wishing to carry out research with Indigenous peoples) should be to work in collaboration with those Indigenous communities that choose to be involved in research, in order to assist them in the protection of their rights and security.* In some cases, ethics requirements are instituting cookie-cutter rules that do not fit all situations--such as requiring paperwork with non-literate populations, or requiring anonymity for individuals who want their voices to be heard. These rules are often treated by prospective researchers as mere bureaucratic hoops to jump through, rather than understanding the meaningful need to negotiate with Indigenous peoples over the terms of research.

Higher education, government research institutions, and granting agencies should require researchers to generate results that benefit both the general body of knowledge, and the communities being researched. New guidelines are being drafted to take the particular contexts and needs of Indigenous communities into account. The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), for example, is developing a guideline which includes an extensive bibliography..<sup>5</sup> They developed nine guidelines for research with Indigenous Peoples that are characterized by the following aspects: values, benefit, openness, partnership, respect, consent, confidentiality, protection, and reciprocity. The NMAI guidelines were referenced briefly in the AAG's Statement on Professional Ethics, revised in November 2009.<sup>6</sup>

Rather than draft a statement or guidelines on proper research ethics from an authoritative position, the IPSG wishes to open a conversation about how to conduct more ethical research in and with Indigenous communities. In providing a bridge to build further communication and collaboration, the IPSG would like to put ourselves at the service of both geographic researchers and Indigenous communities, Geographers wishing to approach Indigenous communities—in the Global North or South—with requests for research can first approach the IPSG for suggestions and guidance into a respectful research process that builds relationships with Indigenous communities, and whether a project should proceed or continue.

To ease this process, we have collaboratively compiled a list of questions that we would ask of prospective researchers approaching Indigenous communities—and more importantly, what we believe researchers should reflect upon and ask themselves. This is not a mere checklist or recipe to follow, but rather an approach to doing collaborative geographic research with Indigenous communities. Just as the research needs of Indigenous communities may vary across political, economic, and environmental contexts, so too will the questions pertinent to ethical research vary. As such, the development of collaborative research with Indigenous peoples is highly dependent on the specific local contexts of people and place. Researchers must be aware that formulating ethical guidelines may involve negotiation, nuance, and sometimes, contradiction.

These statements and questions are intended to stimulate researchers to *think before they research*, and to internalize collaborative attitudes during the process of researching. The IPSG would like to emphasize that thinking and discussing these topics is essential to the future of geographic research and, therefore, we are aiming to catalyze such collaborative processes within the AAG. We invite stories from researchers about their experiences with Indigenous communities, and from Indigenous communities about their experiences with researchers. Because this process is very complex and has no set formula for success, it requires on-going thinking, negotiating, and reflection. Yet the primary moral principle that guides this complex process is actually quite simple: the principle of respect.

## A. Formulating the Project

**The process of collaborative negotiation resembles diplomatic protocol**, and in fact emerges from nation-to-nation relationships (particularly in countries where treaties form the basis of intergovernmental relations). These protocols begin with a recognition of trust and integrity, and are anchored in mutual benefits and reciprocity. If the researcher arrives to a new community to do research assuming that she will be welcomed, she is not behaving as a proper guest. If researchers assume that they are guests in the community, then they are more likely to be welcomed. Rather than approaching a community with a set research agenda, or an assumption that the research findings will benefit the community, it may be more fruitful to approach the community with a set of skills, and draft an agreement how the skills may best be used for mutual benefit. It is necessary to approach this interactive process with honesty and humility, particularly in the case of projects that have not yet been funded.

1. Timeframes are different across cultures, and research grant timeframes often do not meet the needs of collaborative-based research. How much time is being given for review, implementation, and completion of the project? Is the academic or institutional calendar guiding the pace of the project (restraining timelines and possibilities), or is the Indigenous community's process guiding the pace? How is the researcher negotiating between funding sources that have a precise timeline for research and with an Indigenous community who may not want to follow that timeline? If the project has a more limited timeframe (due either to academic or funding restraints or both), what more limited goals could realistically be accomplished?

2. How much time is being invested to build relationships with the Indigenous community and its leadership, and is enough patience being invested to learn what they care about? Is flexibility being built into the project schedule, due to possible constraints, delays, and lack of predictability about how these initial stages of relationship-building may go? How is the researcher ensuring that the promises being made can be kept within the time framework?

