

DECOLONIZING COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY AT THE ABSAROKA AGENCY
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF THE 2011 COLLABORATIVE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVENTS OCCURRING AT THE SITE
OF THE 2ND CROW AGENCY

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

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April, 2012

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife Megkian and our three daughters, Florence, Ruby and Lilian. Special acknowledgements to my advisor, Dr. Michael Brody.

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ABSTRACT

This transcendental phenomenological study examines three collaborative archaeological events that occurred at the site of the former “Absaroka” (Crow) Agency (1975 – 1884), during the 2011 summer excavation. The June 4th 3 Tipi Day, the July 8th Absaroka Agency Volunteer Day, and the August 2nd Crow Elders Day, are each examined primarily through interviews conducted with key collaborators and participants, with an emphasis on uncovering the decolonizing qualities of the events. Interviews consisted of three basic questions: 1) How did the events at the Absaroka Agency reflect and exemplify collaborative archaeological inquiry and decolonizing research methodologies? 2) What did you experience at the Absaroka Agency? 3) What did the experience mean to you? Analysis of interview data included the highlighting of significant statements and the contextualizing of those statements within a table that highlighted the three essential characteristics of decolonizing collaborative research methodologies. The conclusions and final discussion are interpreted from the researcher’s perspective as an embedded participant-observer and member of the Crow Tribe.

The emerging and swiftly growing field of Collaborative Indigenous Archaeology is still in the early stages of intellectual and practical development, and more scholarship is needed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the central issues still being resolved within the field. One essential and multi-faceted problem lies at the heart of this developing field; what does the decolonization of collaborative archaeology look, smell, sound, taste, and feel like? This study explores how the collaborative events at the Absaroka Agency answered that complex question, and it also addresses two prominent research gaps in the field; a scarcity of research and publication by indigenous researchers and a lack of literature about collaborative archaeology with northern plains tribes, such as the Crow Tribe.

This study provides relevant information about collaborative inquiry and decolonizing research methodologies to an extensive group of participating partners, including federal, state, and tribal organizations. The findings also provide an informative guide for future scholars who seek to engage in similar collaborative research methodologies.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A Phenomenological Exploration of the Archaeological
Collaborations Occurring at the Absarokee Agency

Background of the Problem

This transcendental phenomenological study focuses on the collaborative archaeological events that occurred at the site of the second Crow Agency (1975 – 1884), more commonly known as the Absaroka Agency, during the 2011 summer excavation. Plans by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) to reconstruct and widen Montana Highway 78 prompted the state agency to undertake an extensive archaeological excavation of the impacted areas, as pursuant to the 1990 Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act. Due to the significant historical importance of the site, several organizations, including the MDT, the Montana Historical Society, and Montana's Project Archaeology sought to develop a larger collaborative education project that included members of the Crow tribal community.

Educational collaborations between members of tribal descendant communities and professional archaeologists have become more common in the past 20 years, but are still emerging as an important new aspect of contemporary archaeological education. Studying the collaborations provides an opportunity to more fully understand archaeological collaborative inquiry processes with northern plains tribes.



Figure 1. A truck drives down Montana Hwy. 78.

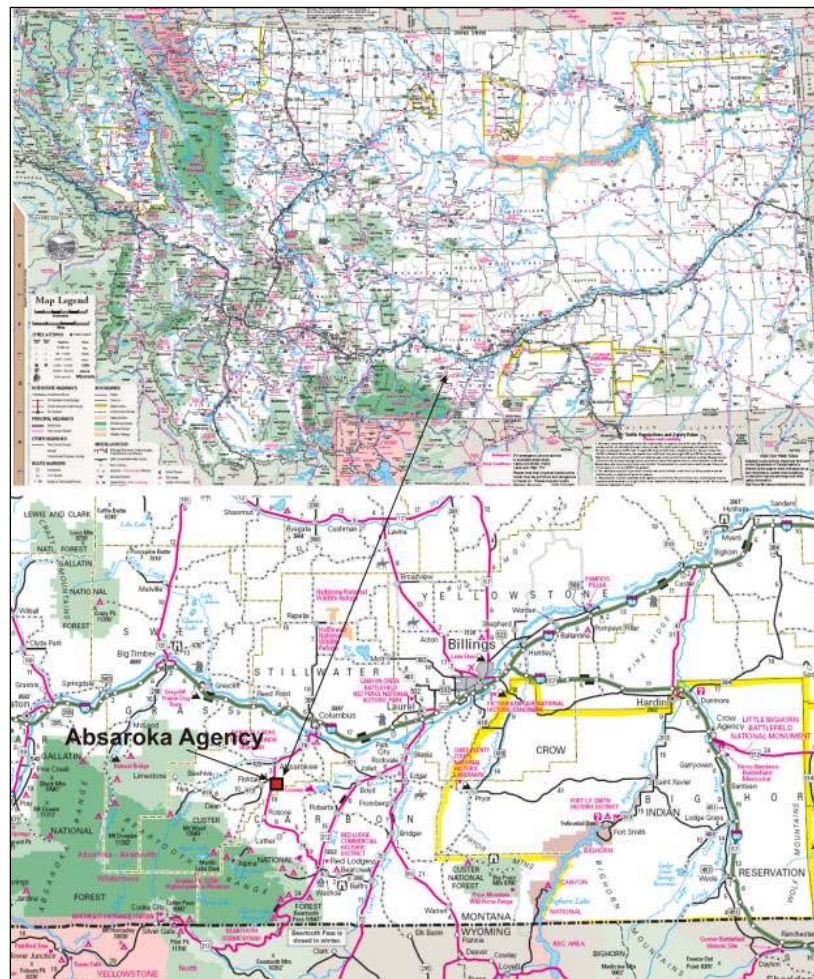


Figure 2. Map of Absaroka Agency.

Context of Study

Although I am the primary researcher and author of this phenomenological study, I am also an active participant within the on-going Absaroka Agency collaborative educational process. Because of my pivotal role within the professional collaboration and my close personal ties to the site, my objectivity as a researcher is inherently compromised. Yet this issue can be addressed within the context of the phenomenological research framework, as my subjective experience comes to the forefront and establishes the context from which the study unfolds. For better or worse, my personal viewpoint and unique relationships with those individuals interviewed in this study set the tone and color the background of this descriptive investigation. To help place the study into the appropriate research perspective, my phenomenological experience as the author requires a rich contextualization throughout the entire dissertation. I will first highlight my family's history at the Absaroka Agency, including my own personal experience with the area, and then conclude my introduction by sharing my recently rediscovered family story about my connection to, or more aptly, my disconnection from the place.

As a member of the Crow Tribe, I understand the historical significance that the Absaroka Agency represents to all tribal members, but I've also inherited some special family ties to the area. My great-great-grandmother owned a 320-acre land allotment there for over 40 years, and I had dozens of relatives, including one grandfather and one great-grandfather who were born in the immediate vicinity.



Figure 3. Tom and Sarah Shane with family.

My grandmother's dad Frank Yarlott was born in 1881 along the Rosebud Creek, a few miles south of the Agency while it was still operational. On the other side of my mother's family, her father John Doyle was born in 1901 just downstream from the old Agency on his grandmother's ranch near the Stillwater River. In fact, the creek that my grandfather was born beside now bears the surname of his Irish grandfather Tom: "Shane Creek". Representative of that time and place, both of my grandfathers were born from mixed-race marriages between European immigrants and Plains Indian women.

As a young person growing up in the town of Crow Agency, I occasionally heard stories of how that seemingly distant place was closely linked to us, but I received few details, and paid even less attention. The names and dates seemed archaic and irrelevant, and the area itself was literally off of my radar, as we rarely had any reason to travel any further than Billings. But whenever my uncles had cause to travel west to watch high

school basketball tournaments in Bozeman or Butte, I was along for the ride and was reminded without fail of my connection to the area. “Your Grandpa was born there,” was the flippant, yet profound statement, told to me and my cousins as we sat in the backseat, gazing out the window. Although those moments were infrequent and we usually flew past Columbus at 75 mph, I remember trying to reconcile my sense of disconnectedness from that place with my knowledge that it was my homeland. It was hard for me to imagine a time when any of that land was still the predominant domain of my tribe and the home of my family.

When I left the reservation to go to college and began to form my identity as an adult, I increasingly turned to my tribal traditions for support away from my home community, and it was then that I started to understand and appreciate the quiet passion that many of my elders held towards our homeland. Years of living and traversing my ancestral territory throughout all four seasons have strengthened my sense of this place, and along with it, a sense of myself. Having lived most of my adult life in Bozeman, MT, I have driven the stretch of Interstate highway between the two places countless times since I left the reservation to attend MSU-Bozeman in 1990; shuffling back and forth along the Yellowstone River, moving to and fro between cultures and communities. During that time I’ve come to see Columbus as the middle of the road, both literally and figuratively, between the two points. Columbus is located at the mouth of the Stillwater River as it confluences with the Yellowstone, and is about 100 miles west of my rural hometown of Crow Agency, and 100 miles east of my adopted home of Bozeman. (see appendix map) Remarkably, the 200 miles of road between the sleepy reservation village

and the bustling college town is almost entirely located within the boundaries of my tribe's original reservation, and although the path stretches dramatically from the mountains to the prairie, the differences between the two places are more colored by cultural contrast than by geographic divergence. The expression "walking in two worlds" is often used by American Indians to describe the surreal experience of moving in and out of cultural arenas, and I've discovered that this is more than just a metaphor – it's a peculiar reality. Still, as a person of mixed-blood and mixed-culture, being somewhere in the middle is part of my inheritance and life experience. Maybe that's why I've always sought it out, and recognize that quality about the land around the Absaroka Agency; as a place in the middle, a place of convergence.

The 2011 Absaroka summer excavations did much more than just exhume artifacts; they helped transform the old Agency into once again a center of attention, pulling people towards it to renew old bonds. The tug of the land on the people reveals the enduring strength of the deep ancestral roots that lie there, and in my family's case, that attraction has held strong for over 110 years. Through my own oral and written research conducted throughout and alongside the 2011 Absaroka Agency summer excavations, I recognized that the story of how my great-grandmother was disinherited from her family land near Absarokee was so jarring and compelling, it needed to be shared. Along with recognizing the importance of preserving my great-great-grandmother's story, I also recognized that I had to visit that place and complete a circle started before I was born. In the spirit of the day, I began arranging a visit to the site with some of my closest collaborators, including my uncle, John Doyle, Jr., to go pay respects

to the land where we came from. Surprisingly to me, but also quite tellingly, none of my aunts or uncles had ever visited the place where their dad was born, which is also the burial place of my two great-uncles who died as infants. Now the time had come, and the powerful forces of attraction unleashed by the Absaroka excavations proved too great for its descendants to resist.

