



FNLKC Conference Keynote

Workshop Title: When the 'Object' of Repatriation is Song: Confronting Archives, Navigating Copyright and Asserting Indigenous Laws

Name of Presenters: Dr. Robin R. R. Gray, PhD

Biography: Robin R. R. Gray, PhD (T'uu'tk) is Ts'msyen from Lax Kw'alaams, BC and Mikisew Cree from Fort Chipewyan, AB. In 2015, she earned a PhD in anthropology from the University of Massachusetts Amherst from Amherst, MA. Dr. Gray has been facilitating community-based research projects with, by and for her people, including the repatriation of Ts'msyen songs from archives, and an exploration of embodied heritage with an urban Ts'msyen dance group. In addition to her academic life, Robin is active in her culture and community, a Ts'msyen dancer and singer and an apprentice Chilkat weaver.

Abstract: There is an incredible amount of Indigenous cultural material located in museums, archives and personal collections around the world, but Indigenous people are not considered the owners of their captured heritage by default of western property frameworks. This paper focuses on the efforts of Ts'msyen from Lax Kw'alaams to repatriate songs and associated knowledge products from the archives of the Laura Boulton Collection of Traditional and Liturgical Music. It provides an overview of the socio-political context that created the conditions for the songs to be taken from the community, including an analysis of the contributing role of intellectual property laws in the dispossession of Ts'msyen knowledge, heritage and rights. Based on an ongoing community-based participatory action research project with, by and for Ts'msyen, this paper offers decolonial considerations on the topic of ownership, access and control from the vantage of Ts'msyen laws, ethics and protocols.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, delegates will:

- Begin to understand how to protect our Indigenous cultural materials.