3. How much of a role does the community have in shaping the research framework? Is the research agenda too defined and time-sensitive, thus limiting the community's input? Conversely, is the research agenda too ill-defined and open-ended to work successfully, burdening the community with too much of a role in shaping its framework? As a compromise between the two extremes, how can the researcher lay out defined skills one can offer to the community, but leave the final shaping of the project open for the community to determine?

4. Is the process of gaining Free, Prior and Informed Consent taking into account both individual and collective (community /legal representatives) consent? How can one ensure that the process of approval is going through the proper channels of Indigenous government or community leadership? Who is giving the permission to conduct the research in an Indigenous community and what is that person's and/or organization's role in the community? How do they or do they not represent the community with whom the researcher wants to work? Have the community members themselves given Free, Prior, and Informed Consent?

5. How is the project addressing written forms of consent versus oral forms of consent (such as a statement recorded on tape), which some Indigenous people may prefer?
6. How is the project plan addressing not only the stated goals and intentions of the research, but also inadvertent or unanticipated consequences of the project? What system of internal and external accountability is in place, in case of possible ethics violations?
7. How is the project ensuring that it is protecting the security and well-being of the Indigenous community from harmful effects of the research, and not just operating under research ethics protocols (such as Institutional Review Boards in the U.S.) designed to protect the researcher and institution from legal recriminations or financial liabilities?
8. In some cases, a research project emerges from pure theory or human curiosity rather than application to current circumstances. If your research interests are not matching the current concerns of the people in that time and place, how are you respectfully communicating and negotiating how it may benefit them in the future, or more broadly benefit other people or communities (for example, through influencing policies or representations)?

## **B. Identities of Researchers**

**Academic researchers have the option to go beyond simply researching Indigenous peoples and cultures.** They can also research the interaction of Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies and communities. Non-Indigenous researchers can take responsibility for studying the actions of their own communities and governments, and work with Indigenous communities to remove obstacles and barriers to the full exercise of self-determination. Non-Indigenous researchers may need to take responsibility to expose ethics violations in their own institutions, and not just wait for Indigenous peoples or organizations to object to research practices. These principles can be applied whether the Indigenous communities are in the researchers' own country, or in another country. This is the same case as when the researchers themselves are Indigenous people, or even Indigenous people working in their own community (as Linda Tuhiwai Smith points out).

1. Has the researcher thought about his/her relationship of power and positionality in relation to the communities with which he/she wants to collaborate? How has the researcher designed his/her research to deal with these power relations and differences? What role does identity difference play in the researcher's project?
2. In what ways can non-Indigenous researchers being trained in cultural respect and sensitivity in their dealings with Indigenous communities and individuals, both in their research work and other social settings? How can they acquire or develop other skills that may benefit the Indigenous community in the future?
3. How can the project research methodologies go beyond solely academic disciplinary methodologies and incorporate or take into account Indigenous research methodologies—the path or process that the Indigenous community itself would use to investigate the topic?

44. For non-Indigenous researchers: How could you explore options for research that do not include “studying” Indigenous peoples? If non-Indigenous communities or institutions are a primary obstacle or barrier to Indigenous self-determination, would it be more helpful to the Indigenous community for you to study non-Indigenous policies or attitudes? If the Indigenous community does not want you to conduct research within their community, how could you flip or shift your research to focus more on your own community, or on broader social relations, policies and institutions that affect Indigenous peoples?

5. The principle of reciprocity can extend to the sharing of knowledge. In some cases, communities benefit from knowledge they have gained from researchers. How prepared are you to share the insights of your discipline, or Western scientific knowledge, so they can incorporate or use it for own purposes? (After all, much of Western scientific knowledge was originally extrapolated from Indigenous peoples, and then imposed as categories on them.) Are you prepared to share life experiences or skills that can provide tools or opportunities to the community, aside from the research results themselves?

6. Are the mentors of the researcher (such as professors supervising a student) fully aware of the dynamics and complexities of working with Indigenous communities? Do they provide proper training and guidance to the student, or are they prepared for the pressure that a student project might bring on their own workload? Are they asking for a clear, defined plan in circumstances where predictability is low and flexibility is needed? Has the researcher clearly communicated with his/her mentor that this might not be the case and talked about alternative research pathways?