In 1910 my great-great grandmother Sarah Shane became one of the first Crow women in history to ever write a will and testament. Within her will she made two noteworthy stipulations: First, she decreed that her husband at the time, Jack Williams, was not to receive any of her land or other belongings after her death, as he had deserted her; secondly, she stated that any of her daughters who married white men would be disinherited from any of her land holdings. At the time the will was written, Sarah's daughter Margaret had been married to a white man named Tom Doyle for 15 years, and so with the stroke of a pen, Margaret and her descendants were cut off from the family land holdings and exiled to the southern end of the reservation, out of their beloved Yellowstone country. Sarah and Tom's sons who inherited the ranch eventually sold it, leaving only faded memories and the bones of their loved ones as the last remaining connection of the Shane brood. Of course one glaring irony of Sarah Shane's will was the fact that she herself was the first in her family to marry a white man. In fact, one claim to fame was that her wedding to the Irish immigrant Thomas Shane in 1875 was the first between a white man and a Crow woman performed at the Absarokee Agency. Sarah's marriage was not only hugely symbolic of a new day and age, it literally spawned

it. But in the end, her final will and testament may have reflected a change of heart towards inter-racial marriage and the land inheritance that came along with it.

Born in 1859 along the Musselshell River, Strikes the Gun was the daughter Medicine Cherry Tree and her husband, a Crow chief named Four Times. She was only 16 when she married the 31 year old Irishman and changed her name to Sarah. After 26 years of marriage and 11 children, Tom Shane died in 1901, leaving behind a 42-year old widow with many years of life ahead of her. As if her first 40 years weren't memorable enough, the next chapter in Sarah's life played out like an operatic tale of deceit and betrayal and indomitable perseverance, as she faltered into a brief but disastrous second marriage that almost cost her everything.

"Rattlesnake" Jack Williams was an old-timer from the Yellowstone region who himself had already lived quite a full and adventurous life before his fleeting marriage to Sarah Shane. A hired hand for the legendary millionaire cattleman Nelson Story, Rattlesnake Jack loved the Crow Country that he worked on as a cowboy, but was never astute or affluent enough to purchase his own piece of property. As an aging desperado with nothing left to lose, Jack may have viewed the widow Sarah Shane's choice ranch as open for the taking to the most eligible bachelor. According to historian Jim Annin in his book *They Gazed on the Beartooths*, Jack was a ruggedly independent, but jaded survivor, and he cryptically summarized his marriage to Sarah Shane as such, "Williams was embittered in his old age over poor choices made earlier, and had a spite marriage with Sarah Shane... Williams moved to Nevada and lived the rest of his life there near Las Vegas." The brief, but pointed description and curious epilogue begs more questions

than it gives answers, but it clearly suggests that Rattlesnake Jack married Sarah for motives unrelated to any love for her. And so it was, that on a honeymoon train ride to Salt Lake City, Strikes the Gun overheard her husband Jack plotting with another man to end her life. Convinced that her death was imminent, Sarah quickly gathered herself and exited at the very next depot, walking the 300 miles back to Montana. When she returned home, she shared her startling story with her family but never filed official charges or even filed for a divorce against Rattlesnake Jack. Although she was content to never see Jack again, she also promptly used her will and testament to ensure that her land would not pass into the hands of any non-Indians – even at the cost of disinheriting her own children.

Discovering and rediscovering my own family's complex and wrenching connection to the Absaroka Agency has allowed me to see both the place and my ancestors with new eyes. As my vision has crystalized and my knowledge has grown, I've also discovered some truths about the field of archaeology. I've come to believe that what ultimately fuels the passion of both archaeologists and descendant communities alike is the possibility that we can empathize more deeply, and understand more clearly, those old-time people of the land and the remarkable lives they forged. Our needs as scientists and laymen are the same: we yearn to experience a more profound truth about our ancestral history, and in doing so, satisfy an intuitive curiosity to discover more about ourselves. Needless to say, my adolescent ambivalence about that quaint and distant place has been supplanted by a steadfast love of the land's history and a dream to share that knowledge with others.



Figure 4. A stone marker marks the location of the Absaroka Agency.

Absaroka Agency History

Appreciating the full significance of the Absaroka Agency requires understanding the historical context of its place and time. The Absaroka Agency was constructed by the U.S. Government as part of their legal obligations to the Crow Tribe as agreed upon within the 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaty. It was built in a central area of the Crow homeland, as a replacement for the first Agency, and was intended to serve as a federal liaison point for the distribution of Crow tribal annuities. The Agency operated in the upper Stillwater Valley, at the confluence of the Rosebud River and Butcher Creek, from the summer of 1875 until the spring of 1884, when it was moved eastward to its present day location on the Little Big Horn River (Hoxie, 1995). Both the establishment and the eventual abandonment of the Agency marked pivotal moments of dignified survival on the part of

the Crow people, but the sense of epic loss still looms large in the hearts and minds of modern descendants.

During the 13 years following the 1851 Ft. Laramie Treaty, the Crow Tribe lived independently within their 30 million acre reservation with no permanent government presence. The discovery of gold in Virginia City changed everything, and marked an irreversible intrusion into their aboriginal homeland. The tribe negotiated peacefully with the U.S. Government to allow the forts along the Bozeman Trail to the Montana gold fields. The most dangerous portion of the Bozeman Trail stretched through the heart of Crow Country, but was heavily contested by westward migrating bands of Lakota Sioux, and Red Cloud's war and victory against the forts cost the tribe dearly at the 1868 Ft. Laramie treaty negotiations. Within that second Ft. Laramie treaty, the tribe ceded 22 million of their original 30 million acres – over 2/3 of their land holdings – to the U.S. Government, in exchange for a multitude of goods and services. These goods and services were to be provided to Crow families directly from government agents who were headquartered within the reservation boundaries. The first such headquarters in Crow Country was constructed in 1869 at the confluence of the Mission Creek and Yellowstone River, and was also known as Fort Parker. A Lakota attack on the fort in September of 1872 prompted a council meeting the following spring of 1873, in which federal officials insisted that the Agency be relocated from the Mission Creek site (Hoxie, 1995). The Fort Parker Agent Dexter Clapp and officials from Washington, D.C. reminded Crow leaders at the council that the tribe must now learn how to become farmers, as the Northern Pacific Railroad was coming to the Yellowstone valley, and would doom the

last roaming herds of buffalo (Hoxie, 1995). Despite their best efforts to convince the tribal representatives present at the meeting, all three men (Blackfoot, Iron Bull and Long Horse) opposed the eastward relocation because it diminished the size of their reservation and reneged once again on another treaty. Local non-Indian residents were also concerned that the departure of the friendly bands of Crow Indians would allow for an unrestrained presence of hostile Lakota Sioux along the upper Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers. Yet the increasing economic and political pressure to control Crow resources north of the Yellowstone River proved to be a more compelling interest to the federal officials, and in the summer of 1875, one year before the Battle of the Little Big Horn, the Agency was moved eastward, directly into the oncoming path of westward bound Lakota Sioux.

Within weeks of its completion in June of 1875, Lakota war parties began raids on the Absaroka Agency, and by August of that summer they had taken all of the horses and oxen and the lives of 8 residents. The dismal beginning kept many Crows at bay, but after the Great Sioux Wars of 1876 -77, more tribal families began to use the Agency as a resource (Hoxie, 1995). With their Lakota rivals militarily defeated and economically dispossessed, the Crows hardly had reason to celebrate, or even call their new “home” secure, as their Agency suffered from ongoing horse-stealing from Blackfeet and Assiniboiné raiders, as well as renewed and intensified pressure by white businessmen and politicians to usurp more Crow land. Confined to their reservation boundaries and besieged by an onslaught of powerful economic, political, and military forces, the Crow people had become refugees in their own homeland. By 1882, with all the wild big game

animals in Montana becoming nearly impossible to find and hunt, it was clear to Agent Henry Armstrong that the Crow Tribe would quickly become completely dependent upon Indian Agents for food rations. The loss of their economic independence combined with heavy pressure from federal officials forced tribal leaders into a series land cessations, in which the tribe lost ownership of the western and northern portions of their reservation, and the Agency was once again moved eastward.

The legacy of the Absaroka Agency is complex and deserves further exploration. Like Ft. Parker before it, the Absaroka Agency's biggest impediment to survival was the "inevitable", if delayed, turning of the economic tide in the region. It had taken 80 years since the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but Montana's transition from wild Indian Country to civilized state, was nearly complete. A new era and a new way of life were unfolding on the northern Plains, and the vast land holdings of the Crow Indians proved to be too valuable to remain unmolested. In the spring of 1884, the Crow Agency was moved for a third and final time to a site along the Little Big Horn River, barely a mile away from the place where Crow scouts warned Custer not to attack a Lakota and Cheyenne village only 8 years before. Like the thick cloud of dust kicked up from the last days of high drama on the Great Plains, it seemed that the Crows had finally settled. Within 5 years, this unequivocal end of the buffalo days brought the next stage of evolution in the region's new chapter: It became the state of Montana.

Archaeology and Collaboration

Following the 1884 abandonment of the Absaroka Agency, the land transferred into private ownership and became farm land thenceforth. Within a few short years,

nothing visible remained of the original structure, and only one photo is known to exist of the Agency before it was destroyed. Because no visible trace of the Agency existed and there was only speculation about the exact location of the fort and an undetermined amount of artifacts beneath the surface, the Historical Research Associates suggested in a 1988 report that the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO) should not formally recommend the Absaroka Agency site for recognition on the National Register of Historic Places. However the MSHPO recommended the site for further study and after subsurface testing in 2000 revealed high potential for significant historical value, the site was accepted into the National Register.

Then, over 120 years after it was abandoned by the Government, the Absaroka Agency would once again become a place of interest and relevance; if only for one brief summer. A Proposed reconstruction of Montana Highway 78 prompted a more comprehensive small-scale archaeological study, which was completed by Aaberg Cultural Resource Consulting Services in the summer of 2006. Successful magnetometer readings and a trove of artifacts collected at the site convinced archaeologists that place required further study as well as notification to the Crow Tribe as a one-of-a-kind locality. The ancient trail that military scout Tom LeForge traversed on horseback in 1874 was now an asphalt highway – and it was that road that provided the impetus to revivify the memory and exhume the submerged secrets of the Absaroka Agency.