7. Are the researchers accepting funds from sources that may affect their relationships with Indigenous communities? For example, are they funded by military or intelligence agencies for projects in Indigenous regions facing repression, where innocently gathered data may undermine the communities’ security? Is the Indigenous community fully aware and supportive of such a military relationship, or did it initiate the relationship as part of its self-determination (for example, to safely access cultural sites on a military base)? Is the research team deferring to the principle of “Free, Prior and Informed Consent”?

### **C. Partnerships**

**Indigenous Scholars and Communities have expressed that researchers need to form partnerships with Indigenous communities when formulating the research project, rather than presenting these communities with a formulated research plan.**

Researchers can approach communities first with their capabilities, but the communities may want to shape the ultimate purpose of the research as well as the researchers’ role in the community. For instance, the researchers cannot assume that because they want to resolve the political or economic problems of an Indigenous community, that the community necessarily wants them to do so. Moreover, a community ultimately decides if they want the researcher as an ally; this is not something that can be self-assigned and it may take time for a community to trust a researcher, especially based on negative historical experiences with researchers. In addition, most communities want to receive

full information on the form, methodology, and sponsors, in negotiations prior to the start of the project. Free, Prior and Informed Consent must be secured from Indigenous partners, individuals and/or communities participating in or affected by the research.

1. How involved is the Indigenous community (and its legal representatives) in formulating the research plan, or being presented with a completed research plan? What process of negotiation is being pursued with these representatives in shaping the project? How is the community shaping the ultimate purpose and goals of the project so it can ultimately benefit them? Is it fully aware of the skills and capabilities of the researchers, so it can help set the direction of the project?
2. To what extent is the community and its legal representatives receiving full information on the forms, methodologies, funders and sponsors of the research project? Is this information in both written and oral form, in accessible and transparent prose, in a language they fully understand? Is it made clear that the community has input not only into how a project is conducted, but if it should be conducted at all?
3. Have you provided a written description of the project, written in accessible prose, that explains the project to non-academic individuals? Are you prepared to explain the project orally to non-academic individuals, and take questions about the project?
4. In situations of disputes within and between Indigenous communities, how will you deal with questions of divided leadership and direction? How does the project's agenda seek to heal or sidestep divisions? Does it have any potential to exacerbate or widen the divisions? How willing is the researcher to engage individuals or communities that have questions about a project that has already been approved by other individuals or communities?
5. Has the project set up a research advisory group of representatives from the Indigenous community and/or government? What is the plan in place for the transfer of skills and knowledge that would enable a local Indigenous research group to take charge and eventual control of an on-going project?
6. How will a researcher collaborate with an Indigenous community that retains its own language? Will you learn the language if so requested? Will you not learn the language if the community wants to exercise control over its dissemination? How will these questions be addressed?

#### **D. Benefits**

**Benefits of the research should flow to the Indigenous partners**, including acknowledgement, fair return and royalties. Researchers should reciprocate for this knowledge with appropriate service to the community, and by not flaunting the knowledge that has been shared with them. Many Indigenous communities and individuals assert that it is ethical for them to have control over what aspects of their traditional knowledge or “intellectual property” is shared or is kept in their possession.

1. How is traditional knowledge included in the project, if requested by the partner community? Is it not included if so requested? Has the researcher had clear conversations with the community about which parts of the Indigenous knowledge cannot be shared with the public?

2. Are Indigenous partners acknowledged or recognized for their contributions when they wish to be, or not acknowledged if they wish their identity to be protected? Did the researcher have clear conversations with the individuals about this, and if so, did they make any special requests? How does the researcher deal with varied responses to recognition in terms of academic requirements (such as the IRB in the U.S.)?

3. In situations of government oppression or hostility from the dominant population, how does the researcher collaborate with the communities in a safe way to confront with these circumstances and intervene for their rights? What steps does the researcher need to take when asked to be an ally in situations of economic and political oppression? How could the presence of researchers benefit the safety and security of the Indigenous community? How could the presence inadvertently draw undue attention and harm to the community? Could it draw unwelcome attention to the researchers themselves, or put them in harm's way, and thereby divert public focus from the harm being done to the Indigenous peoples?

4. Are any benefits from publications of the work, such as royalties, patents, copyright, trademark, etc. being kept by the researchers as individuals or channeled to empower and assist Indigenous communities? Is the researcher examining her/his privilege to conduct research in places affected by extreme poverty and/or violence, and then go home to more comfortable circumstances? Are there ways to "spread the wealth," instead of merely benefiting one's career?