MDT, Project Archaeology, and
Educational Collaboration

When it became official that a major archaeological excavation would occur at the Absaroka Agency site, the MDT and Project Archaeology (PA) proposed to use the dig as an opportunity to launch a collaborative educational research effort. Project Archaeology chose to utilize a collaborative model approach previously employed with success by other archaeologists engaged in professional collaboration with descendant communities. PA's vision was to bring together a diverse team of co-researchers and engage in a meaningful process of idea exchange and concept formulation. PA project leader Crystal Alegria invited me in November, 2009, to become a member of the core-group that would be spearheading the on-going collaborative education project. After meeting with Crystal and PA Director Jeanne Moe, it was decided that my role within the project would be primarily two-fold; I would assist the project as a Crow tribal liaison, and also be the principal designer of the public-school curriculum that the project would ultimately produce.

My first charge as tribal liaison was to communicate with Crow educational and community leaders to plan a public meeting. The purpose of the gathering was to bring authenticity to the collaborative process by sitting down with the local elders and other tribal residents to visit with them about the Absaroka Agency project; both informing them, as well as asking for their opinions, ideas, and insights. That initial public forum held at the Little Big Horn Tribal College in March of 2010, led to a more successful public summit the next month, and the outpouring of comments expressed at those meetings became the core values that guided the creation of the curriculum. Those well-

attended gatherings marked the beginning of an unprecedented two and a half year collaboration between the MDT, Project Archaeology, professional archaeologists, tribal educators, public schools, and the Crow Tribal Education Department. The core group of co-researchers from throughout the region included Shirleen Hill (Crow Elementary Teacher), Christine Rasmussen (Bozeman Elementary Teacher), Robin Lovec (Livingston Elementary Teacher), Kathy Francisco (Evaluation Specialist), Crystal Alegria (Archaeology Educator), Jeanne Moe (BLM Archaeologist and Educator), Steve Aaberg (Archaeologist), Steve Platt (MDT Archaeologist), and myself.

OPI & Montana Historical Society's
Museums & Schools Collaboration

As Project Archaeology's educational endeavor gathered momentum, other state-sponsored collaborative educational efforts were preparing to follow a similar path, and the Absaroka Agency would once again come to the forefront. Through a "Museums-to-Schools" Indian Education for All grant from the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and Montana Historical Society (MHS), the Museum of the Beartooths in Columbus, MT began an educational collaboration with the Columbus schools and members of the Crow tribe. As with the MDT/Project Archaeology venture, I was invited by the project leaders to be an active participant in the collaborative process. My official capacity would be as an Indian advisory "coach" to the non-Indian participants involved in the Columbus/Absaroka Agency educational collaboration. The core group of collaborators on this project included Penny Redli (Museum of the Beartooths Director), Casey Olsen (High School History Teacher), Danen Johannes (Middle School

History Teacher), and myself as advisor. The extensive group of collaborators included the site's chief archaeologist Steve Aaberg, elder Joe Medicine Crow, historian Mardell Plainfeather, and professional architect Daniel Glenn.

The collaboration in Columbus was diverse, and included the creation of a small-scale model of the original Absaroka Agency by Crow architect Daniel Glenn, now on permanent display in the Museum of the Beartooths. Students at the Columbus schools also engaged in a year-long study of Crow tribal culture and history in the region, and at the end of the year produced two portable "Indian Games" trunks, and a published book entitled, "The Crow Tribe's History in Stillwater County" – researched and written entirely by Columbus high school students.

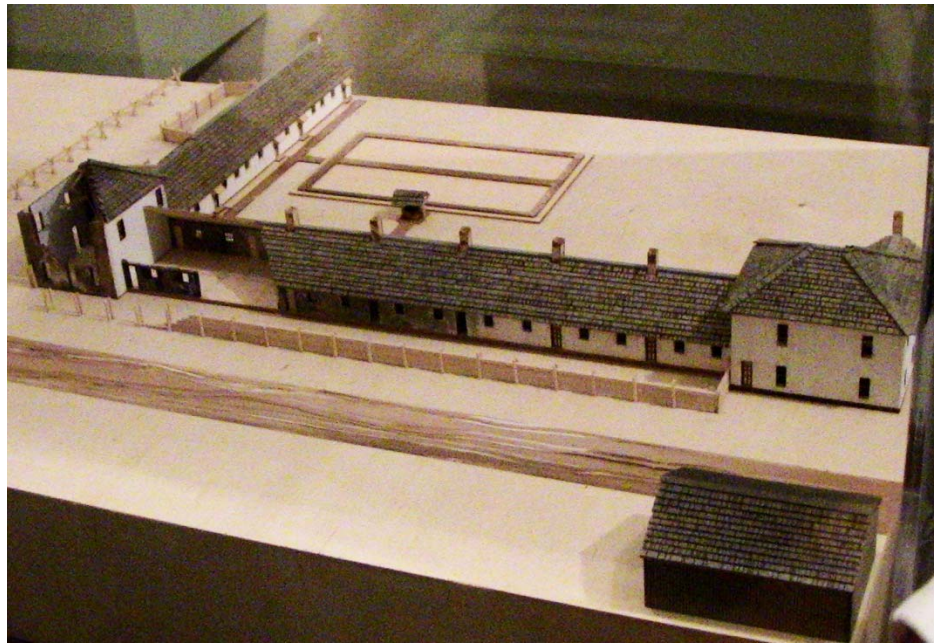


Figure 5. Daniel Glenn's scale model of Absaroka Agency.



Figure 6. Daniel Glenn's architectural renderings of the Absaroka Agency.

Collaborative Events at the Agency

Three significant collaborative events occurred at the site of the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011, and even though each of the events was independently organized and uniquely designed with distinct and separate goals and objectives, each of the occasions shared the common threads of collaborative inquiry, indigenous people's participation, and archaeological investigation. Although some of the collaborative events were brief in duration and only lasted for a few hours at the archaeological site, the gatherings nevertheless marked unique and noteworthy moments in the history of the place, as well as in the research history of collaborative indigenous archaeological inquiry. Taken collectively, the three collaborative events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011 are worthy of a doctoral study because they signified unprecedented firsts for such gatherings, and their models may provide important insight for future such studies on the northern Great Plains.

Table 1. Overview of Collaborative Events.

Event	Date	Site	Organizers	Goal
3 Tipi Day	June 4	Agency Site & MOB	Shane Doyle & Penny Redli	Engage in collaborative discussion
Volunteer Day	July 8	MOB & Agency Site	Project Archaeology & Penny Redli	Provide an opportunity for public participation in excavation
Crow Elders Day	August 2	Agency Site & School	BLM, Crow Elders & Steve Aaberg	Provide tribal elders with opportunity to tour the excavation site

The June 4th event was organized, sponsored and led by myself, and was initiated with two goals in mind. First and foremost, “The Absaroka Agency Day of Commemoration and Meaning” was meant to invite the public at-large to participate in the on-going archaeological and historical collaborative process by convening in Crow tipis at the site to swap stories and family histories about the place. Secondly, the Day of Meaning at the Agency was designed to kick-off the summer excavations by coordinating it with the Museum of the Beartooths’ unveiling of a small-scale model of the Absaroka Agency created by Crow architect Daniel Glenn. I personally invited over 50 people to the event, which began at 11:00 am and lasted until 1:30, at which time most people who participated in the discussions drove to the Museum of the Beartooths to celebrate the unveiling of the newly created model.

Despite a multitude of logistical hurdles that seemingly prevented a large participation from Crow reservation residents, including the fact that Absarokee is over

100 miles from the town of Crow Agency, and that the Crow community was also in the midst of recovering from devastating spring flooding, the event still brought together about 40 descendants of both the Crow and non-Indian people who lived at the Agency. The event sought to capture the collaborative spirit of the season, and was advertised in the Billings Gazette as being open to the public with refreshments provided. To provide an area for the groups to converse, three tipis were raised at the spot where the Agency fort once stood, and a barbecue cooking area was set-up to cook lunch. Participants also signed a research waiver that allowed for the video recording of the discussions to be utilized as research data. Immediately following the “3-tipi” meeting, Daniel Glenn’s small-scale replica of the original Absaroka Agency was unveiled at the Museum of the Beartooths in Columbus.

On July 8th, Project Archaeology led a collaborative effort with the Museum of the Beartooths and site archaeologists to coordinate a preparatory educational event for volunteers who wished to participate in the Agency excavations. Named the “Absaroka Agency Volunteer Day,” participating volunteers received historical and technical information at the Museum of the Beartooths in the morning, and then spent the afternoon and day receiving hands-on training through excavating with archaeologists at the Agency site. The event gathered about 30 volunteers and other members of the public, including Crow tribal elder Ellis “Rabbit” Knows Gun. Mr. Knows Gun and myself were both vocal representatives for the Crow tribe, with Rabbit addressing the group at the Museum of the Beartooths, as well as providing a prayer for the event and the participants at the site of the excavations.

A final collaborative event occurred during the site excavation on Tuesday, August 2. Absaroka Agency lead archaeologist Steve Aaberg collaborated with BLM's Tribal Liaison, Mark Sant, to pay for a charter bus to bring a group of tribal elders from the Crow Reservation to visit the site as honored guests and be provided lunch during their stay. A group of 25 elders and historians from the Crow Tribe attended the site, and provided a blessing to the land and stories of the place to enrich our knowledge and understanding of it. During their time at the site, elders were able to visit with archaeologists and witness the on-going excavations, as well as view a large display table full of artifacts that had been recovered from the site. The elders walked casually around the excavation site and were accompanied by archaeologists Steve Aaberg and Jack Fisher. Following their visit to the site, the elders got back on the charter bus and were taken back into town to have a lunch sponsored by Aaberg Archaeology at the Absarokee Elementary School.

Statement of the Problem

The emerging and swiftly growing field of Collaborative Indigenous Archaeology is still in the early stages of intellectual and practical development, and more scholarship is needed to gain a comprehensive understanding of how scientists and tribal members can “cross cultural borders” (Aikenhead, 2001, p. 181) and successfully engage with one another. Through their efforts to reach out and respectfully collaborate with tribal members, contemporary archaeologists have begun to change the path of scientific history towards a developing a more inclusive model of inquiry. This new path requires

that scientists and descendant members develop mutually beneficial relationships based on clear and respectful communication.

One essential and multi-faceted problem lies at the heart of this developing field; what does the decolonization of collaborative archaeology look, smell, sound, taste, and feel like? This study explores how the collaborative events at the Absaroka Agency answered that complex question, and it also addresses two prominent research gaps in the field; a scarcity of research and publication by indigenous researchers and a lack of literature about collaborative archaeology with northern plains tribes, such as the Crow Tribe.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine, within the context of decolonizing research methodologies, the experiences of key participants of the collaborative indigenous archaeological events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency 2011 excavations. The perspectives and perceptions of the participants interviewed can provide insight and information to future researchers and other collaborative participants.

The final analysis and synthesis of the data draws meaning from the participants experiences and applies those implications to the field of collaborative indigenous inquiry. Through discerning and articulating the essence of what constitutes respectful collaboration with descendant community members, the study provides invaluable and practical recommendations to guide researchers in future endeavors.

Research Questions

Following the psychologist Moustakas's systematic approach to transcendental phenomenological research, my questions are broad and aim to gather data that will lead to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences and ultimately provide an understanding of both the unique and the common experiences of the participants.

1. How did the events at the Absaroka Agency reflect and exemplify collaborative archaeological inquiry and decolonization?
2. What did their participation in the collaborative archaeological and educational processes at the Absaroka Agency mean to those individuals?
3. What did participants experience during the collaborative events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency 2011 summer excavations?

Importance of the Study

This study has the potential to offer relevant and beneficial data to a broad web of academic, governmental, and tribal stakeholders. The findings of this study will provide future collaborative researchers with authentic literature that allows them to achieve deeper insight into the decolonizing nature of the collaborative archaeological events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency. As Stephen Silliman articulates in his book,

Collaborating at the Trowel's Edge, *Teaching and Learning in Indigenous Archaeology*,

Improvement in our collaborative methods will come both from explicit and numerated advice by long-term participants (Watkins and Ferguson 2005; see Harrison 2001 for cultural anthropology) and from the consideration of unique cases that highlight the complex terrain of ongoing projects. Newer generations of archaeologists seem to have a

vibrant commitment to doing collaborative and indigenous archaeology, but the literature does not yet offer enough examples of these *in practice* to guide collaborators, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, in such archaeological efforts (Colwell-Chanthapongh and Ferguson 2007, Dowdall and Parish 2002, Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthapongh 2006, Peck et al. 2003, Smith and Wobst 2005). The goal does not entail providing additional local recipes for a global archaeological cookbook on collaborative methods, but rather elucidating the key contexts that frame when, where, how and why collaborative indigenous archaeologies work. (Silliman 2008)

This passage succinctly explains the critical importance of conducting a formal exploration of collaborative indigenous archaeological events such as those that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011. As with any field of study, continued progress in the areas of Indigenous Archaeology and Collaborative Inquiry is contingent upon continued scholarly activity and publication in the fields. By clearing and illuminating a unique path for both future scholars and as well as non-academics to review and consider, this study can assist in the strengthening of ties between archaeologists, tribal communities, educators and the general public.

With its conclusion and publication, this research study will provide informative feedback to participants of the collaborative events at the Absaroka Agency, and it will also serve as a guidepost for future scholars who choose to explore the meandering path of collaborative inquiry. Although the list of partners and participants is long and includes the Montana Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Historical Society, the Museum of the Beartooths, the Bureau of Land Management and the Crow Tribe, there are many others who also stand to benefit from this study, including and especially the academic community at large and the citizens of the Montana.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study focuses on the analysis of qualitative data collected from interviews conducted with nine individuals who participated in the collaborative indigenous archaeological inquiry processes and events at the Absaroka Agency. As a matter of data collection continuity, each of the participants interviewed in the study is a representative member of one of the three foundational participating groups: 1) Archaeologists, 2) Educators, 3) Crow tribal members. The three archaeologists interviewed in the study all participated in the excavation of the Agency site, including the processing and cataloguing of uncovered artifacts. Each of the educators included in this study played important intermediary roles as facilitators of knowledge between the archaeologists and the public at large. The three Crow elders interviewed in the study participated in at least one of the events as a volunteer collaborator.

Definition of Key Terms

Decolonizing Collaborative Research Methodologies

Over the past decade several academic organizations, including the World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium in 2002, have established guidelines for decolonizing research with Indigenous peoples (Bishop, 2005; Smith, 2005; W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2007). The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies (2000) highlights key tenets of these frameworks: respectful collaboration, recognition, and reciprocity (Smith, 2005). By adhering to the principles of the "3-Rs", scholars can engage in

decolonizing methodologies within their collaborative research endeavors with indigenous peoples. Successfully fulfilling each of the three major guidelines often forces researchers to move out of their comfort zones and into tribal communities to spend time developing respectful relationships with tribal representatives; an essential process for which there is no substitute. It is only through following this basic protocol that scholars can establish the interpersonal foundations necessary for an authentic and mutually beneficial partnership.

Respectful Collaboration

Although researchers can learn a tremendous amount of important information about tribal communities from published literature, tribal communities still interact and function primarily within the context of an oral tradition. As it is more fully detailed in the literature review portion of this study, the Plains Indian oral tradition maintains a strong emphasis on extended family and community relationships. Successfully interacting within those tribal communities requires a sensitivity and knowledge of the unique traditions that indicate goodwill and respect on the part of institutional collaborative partners. Taking gifts to elders such as tobacco, sweet-grass, or cedar, can signify the difference between a respectful approach, and one that lacks reverence or humbleness.

Becoming educated about the tribal customs is important, and this process can be best achieved through personal interaction with tribal members, ostensibly tribal consultants. Aside from tribal historic preservation officers, discovering who to appropriately reference within each tribal community usually requires at least one or

more phone calls and possibly one or more trips to the tribal community college and/or tribal government to meet with an official local cultural representative. Respectful collaborations gain power and esteem each time researchers engage in another successful endeavor, building a stronger foundation for continued collaborations.

Recognition

At the core of decolonization is the counter-story—the experiential narrative as told by the “cultural Other” (Montecinos, 1995)—which brings to light ways of knowing and remembering that have historically been stifled (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Recognizing these counter-stories and their sources as legitimate and important data and integrating them into the research is a key guideline in decolonizing research methodologies.

In his landmark ethnography of the Western Apache, Wisdom Sits in Places, Keith Basso listens closely to the Apache people to record their stories of how their language and values are inextricably linked to the local natural landscape. Basso achieved this high level of recognition by learning to speak Apache and spending years living within the tribal community, studying with knowledgeable tribal elders. Yet, his achievement began with the most simple and profound of all qualitative research techniques: he politely engaged, and respectfully listened to people.

Reciprocity

Throughout the collaborative inquiry process, tribal individuals and tribal communities are fairly reciprocated and adequately compensated for their contributions of time and knowledge. Requesting the attendance and participation of tribal people in

the collaborative process requires providing reasonable compensation for their expertise. The cost of traveling to collaborative events is a factor that must be considered and addressed by the researchers who sponsor and organize the events. If collaborative leaders rely on the active participation of tribal members, then they must pay for the cost of the tribal members to attend the respective events. Researchers cannot assume that tribal historians and other knowledgeable community individuals are extremely anxious to participate in the collaborative process, as this is an unreasonable expectation.

Aside from the monetary reciprocity due to each individual tribal member who participates in the collaborative process, all of the data gathered and published from collaborative research must be provided to the tribal community in a timely and respectful manner that also makes the research study easily accessible.

Delimitations and Limitations

The data collected and analyzed for the study is limited to the researcher's field notes, as well as video footage of collaborative events, and qualitative interviews conducted with ten individuals who participated in one or more of the three collaborative archaeological events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011. Although about 100 people in total attended the three events during the summer of 2011, and the number of people interviewed in the study represents about 10% of the overall participants, some of those individuals participating in the interviews were the principal coordinators and key sponsors of the collaborative events.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Decolonizing Methodologies

The process of collaborative learning through archaeology with indigenous peoples represents a historic paradigm shift in the field of archaeology, ushering in a new era of decolonizing methodologies within that branch of science (Silliman, 2008). Until the onset of this new age, which began quietly in the 1970's with studies done in the U.S., the science of archaeology was neither beneficial nor magnanimous toward indigenous peoples. During the age of colonization, archaeological and anthropological research and theory became just as important to the process of successful colonization as disease, bullets, Bibles, and whiskey. Much of the social science produced during this era sought to justify imperialism by proving through objective research that indigenous races were inferior to white Europeans (Smith, 2001). Although most contemporary indigenous communities are well aware of the history of violence associated with the loss of their homelands and way of life, it's a safe assumption that most people outside of academia are not as familiar with the role that the social sciences played in the dehumanization of indigenous peoples. In her renowned book Decolonizing Methodologies, Maori scholar Linda Smith declares that "the word 'research' is one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary, and she explores various methods in which colonial-based research can change and be transformed. (Smith, p.1) However, Smith states explicitly in her introduction that her work is not meant to be

simply another contribution to the social sciences; instead, her intention is to speak directly to researchers who “work with, alongside and for communities who have chosen to identify themselves as indigenous.” (Smith, p.5) Indeed, as a work of scholarship Decolonizing Methodologies does nothing if not describe in detail how imperialism and research worked together to silence the indigenous voice, and discredit the indigenous ways of knowing. In the most basic terms, decolonizing methodologies requires that an authentic indigenous voice become part of any and all social science research done with, alongside and for indigenous peoples and their communities.

The process of decolonizing research methodologies begins with the simple action of inviting and listening to indigenous communities in which research may potentially occur. (Wilson, 2004) One key for this process to be successful is that native communities are consulted at the earliest stages of research design and grant proposal. Although one initial step does not guarantee that the entire research design and methodologies are decolonizing in their nature, it does assure that native voices can be heard and consulted respectfully. As with any continuum of extremes, the research has the potential to be either more or less decolonizing in its design and intent.

Linda Smith and her Maori colleagues have created their own type of research design model, named Kaupapa Maori. Kaupapa Maori is an emerging field of study in New Zealand and is based on Maori cultural values and dedicated to the benefit of the Maori people. (Smith, 2001) Kaupapa Maori is a forerunner in the burgeoning field of decolonizing social sciences, and it represents the emergence of a powerful 21st century indigenous intellectual community. Although its influence on decolonizing

methodologies for New Zealand Maori is enormous, what Kaupapa Maori means for the global decolonizing movement is not as pivotal. Whereas Kaupapa Maori is a specifically Maori model, a successful global effort to decolonize indigenous research methods must be championed by white scientists and ultimately by the academy itself. Within this context, the social sciences can undergo a gradual process of decolonization, but only with the cooperative efforts of the native peoples whom they wish to research.

Collaborative Inquiry

Collaborative Inquiry, or CI, has steadily gained popularity and respect over the past few decades as a powerful methodological action research approach for individual and group transformation. (Kasl & York, 2010) Especially in the field of education, with adult education in particular utilizing its methods, the principle values of collaborative inquiry are empathy and positive, transformational action. As a growing number of educational researchers seek to implement CI investigations in their institutions of learning, an on-going problematic issue that has arisen is the perceived lack of continuity between the unpredictable nature of the participatory process and the more concrete sequential expectations of public funding agencies. In their 2010 article entitled, “‘Whose Inquiry Is This Anyway?’ Money, Power, Reports, and Collaborative Inquiry”, educational researchers Elisabeth Kasl and Lyle Yorks articulate the dilemma that CI faces in the public education system.