5. What forms of reciprocity are being negotiated or carried out with the Indigenous community? What service or material benefit is being left behind by the researcher, whether intrinsic to the research project or not? How are the principles of fair compensation and fair-return being applied to the research process and results?

6. What plan do the researchers have to highlight Indigenous expertise on Indigenous issues-- establishing Indigenous peoples as experts on themselves? When researchers are approached for talks or interviews, are Indigenous leaders or community members also (or instead) invited to speak on the topic? Will the project heighten the profile of primary source experts as well as secondary source researchers? Similarly, will it seek to highlight the work of Indigenous scholars as well as non-Indigenous scholars?

7. How and where will the research be published, and how will copies or presentations be provided to affected Indigenous communities? What plan is in place for community leaders or members to review the text, images and representations? Who has the power and authority to make these decisions over publication, and more broadly over representation? In what language(s) will the research be published? Does the researcher have plans to translate all or part of their work to make it accessible to the collaborating Indigenous community, and to make it accessible to institutions that might be able to work with the community?



## E. Findings

**Most Indigenous partners want the opportunity to review and revise drafts of the findings, and have access to the final product.** Agreements on the confidentiality of sources, and protection of sacred places and knowledge must be maintained even after the research project is complete. The form of the findings is also critically important to building cultural understandings. Quantitative data without qualitative context can create misimpressions and may not serve the needs of the community. Findings based solely on data and people-as-objects fits within Western academic methodologies and GIS mapping, but not Indigenous cultural methodologies. Instead of nouns and objects, many Indigenous languages are based on verbs and actions; they are driven by the process rather than the goal. Framing research findings in terms of on-going processes—the means rather than the ends—can help continue the interaction with Indigenous cultural systems.

1. How are the voices and direct viewpoints of Indigenous people—in written and oral form—presented in the findings /incorporated into the findings? Is oral information recognized and treated as equal in credibility to the written form? Are researchers checking back to see if private conversations can be used as sources, just as they are gaining consent to use formal interviews?
2. Is Indigenous knowledge being legitimized only when it corresponds to Western discipline-based knowledge, or respected as a source of knowledge on its own merits? Are subjective or experiential values of Indigenous peoples presented as their perspectives, or set aside in favor of purely “objective” knowledge?
3. What becomes of the research materials and findings after the research project is completed? Who has ownership of or access to the research materials? Does the Indigenous community that consented to the project have the option to revise or block the findings if they feel it violates their security or rights?
4. How is the confidentiality or anonymity of research participants being fully respected and guarded—even long after the project is over? How are the details of sacred practices and locations of sacred sites being protected in either written or oral form?
5. What measures are being taken so that the research findings or materials are not being made available (purposely or inadvertently) to third parties that might use the information to harm the Indigenous community’s security or rights? What form of accountability is in place to ensure that the information is safeguarded from release to third parties?
6. Has permission been gained for the use of factual data, audio, maps, photos and video acquired or developed in work with the Indigenous community? Have individual research participants been offered the opportunity to review and revise their contribution to the research, such as quotes or interviews?

7. Have community representatives reviewed the overall project findings in their entirety? Have they been given the findings in written form, and invited to an oral presentation?
8. Is Indigenous knowledge being presented as contested, volatile or challenged, or as a given that is accepted within Indigenous communities? Is the researcher attempting to heighten the tension, contrast or similarities between Indigenous knowledge (“Indigenous science”) and Western science, or presenting Indigenous knowledge as possessing value in its own right?

## **F. Deepening Relationships**

**Relationships with Indigenous peoples should not be maintained not simply within the confines of Western ethics or legal principles (including concepts such as “intellectual property”) but also within Indigenous cultural frameworks.** This may mean researchers forming lifelong bonds of service, maintaining a relationship to the community, even after it no longer serves their funding or career interests. Traditional protocols--specific to local circumstances--may include reciprocity or diplomatic gifting, mutual assistance outside of the boundaries of academic studies, and discussion of personal and family perspectives. Researchers should remember that Indigenous peoples are often looking as much at our hearts as at our minds.

1. Are you prepared to discuss your deeper personal motivations, not only the goals or methodologies of the project? Such questions may touch on your values, identities and relationships, and include “why did you get involved in research involving Indigenous people?”, “who is your family” or simply “who are you?”. Can you speak from your heart as well as your mind, directly and honestly, without dominating the discussion?
2. What long-term relationship is being built with the Indigenous community, even after the project funding and career interests are no longer in play? How can the researcher be of service to the community in the future? Can the researcher maintain commitments to long-term relationships in an uncertain job market and life? How will the researcher deal with these commitments to people and place?
3. What options other than research can geographers do in collaboration with Indigenous communities struggling for their rights and lands? Could activism, investigative journalism, lobbying advocacy, a witness presence, or service labor be more valuable to the community than an academic research project?
4. How are local Indigenous cultural frameworks and protocol being incorporated into the project methodologies? How are diplomatic relationships constructed within and between the local Indigenous peoples? How does a researcher plan to uphold ethical research and negotiate with communities that do not have research protocols thought out yet? Would it be important to start discussions about research and let them know

the benefits and negative consequences (whether unintended or not) of research in other Indigenous communities?

5. What are the proper channels to follow in approaching Indigenous elders and leaders? Is gift-giving or the transfer of sacred materials expected as part of making requests or recognition? Are other forms of service or material assistance desirable, even outside of the project boundaries?
6. Some Indigenous communities value the reproduction of knowledge—such as through intergenerational teaching—as much or more than the development of new areas of knowledge. Is the outcome of the research project solely to accumulate new knowledge? Does the project place value on revisiting and renewing established areas of knowledge, in order to reinforce community understanding?
7. *In the final analysis, is the primary goal of the research project to build a relationship with the Indigenous community, and further its larger interests, or to serve the interests of academic careers or institutions? Is the project being directed by funding opportunities or constraints, or by the needs of the Indigenous people?*

### **Final Questions to Catalyze Further Conversation in Geography and in Indigenous Communities**

As researchers, we need to figure out and/or remember why we do research in the first place. Do we emphasize research that extracts knowledge, as another ‘resource’ that can be used objectified and commoditized (not unlike extractive approaches to the Earth)? Or do we emphasize research that decolonizes knowledge, as a process of self-determination of and by our fellow human beings? What does a more sustainable and collaborative approach to research look like? How does the research that we as geographers do ultimately help keep knowledge in the hands of Indigenous peoples, so they can continue to live on the earth?

As the Cree scholar Shawn Wilson writes in his book *Research Is Ceremony*, “It is the forming of healthy and strong relationships that that leads us to being healthy and strong researchers....The reverse may also be true, in that the research process may also build or strengthen a sense of community. Through maintaining accountability to the relationships that have been built, an increased sense of sharing common interests can be established.”<sup>7</sup>

In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith expands upon the important role that respect plays in creating mutually beneficial relationships: “From indigenous perspectives ethical codes of conduct serve partly the same purpose as the protocols which govern our relationships with each other and with the environment. The term ‘respect’ is consistently used by indigenous peoples to underscore the significance of our relationships and humanity. Through respect the place of everyone and everything in the universe is kept in balance and harmony. Respect is a reciprocal, shared, constantly interchanging principle which is expressed through all aspects of social conduct.”<sup>8</sup>

The IPSG maintains that as geographers doing research with Indigenous peoples in their respective places, we may acquire funding, institutional support, publications, and the

respect of our academic colleagues by doing so. Without respect and integrity in our interactions with Indigenous peoples with whom we conduct research and receive knowledge, we actually end up with very little. Conversely, even a poor and obscure geographer can have a fulfilling career, and a rich life, through genuinely listening to and learning from Indigenous peoples about what is most important to them.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations General Assembly. (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf) Article 11, Section 2, specifies that “States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.”

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment. (1996). Protocol for Review of Environmental and Scientific Research Proposals. Developed by the Research Advisory Committee. <http://www.northnet.org/atfe/Prot.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. (2009). Protocols for Conducting Research in Indigenous Settings: Guidelines for Ethical, Appropriate and Successful Methodologies. (Draft MS).

<sup>6</sup> Association of American Geographers. (2009). Statement on Professional Ethics Endorsed by the Council of the October 18, 1998, Updated April 5, 2005, Revised November 1, 2009. <http://www.aag.org/Info/ethics.htm>

<sup>7</sup> Wilson, Shawn. (2008). *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, p. 86.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, p. 120.

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**This statement was developed by the 2009-10 IPSG Board:**

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