The problem is that the participatory principles that make this process powerful are at odds with expectations imposed by institutional needs for control and accountability. Adult educators who are attracted to the process may diminish its power by unwittingly violating the core values

that catalyze the process's potential for liberation and transformation.
(Kasl & York, p. 1)

Kasl and York's cautionary message to educational researchers is indicative of the type of potentially unorthodox and wayward directions that collaborative research can lead co-investigators; to borrow a phrase, CI isn't your grandma's research.

In their 1994 study, Ann Brooks and Karen Watkins describe four ways in which CI and other action-oriented research approaches depart from traditional ways of researching.

- 1) The intended result is the creation of new knowledge that becomes the basis for new action,
- 2) the members of the community or organization in which the research is conducted are central to the research process,
- 3) research data come from the experience of the participants and are collected and analyzed systematically, and
- 4) research purpose is to create change, reflecting Kurt Levin's famous phrase that the best way to understand something is to try to change it.

Within this context, decolonizing methodologies and collaborative inquiry are the methodological equivalents of peas and carrots; unique, but decidedly complimentary.

Decolonization and collaborative inquiry share many common values and traits as research methodologies. Probably most significantly, both methods are predicated upon power-sharing research strategies that require group discourse and consensus building. CI was originally designed in the 1970's by researcher John Heron, and was meant to provide an innovative approach to new human paradigm inquiry, which emphasizes many

various types of action research models. (Kasl & York, 2008) Essentially, CI informs the field of educational research as an authentic form of action research.

Although it would be overstating their methodological similarities to declare that decolonizing methodologies and CI are two names for the same process, there is one characteristic of both methodologies that is singularly unique and separates them from other research methods: the activity of human to human discourse and consensus building are the foundation for the questions that guide the research. Because these research methods require people to both listen and respect each others' opinions, the potential for these action-oriented arenas of inquiry to create meaningful relationships between individuals and communities is essentially unlimited. Along with meaningful relationships, collaborative efforts between researchers and research populations increase the likelihood that everyone involved in the research process will distill a greater sense of meaning from the data/knowledge/information acquired in the study.

This passage from educators Craig Mealman and Randee Lawrence (Mealman & Lawrence, p.1) describes beautifully the organic nature of collaborative inquiry, and shows clearly that decolonizing methodologies is a kindred spirit in the academy. Besides stirring the appetite, the description also stirs the imagination to the compelling research potential of collaborative inquiry investigation.

CI is like a huge kettle hanging outdoors on a tripod which is fueled by natural materials. Establishing and maintaining a culture that challenges the dominant paradigm for knowledge creation and "pushes the boundaries of what knowledge making is all about" (Clark and Watson, 1997 p. 57.) requires certain ingredients mixed together in the kettle. The essence or aroma (collaborative knowledge) from the cooking pot, derives in part from the data collection and analysis process of collaborative inquiry. The collaborators' experiences, dialogue (employing attentive listening) and

reflection are the primary ingredients in the pot. Herbs and spices (the emergent literature on CI) complement these ingredients. The ingredients are fueled by shared passion, attention to relationship, commitment, and openness to divergent views.

The qualities and values that make up collaborative inquiry are also prominent values that are inherent within the oral tradition of indigenous peoples. The organic human interaction that is at the heart of both of these cultural traditions can be described using eight key concepts offered by Brooks and Watson in 1994: collaborative knowledge (negotiating meaning), relationship, dialogue, attentive listening, and personal reflection, openness to divergent views, shared passion and commitment. Almost without exception, indigenous societies relied upon the ancient traditions of consensus building councils to govern their communities. With no kings or divine rule to centralize economic or military power, tribal communities were perpetually engaged in democratic processes of self-governance on all matters of public concern. Over the course of countless generations, tribal oral traditions distilled the sacred knowledge, skills and disposition to engage in community discussion and also maintain group harmony. (Deloria, p.44) Keeping a peaceful camp was a way of life for most native communities, as trapper Edwin Denig noted in his published report Five Tribes of the Upper Missouri, after spending over twenty-one years of continuous residency with Plains Indians of the Crow people, he was intrigued by the social orderliness in camp, “It is amazing that such a savage nation (Crow) could settle all of their individual quarrels with each other... without bloodshed...”(Denig, p. 150) Denig marveled that tribal communities with no written law and seemingly little overall regulation were able to peacefully settle personal

disputes and group power-sharing issues through ancient oral tradition technologies of dialogue and compromise.

Another key element of collaborative inquiry that is unorthodox and may seem counterintuitive to most social scientists, is that CI is meant specifically to benefit the co-inquirers. (Kasl & York, 2008) The research itself is not designed or carried out to inform the greater body of knowledge in the field or contribute to any theory; rather, collaborative inquiry is exactly fit for the people and their experiences and is completely contextual in its nature. This element of research specificity is based upon action-oriented principles of situation-based studies, and is also reflective and seemingly very compatible with the values embraced by “Kaupapa Maori”.

Collaborative Inquiry and Kaupapa Maori

Although both CI and Kaupapa Maori are primarily concerned with benefiting the co-researchers conducting the investigation, there are also notable differences between the overall scope and application of the two fields. While collaborative inquiry is foundationally based upon action research methods, Kaupapa Maori aims to inform and influence any and all research conducted with or upon the New Zealand Maori. Kaupapa Maori also has more specific objectives than CI, which include decolonizing methodologies and creating Maori specific research models.

As phenomenological research approaches, both CI and Kaupapa Maori greatly inform another emerging field, “Indigenous Archaeology.” Indigenous Archaeology, or Indigenous Archaeologies, is the name coined by researchers to describe to the broad

range of archaeological research studies throughout the globe that seek to collaborate with indigenous people and/or indigenous communities (Silliman, 2008). Although the field was initiated in the 1970's with some interaction between archaeologists and tribes in the U.S., the contemporary growth of this collaborative research in the United States is due to the passage of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (Silliman, 2008). And although NAGPRA legislation doesn't require archaeologists to collaborate with descendant communities on every archaeological dig in the U.S., the high-profile law changed the trajectory of archaeology in the U.S. towards decolonizing methodologies.

Another significant historical difference between Indigenous Archaeologies and Kaupapa Maori is the driving force behind both fields of study. Indigenous Archaeologies became a significant branch of mainstream archaeology in the U.S. following requirements of NAGPRA, and so the collaborative engagement between scientists and indigenous peoples was in many ways an arranged marriage forced upon both parties by a powerful Uncle Sam. In comparison to this turn of events, the New Zealand Maori renaissance was not driven by national legislation, but rather by a core group of Maori scholars with some support from Pakeha (white) researchers. There are a plethora of circumstantial issues, mostly demographic in nature, that make it impossible to draw a symmetrical comparison between Indigenous Archaeologies in the U.S. and Kaupapa Maori in New Zealand, but the implications specific to NAGPRA cannot be understated.

The collaborative archaeological projects that have occurred in the U.S. and throughout the world between archaeologists and indigenous peoples over the past 20 years have arguably decolonized the social sciences more than any other intellectual movement of the past 500 years. And yet, only the surface has been scratched in terms of the potential for creating a new vision and a new era in archaeology and anthropology. According to the archaeologist Stephen W. Silliman in the book of his editing,

Collaborating at the Trowel's Edge

Collaborations that have taken place between archaeologists and Indigenous people have been the most challenging, not only in the sense of being difficult for the discipline to accept over the past few decades, but also in the sense of their transformative impact on both the participants' beliefs and practices and the nature of archaeology itself. (Silliman, p. 5)

The challenging nature of the collaborations that Silliman refers to is predictably difficult not only because of the colonial history associated with archaeology and native peoples, but because of the very different worldviews and values that each group embraces. Indigenous Archaeologies have pushed people out of their comfort zones, but for good reason and with positive results.

Indigenous Archaeology is, in a word, diverse. (Silliman, 2008) No two studies look the same for a variety of logistical reasons, but primarily because every factor involved in the overall collaborative process is subject to extreme variance. It goes without saying that every indigenous community is unique, creating the first level of variance, and the same is true for archaeological researchers, creating the second, and the third variable in the collaborative process is the method and extent to which indigenous people are involved in the research. Beyond these factors, there are a whole slew of other

possible research issues that could arise, i.e., is there an excavation associated with the research? Are there artifacts to be collected and maintained? Who are the other stakeholders involved in the research? The organization, interpretation, and control of these variables are the fulcrum upon which Indigenous Archaeology's collaborative efforts are balanced (Silliman, 2008).

The 21st century collaborative practice of Indigenous archaeology embodies the spirit and goals of decolonizing research methods and practices. Indigenous Archaeology is founded on the principle of scientific collaborative inquiry with indigenous and descendant communities, making it different from other forms of archaeological investigation, but beyond this simple definition, there is no specific protocol or prescription for how each collaborative effort should be conducted. Because Indigenous Archaeology is a broad field of study with many different types of collaborations occurring under its auspices, it is useful and meaningful to contextualize so-called Indigenous Archaeological studies within an extensive continuum based on the degree to which the studies exemplify decolonizing methodologies. As a direct correlation, archaeological studies incorporate a greater amount of collaboration with indigenous communities are more reflective of authentic decolonizing research and practice.

Kent G. Lightfoot asserts that the further development of collaborative archaeological research faces two major challenges: The first is to identify the specific transformations that need to be made in the practice of North American archaeology to make it a truly collaborative endeavor. What exact changes need to be made to address the concerns of descendant communities? The second challenge is how to implement

those changes beyond just a small percentage of the overall researchers and descendant communities. (Lightfoot, 214) Lightfoot describes how these challenges can be met through the process of collaborative archaeological inquiry with descendant communities, and he relays his own rewarding experience of being part of a successful collaborative inquiry process.

Plains Indian Oral Tradition and the Process of Collaborative Archaeology

Since time immemorial and to the present day, ancient oral traditions have been at the heart of Plains Indian societies, imparting countless generations of tribal communities with the knowledge, values, and dispositions to live strong and sustainable lives. As a brief recap of the historical trauma displays, today's surviving oral traditions have endured through 200 years of the sociological equivalent of a meat-grinder. Beginning in the 1790's with the introduction of smallpox, Plains societies were initially shattered by a catastrophic decimation of their community populations. Then, still reeling from the trauma of cataclysmic plagues, groups like the Blackfeet, Cheyenne and Lakota subsequently suffered through brutal military defeat and ensuing economic dispossession. Adding to the community destruction, this same generation of survivors also witnessed the legacy of institutionalized racism that their descendants would inherit, such as the outlawing of their ceremonies and the forced removal of their children to boarding schools.

Now, after 130 years and almost 7 generations of reservation life, tribal communities throughout the Great Plains are in the midst of a 21st century revitalization

of their oral traditions. Ironically, much of this cultural revitalization has occurred within the halls of academia at tribally-chartered colleges. Indeed, every reservation in Montana has their own community college that teaches and continually bolsters tribal languages and histories, among other tribal cultural resources. Along with the modern tribal college movement, tribal oral traditions still flourish in reservation communities and can be seen in everything from seasonal family gatherings for the naming of new babies, to the daily impromptu native language conversations at the local grocery store. Although many ceremonies such as the sweat lodge and the Native American Church almost always occur outside of the public eye, they are vibrant and flourishing traditions that underscore the enigmatic nature of how tribal communities maintain ancient customs that defy written transcription.

The strength and beauty of the Plains Indian oral tradition lies in its over-arching emphasis on the importance of respectful and beneficial relationships between the individual and the world at large. Historically, Plains Indian societies valued relationships within the context of the extended family, but also relationships with other elements of the natural world including the plants, animals and spirits of the land. Plains Indian traditions reflect these values in all aspects of their culture, but are most obviously manifested in public traditions such as ceremonial adoptions and public “give-aways” in which individuals who have achieved important things in their life give thanks for their success by publicly honoring their network of friends and with gifts.

Modern indigenous scholars such as Vine Deloria, Linda Smith, and Davina Two Bears have written about the unique oral traditions of passing along knowledge within

and outside of the tribal community, and taken collectively, these scholars advocate for a type of research that emphasizes respectful relationships with tribal communities first and foremost. In his 2008 article, Sonya Atalay uses native language to authenticate and contextualize indigenous collaborative archaeology. The Ojibwe term *gikinawaabi* describes the experience of passing knowledge from elders down to the younger generation, and Atalay suggests utilizing the term and concept as part of the theoretical underpinnings of indigenous archaeology, both in practice and in pedagogy.

I offer the *gikinawaabi* concept here as one example of the way Indigenous (and other) epistemologies might be incorporated into current approaches to archaeological method and theory. This example also illuminates areas where student training and pedagogy in our discipline might be expanding to provide students with the skills necessary to investigate alternative approaches and concepts to heritage managements and stewardship of cultural knowledge. (Atalay in Silliman p. 134)

Collaborative indigenous archaeology is, in some ways, more of an anthropological undertaking than some of its archaeological counterparts because of the noticeably ethnographic and, some might say, hybrid qualities (Silliman, p. 6 2008). Participants involved in this kind of archaeology have to be attuned to their interlocutors, must be aware of the ways that interactions and collaborations influence the scope and outcome of research, and have to document the subtleties of this process. (Chip-Colwell, P. 10)

The processes of collaborative indigenous archaeology, no matter whether tribal communities embrace or reject them, need to be documented to reflect the researcher's perspective on the state of affairs within and among tribal communities and archaeologists and anthropologists. Atalay suggests that no matter what the outcome,

participatory research methods are an essential part of a sustainable and ethical future for archaeological research. And as such, they are an essential part of archaeology training and education for all students. (Atalay in Sillman, p. 133)

Collaborative Indigenous Archaeology: On and Off the Reservation

Collaborative Indigenous Archaeology in the United States has increased dramatically since NAGPRA became law in 1990, and the start of the 21st century has been an especially active time for this new field. Every year sees an increase in collaborative educational and research endeavors, as archaeologists and descendant communities come together on their own accord more than ever before to rethink and reshape 21st century American archaeology.

Summer field schools represent a new era in both collaborative archaeology, as well as in tribal resource management. Throughout Indian Country, archaeological summer field schools chartered by tribal governments and organized in conjunction with state universities have begun to make an impact in tribal communities by educating and training tribal youth to become indigenous archaeologists who can work professionally on their reservations and in indigenous communities throughout the nation and around the world. Field schools have become especially popular for many tribes throughout the southwest that have taken a more proactive approach to initiating and/or facilitating all archaeological research done within their reservation boundaries.

The Navajo Nation has led the way in this new era, and was one of the first tribes to organize and sponsor a collaborative summer field school on their reservation.

Archaeological field schools, most of them chartered by tribal governments and in the form of summer-camps, have each created unique opportunities for tribal communities to begin integrating their own tribal values and knowledge into how archaeology is practiced and conducted on their respective reservations. Indeed, Two Bears also reminds us in her article, “‘Ihoosh’aah, Learning by Doing, The Navajo Nation Archaeology Department Student Training Program,” that Navajo people have been engaged in archaeological research since 1896 in Chaco Canyon, albeit as assistants to the scientists. Over the past 110 years, the Navajo Nation has come a long way towards taking control of every aspect all of the archaeological endeavors occurring on their reservation. Large scale utilities and service projects in the 1970’s spurred a wave of archaeological research throughout the reservation, and the Navajo Nation recognized the need to protect their own resources, and became a forerunner in Indian Country by developing their own tribal cultural resource management program. In 1988, the Navajo Nation began the Navajo Nation Archaeological Department, and in the decade to follow, the NNAD joined forces with Northern Arizona University to provide the Navajo Nation Field School. This collaborative endeavor has been very successful by any measure, but especially in regards to assisting young Navajo students to achieve their anthropology and archaeology college degrees. As of 2006, a total of fifty Navajo students had participated in the program, and of those twenty received bachelor degrees and seven completed master’s degrees. Eight of those graduates are now in supervisory positions within archaeology and anthropology within the Navajo nation and other tribes. (Two Bears, 200, 2008)

The Navajo and other tribes, who initiated field schools soon after NAGPRA was passed, laid the foundations decades ago for creating today's modern communities of multi-generational tribal archaeologists. These tribally-enrolled and tribally-trained archaeologists have become integral to the management of Tribal Historic Preservation Offices throughout the nation, and their gradual ascension in the field has begun to change the face of archaeology. In fact, there has been such a sea change in the field of American archaeology, especially among the southwestern reservations, that Navajo archaeologist Davina Two Bears declared, "it is no longer accurate to frame discussions as between "Indians and archaeologists," because in this day and age many Indians are professional archaeologists, and our numbers are steadily increasing." As a professional archaeologist with strong cultural ties to her tribal traditions and homeland, Davina Two Bears is a leader among her peers in the field, and represents the future of American Indian archaeology.

Through the process of engaging with professional archaeologists to promote the training of a new cadre of Indian archaeologists, tribal nations are setting the stage for a new and possibly revolutionary era in archaeology. Pro-active tribal engagement is particularly important because federal legislation such as NAGPRA is not enough to ensure that indigenous peoples are actively participating in "the future of their past". Because some of the most important archaeological excavations in the U.S. occur off of reservation lands, under-represented tribal nations can easily become peripheral participants in the overall dig process rather than key collaborators. As a fundamental aspect of resource management and historic preservation, tribal nations must be

aggressive and visionary in their approach to promoting both archaeological knowledge and future career possibilities for tribal youth. The time has come for Indian people to exploit archaeology to renew and reshape their ancient links to their homeland.

As archaeologists and tribal communities move towards a more effective model of interacting with one another, the concept of collaboration becomes more authentic as tribal perspectives become more ingrained within the archaeological process. When archaeologists only consider the tribal perspective at certain moments and within specific contexts, such as the “public outreach” to a descendant community, this doesn’t necessarily reflect what could be described as “collaboration.” (Silliman p.3) Silliman states that authentic collaboration entails an inclusion of tribal perspectives “embedded at all stages of the archaeological process, from project formation to field methods, from excavation recovery to laboratory analysis, from interpreting to writing.” (Silliman p.4)

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

The Qualitative Paradigm –
Transcendental Phenomenology

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative Transcendental Phenomenology design best served the purpose of this study because it provided a means of describing how diverse participants experienced and drew meaning from a particular phenomenon, which in this case were three separate collaborative archaeological events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011.

My research methods closely followed the systematic procedural steps for transcendental phenomenological research developed by the psychologist Moustakas. Data was gathered from in-depth interviews conducted with nine individuals who experienced the phenomenon as participants. The nine individuals who were interviewed for this study also represented the three core groups that participated in the overall collaborations: Three archaeologists, along with three educators, and three Crow tribal elders were all interviewed individually and asked the same three general questions. The questions were designed to an authentic and richly contextualized descriptive story about the participants' experience at the collaborative events. The general questions included:

- 1) How did the collaborative event/events at the Absaroka site reflect and exemplify decolonization and collaborative archaeological inquiry?

- 2) What did you experience at the collaborative event/events you participated in at the Absaroka Agency?
- 3) What personal and professional meaning did you take from your collaborative experience at the Absaroka Agency?

Interviews will be guided by three general questions, but interviewees will be prompted by the use of field notes in the form of videos filmed on site.

Written observations and field notes of the activities and electronic communications between and among key collaborators will be included within the data, as well as all curriculums and other published collaborative literature. Document analyses of email and other written exchange will supplement the interviews and observations. Other data referenced includes the Little Big Horn College community comment transcripts.

The Researcher's Role

My role is defined as a participant observer, and is fully contextualized within the introductory portion of this dissertation. According to Michael Patton, the personal nature of qualitative inquiry comes from its openness, the evaluator's close professional contact with those involved in the program, and the procedures of observation and in-depth interviewing, especially interviewing, that demonstrate proper respect to those people who contributed their voices and became an important source of data for evaluation. (Patton, 2001) This closeness to the project allows the researcher to probe the complexities and processes of the participants' thoughts, feelings, and actions to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and context (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994).

The role of the researcher in transcendental phenomenology is to first collect original data comprised of 'naïve' descriptions gathered through the use of open-ended questions and dialogue with participants. Then the researcher becomes the narrator of the structure of the experience based on descriptive reflection and interpretation of the research participant's story. The aim is for the researcher to uncover what the experience means for the people who have had the experience. The researcher is then able to derive general meanings. According to Moustakas (1994),

To understand the objects that appear before us we must return to the self, to know and recognize ourselves in the experience that is investigated. Transcendental phenomenology is a scientific study of the appearance of things, of phenomena just as we see them and as they appear to us in our consciousness. (p. 27)

According to Moustakas (1994) phenomenological models of research are important because (p. 21):

- They recognize the value of qualitative designs and methodologies. Studies of human experiences are not approachable through quantitative approaches.
- They focus on the wholeness of experience rather than solely on its objects or parts. They search for meanings and essences of experience rather than measurements and explanations
- They obtain descriptions of experience through first-person accounts in informal and formal conversations and interviews
- They regard the data of experience as imperative in understanding human behavior and as evidence for scientific investigations
- They formulate questions and problems that reflect interest, involvement, and personal commitment of the researcher
- They view experience and behavior as an integrated and inseparable relationship of subject and object and of parts and whole

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed and read through several times to identify significant statements that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Significant statements were grouped into clusters of common meaning, and those themes were then contextualized within a graph to indicate how they correlated to the foundational research questions which focused on decolonizing research methodologies. As identified within the literature review portion of this study, the three fundamental aspects of decolonizing research methodologies – recognition, respect, and reciprocity, are utilized as a priori codes to best interpret the research data and answer the primary research question.

Following the identification and tabling of significant statements, the statements are compared and contrasted, and then triangulated to reveal and illuminate the most symbolic instances of the collaborative experience. These are the quintessential moments that best defined collaborative indigenous archaeological inquiry, and captured the essence of the decolonizing methodologies characteristics identified within the literature review and on the data table. The meaning and significance of these seminal moments will then be explored within the context of a series of richly descriptive vignettes. Because of the story format that this type of qualitative analysis lends itself to, the vignette style provides a truly unique opportunity for making the most relevant meaning of the multi-perspective experiential data.

To conclude the data analysis process, a summary discussion of the collaborative events aims to crystalize the textural and structural qualities of the participants’

experiences and offer a final reflection regarding the implications of the findings for the field of decolonizing research methodologies as well as suggestions for future collaborative archaeological endeavors.

Subjectivity and Data Verification

When conducting qualitative research, Peshkin (1988) believed that developing a reflexive awareness of our subjectivity contributed to enhancing the quality of our interpretations. As a teacher, student, and tribal member, my cultural background and academic experiences provide me with a unique level of familiarity with the phenomenon under investigation, yet those same experiences also deeply bias my perspective and inevitably color the qualitative process of gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. I will take precautions to manage or avoid bias by using strategies recommended by other researchers (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 2000; Vockell & Asher, 1995) as effective ways to reduce subjectivity and increase the validity of the study. These strategies include prolonged engagement and reflection, triangulation of data, and of particular significance in this study, member checking. Member checking is defined by providing interviewees with the transcripts of their interviews and allowing them to clarify any or all of their statements made within the interview.

Regarding subjectivity and data verification, Michael Patton emphasized the importance of delving deeply into the lived experience of the participants, “the validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size.” (Patton, 2001)

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter reports results that emerged from interviews with participants, followed by interview descriptions; and finally presents an interpretation and summary of the data.

Participant Biographies

The nine people who were interviewed about their experiences at the Absaroka Agency were asked to provide a summary of biographical information to include in this study, and each submitted either written or verbal comments about themselves. Along with their biographical information, a short summary description of my background relationship with the participant will also be presented.

Archaeologist Participants

Steve Aaberg – Lead Archaeologist
at Absaroka Agency Excavation. I first met Steve Aaberg during a community input meetings held at the Little Big Horn College on March 17, and May 4, 2010. The meetings were organized by Project Archaeology, and were meant to both inform community members about the creation of a new public school curriculum focusing on the Absaroka Agency, and draw opinions from the community about what the curriculum should contain. Steve and I worked together to present the information and then facilitate a discussion to a groups ranging from eight people in March, to 16 people in May. The

meetings successfully identified several prominent themes being voiced from the community participants, and those themes then became the focus of the emergent curriculum.

Because of his leadership role both directly and indirectly, Steve Aaberg's overall contribution to the curriculum development project was substantial. His company's 2008 report on the Absaroka Agency provided the primary resource document for the development of the Absaroka Agency curriculum, and his participation in the community input meetings held in Crow Agency was a critical reason for their success.

A year after the initial community input meeting was held in Crow Agency, Steve and I met again in Bozeman, on March 3, 2011, to participate in a group planning meeting of the Absaroka Agency collaborative education project. The meeting was coordinated by Project Archaeology, and gave all of the participants in the project an opportunity to sit down together and get updated on the progress of the project, as well as make plans for the upcoming summer.

Because of his tremendous expertise and his pivotal role as the lead archaeologist at the Absaroka excavation, Aaberg's presence at the meeting was significant and important. A Montana native who was born and raised in Chester, he received his higher education at Montana State University and the University of California-Berkeley. In 1975 Aaberg returned to MSU from Berkeley and began working as a research archaeologist for the Department of Sociology/Anthropology. While at MSU, Aaberg established Aaberg Cultural Resource Consulting Service (ACRCS) as a part-time business in 1977. In 1990 Aaberg left MSU and established ACRCS as a full-time

business. In his over 30 years of experience as an archaeologist Aaberg has worked on excavations at sites ranging in age from the 11,000 years old to the historic second Crow Agency near Absarokee.

The collaborative meeting on March 3, 2011 also provided an opportunity for the group to discuss and consider two events proposed for the upcoming summer, both of which Steve supported. Following the update and discussion of the curriculum project, I introduced my proposal to organize an “Absaroka Agency Day of Commemoration and Meaning,” and Crystal Alegria outlined the basic proposal for the July 8th Volunteer Day, upon which she and Steve Aaberg had coordinated. Both of the proposals were given vocal support by all of the partners in attendance, and the meeting concluded after a lunch at a local Mexican restaurant.

Dr. John Fisher – Archaeologist
at Absaroka Agency Excavation. I first met and began working professionally with Dr. Jack Fisher through a Project Archaeology collaborative education workshop that occurred in the summer of 2007. He and I accompanied groups of teachers to the Madison Buffalo Jump and the Madison Teepee Rings that summer to discuss each site from our respective fields of expertise; his as an archaeologist, mine as a member of a descendant community. Since that collaboration in 2006, we have worked together on numerous similar Project Archaeology events, and become well-acquainted.

Dr. Fisher is Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology at MSU-Bozeman. He has been at Montana State University since 1990. Professor Fisher's archaeological research interests include lifeways and adaptations of

pre-Contact hunter-gatherer peoples of Montana and adjacent regions and of southern Africa. He carries out archaeological investigations in the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains of Montana, and also collaborates with researchers in South Africa. Dr. Fisher has carried out ethno-archaeological research among extant hunter-gatherer peoples of central and southern Africa, and is currently on sabbatical from MSU-Bozeman to continue his archaeological research in South Africa during the academic year 2011-2012.

Dr. Fisher's affable demeanor quickly gained my regard when I began working with him during the summer of 2007. His generosity and expertise led me to ask for his assistance in this study, and he agreed to support and assist in my efforts by serving as a member of my doctoral committee throughout the course of this research.

Victoria Bochniak – Archaeological Intern

at Absaroka Agency Excavation. Victoria Bochniak and I were first introduced in

the fall of 2010, when she began working with Project Archaeology as a student intern.

Victoria is an undergraduate student at Montana State University, pursuing a degree in anthropology as well as minors in both museum and religious studies. She has also been employed as a student research assistant for Project Archaeology since the fall of 2010, which has allowed her to gain and experience and insight into the historical and tribal archaeology of Montana.

When Victoria began working as an assistant with a collection of artifacts that had a connection to the Crow tribe's traditional homeland, she and Nancy Mahoney consulted with me on the matter and asked for my opinion regarding the nature of how the artifacts

were acquired. Although I couldn't offer much knowledge to them about the artifacts, they did follow my suggestion that they contact Crow elder and historian Barney Old Coyote and ask for his interpretation. After spending time with Barney and his daughter, Patricia Bauerle, going through the artifacts and listening to stories, Victoria came away with an entirely new perspective on her work. Speaking with her after her conversations, she described to me how meaningful and profound that encounter with the Crow historian had been; she had developed a new relationship with the artifacts and the people.

Originally from Orland Park, Illinois, Victoria gained an affinity for the Rocky Mountains as a youth when she and her family lived in Lakewood, Colorado for seven years. Wanting to come back to the west after her parents had returned to Illinois, she discovered MSU-Bozeman on a web search and was pleased with what their programs had to offer. She stated, "Once I visited Bozeman and the MSU campus for the first time I fell in love and have never looked back." Victoria's long-term goal is to achieve both a Masters and PhD in archaeology.

Educational Partners

Dr. Jeanne Moe – Director
of Project Archaeology. Jeanne Moe and I first became acquainted as friends in the spring of 2007, when we both took the same graduate seminar course, in which there were only 4 students. The small class size, combined with the three-hour evening format, allowed our class to bond as comrades and colleagues over the course of the semester. It was during this time spent in class together that Jeanne first invited me to work and collaborate with her on the nationally renowned project that she had founded, Project

Archaeology. Since that initial collaboration in 2007, Jeanne and I have worked together on over a dozen different workshop presentations and other events, and have agreed to engage in more collaboration during the summer of 2012, and ostensibly into the future.

Jeanne was born and raised in central Montana and attended Montana State University (MSU). As an undergraduate, she was drawn to classes about Montana history and the American Indians who lived in Montana before Euro-Americans settled the area. To learn more, she started taking courses in cultural anthropology and archaeology, received a BS in anthropology, and has worked as a professional archaeologist since graduation; the last 25 years for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In the early 1990s, she assisted with initial development of the Project Archaeology education program while working at the BLM Utah State Office and has since coordinated the program nationally since 1994. To complete her education, she earned a Doctor of Education degree in 2011 focusing on students' conceptual understanding of science through instruction in archaeological inquiry.

Crystal Alegria – Program

Coordinator of Project Archaeology. Crystal Alegria and I were first introduced by Jeanne Moe during the summer of 2007, when I began working with Project Archaeology as a Crow historical consultant. As the Project Archaeology Program Coordinator, Crystal engages in extensive educational outreach with archaeologist and teachers, as well as tribal consultants. Her organization of the July 8th Volunteer Day and her tremendous overall support of the 2011 collaborative events contributed hugely to their success.

She has invited me to participate in a variety of educational projects and collaborative research publications, including the Absaroka Agency curriculum. Beyond our professional connection, Crystal and I have also become friends. Our families have become acquainted through holiday parties and other events, and this has strengthened our overall collaborative partnership.

Prior to joining Project Archaeology Crystal worked for a variety of museums doing exhibit design, collections management, and curriculum development. Since joining Project Archaeology, Crystal has worked on archaeological education and outreach with an emphasis on curriculum development for upper elementary students and professional development for teachers. Crystal has a B.S. in Anthropology and a M.A. in History from Montana State University, and was born and raised in Livingston, MT.

Penny Redli – Director of the Museum of the Beartooths. I first met Penny Redli in 2007 at an Indian Education for All training being held for Montana Museum Directors. At the time, Penny was director of the Carbon County Museum, and she was determined to create an educational piece in the CCM that provided a striking glimpse of the history of the Crow Tribe in the region; a roughly 10' x 10' circular map of the traditional Crow tribal homeland. I was impressed with her multi-cultural vision and ability as a small-town museum director, and later I was impressed with her memory for names, as my mother later visited the CCM in July of 2008, and Penny mentioned to her that she had met me at a workshop that previous year.

In 2010, I began working with Penny collaboratively when I was hired by the Montana Historical Society to act as an educational coach and assistant in a multi-project educational endeavor that partnered six small-town museums with local public schools and regional tribal consultants. This year-long collaboration was the forerunner to the shorter, but more inclusive collaborative events that occurred at the site of the Absaroka excavation. Throughout the multitude of meetings, emails, phone calls and interviews, Penny and I have become friends, and her efforts to reconnect me to my great-great-grandparent's home along the Stillwater River indicates the growth of that collegial relationship.

As the Executive Director of the Museum of the Beartooths in Columbus, MT, Penny is a fourth generation Carbon County resident whose passion for preserving history was evident even as a young child, when she instinctively began archiving and documenting information about her grandmother's old photographs. Before taking on her current position in February of 2008, Penny was the Executive Director of the Carbon County Historical Society and Museum in Red Lodge, located about 30 miles south of Columbus, for nine years. Once in Columbus, her successful efforts to re-organize the Museum of the Beartooths were quickly rewarded in 2009, when the museum was awarded an Institute of Museum and Library Services Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) grant.

Aside from her local museum work, Penny has been on the Museums Association of Montana (MAM) Board of Directors for eight years, and is currently serving as the Secretary/Treasurer and the annual conference chair. Penny is also currently the chair of

the 16 member Cultural & Aesthetics Projects Advisory Committee that reviews all Cultural Trust Grants and makes funding recommendations to the Montana Legislature.

Crow Elder Participants

William Big Day – Director of Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Office. I was first introduced to William Big Day in 1999, when he and I both began teaching for the Lodge Grass School District. Despite the fact that neither one of us was from Lodge Grass, William being from the town of Pryor, and I from Crow Agency, we both felt at home in the Lodge Grass Schools. When I left Lodge Grass in 2002 to pursue a Master’s Degree, I largely lost touch with William, only seeing him occasionally at community events such as the Crow Native Days in June, and Crow Fair in August. From my visits and interactions with him during the time we taught in Lodge Grass, I learned that William is a Crow speaker who was raised in a family steeped in tribal knowledge and traditional ceremonial values. As a humble man with an approachable demeanor, his current position as the Director of the Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Office is a testament to the respect he maintains within the Crow community, and the esteem he holds among his peers.

William currently serves as both the Crow Tribal Cultural Advisor and most recently the Director of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office. William provides official tribal representation at archaeological and other historic sites throughout the region identified as the Crow Tribe’s traditional homeland. Big Day is also a professional oil and pastel artist and former high school art teacher, who has a BA Degree in Art from MSU-Billings.

Howard Boggess – Historian and Crow Tribal Elder. I first met Howard Boggess by happenstance at Famous Dave’s Restaurant in Billings, during the summer of 2008. After recognizing him come into the restaurant and sit down, I introduced myself and told him that I was familiar and appreciative of his work as a tribal historian. It was then that he went out to his car to retrieve and give me a copy of a cd he’d recently helped to produce that told the story of the famous Battle of Grapevine Creek. Although we’d just been introduced, he was already giving me gifts. It was at that time that he had given me his card, and I held onto the card until the spring of 2011, when I rediscovered it just in time to call him and give him a personal invitation to the June 4th Absaroka Agency Day of Recognition and Meaning.

Howard is an elder renowned for his knowledge of Crow and Montana history, and in 2002, the Montana Historical Society recognized him for his participation in numerous museum, and state park positions including volunteer, board member, director and officer. Howard is probably best known for his vocal and victorious fight to protect the sacred rock art at Weatherman Draw from oil development. He considers that accomplishment one of his most fulfilling.

Rabbit Knows Gun – Artist. Rabbit Knows Gun and I hale from the same small community of Crow Agency, MT, where most residents are related either through extended family bloodlines, or share at the most, one-degree of separation. Rabbit’s Knows Gun and I both attended the same Catholic Church, St. Dennis Parrish, and I the same school with Rabbit’s son, Lyndon, who is a year older than me. My earliest memories of Rabbit Knows Gun are associated with watching him play pick-up

basketball with my older cousins at the blacktop basketball court behind the Crow Agency Elementary School. At 6'6", Rabbit naturally stood out on the court, but it was his audacious long-range shot selection and creative point-guard play that set him apart as a one of a kind player. When his era as player had passed, he took up the role as elder trainer and community coach, maintaining a steady presence at the outdoor court near his house, giving pointers and challenging players to raise the level of their games. His talent and dedication towards his children is also apparent in the artistic arena, as his youngest son Allen is quickly becoming a widely renowned oil painter.

Rabbit himself is an accomplished oil paint artist who also teaches Crow art workshops at the Little Big Horn College in Crow Agency. Rabbit's spiritual life, his family, and his art dominate his life. According to Rabbit, the 'kinship of creation' concept continues to be one of the dominant driving forces in his work. Rabbit has embraced his role as a "Visionary Artist of the Poor," and one of his concerns is that people understand the symbolic meanings behind his work. Several motifs or themes in his work share common principles and perspectives from both Native American and Biblical backgrounds. From Rabbit's perspective, these paintings symbolize the power of both native beliefs and Christianity in the minds, hearts, and spiritual lives of Native Americans. Rabbit emphasizes that his pictures signify the blessings of the Creator and what He has bestowed on Native culture and the United States of America.

Archaeological, Educational, and Tribal Collaboration
at the Excavation of the Absaroka Agency

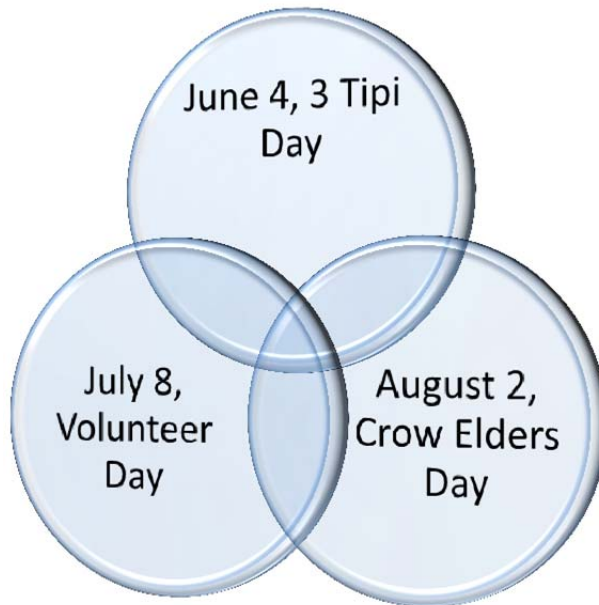


Figure 7. Each of the Three Events Is Separate, but they Share Collaborative Inquiry, Indigenous Participation, and Archaeological Investigation.

Three significant collaborative events occurred at the site of the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011, and even though each of the events was independently organized and uniquely designed with distinct and separate goals and objectives, each of the occasions shared the common threads of collaborative inquiry, indigenous people's participation, and archaeological investigation. The venne diagram above illustrates how the three events related to each other and shared common essential traits that also embodied traits of decolonizing research methodologies. All of the events occurred at the excavation site. Each of the events contained moments in which they embodied the characteristics of decolonizing research methodologies. Recognition of the tribal voice,

respectful collaboration with tribal people, and reciprocity towards tribal communities were all present at specific moments during each of the events, as the data suggests. The venne diagram relates that information by illustrating the details of how and when those specific moments, or essential “sweet spots” exist.

Although some of the collaborative events were brief in duration and only lasted for a few hours at the archaeological site, the gatherings nevertheless marked unique and noteworthy moments in the history of the place, as well as in the research history of collaborative indigenous archaeological inquiry. Taken collectively, the three collaborative events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011 are worthy of a doctoral study because they signified unprecedented firsts for such gatherings.

3 Tipi Day

The notion for the Day of Commemoration and Meaning came about as a result of my close working relationships with most of the key players involved, several of which were developed while I worked as an Indian Education Coach for the Montana Historical Society and Office of Public Instruction. After visiting about the idea with my academic advisor, Dr. Michael Brody, and Jeanne Moe of Project Archaeology, our group began official planning of the event with a meeting in March of 2011.



Figure 8. Setting up tipis.

Following that initial meeting, I began contacting Crow tribal members to extend an open invitation for them to come take part in the day's events, although I could offer no gas money or transportation reimbursement. The event was advertised in several local newspapers, including *The Billings Gazette*, *The Bighorn County News*, and the *Stillwater County Press*. However, as fate would have it, a 100-year flood along the Little Big Horn River and the deaths of some important tribal leaders in May and early June detoured many individuals from attending the event.

Although the June 4th collaborative event at the Agency site was officially named and advertised as the, "Absaroka Agency Day of Commemoration and Meaning", most people who were there that day will probably remember it best as the "3-Tipi Day". Those 3 tipis provided light and airy shelter for over 40 people, including 4 children, who had arrived that day to share to listen and share their stories and opinions about the old Absaroka Agency. Remarkably, despite nearly two months of record-breaking rain and snow in the region, the weather on June 4th was picture perfect. The three white tipis, placed side by side in a line running north to south, struck an elegant pose upon the lush

green landscape, standing gracefully with snow-capped mountains in the backdrop and an indigo-blue sky overhead.



Figure 9. 3 Tipis.

The current landowner of the property where the Absaroka Agency once sat, Mr. Robert Ostrum, displayed openness and generosity to the community at large by opening up his land and allowing for the setting up of three tipis as well as a shaded cooking and barbecue station for preparing lunch, and allowing for the establishment of an impromptu parking lot in his alfalfa field that accommodated over dozen different vehicles. Museum of the Beartooths Director Penny Redli played a noteworthy role in getting permission for the event, as she was the main point of contact who approached Mr. Ostrum with the idea and asked for approval to move ahead.

The vehicles began arriving early at the site, and by 10am, an hour before it was scheduled to begin, the tipis had been raised and about a dozen people had assembled to casually visit and meander about the area, soaking in the sun and enjoying the first real week of summer, 2011. One of the first people there was a gentleman whom I knew well as a child but hadn't seen for at least 25 years – John Spomer. Mr. Spomer once owned

and managed the “Custer’s Last Stop” gas station, convenience store, and motel, at the I-90 exit onto Highway 212. I was happy and surprised to see him. He recognized me and commented that he could still remember me as a little boy in Crow Agency. I hoped Mr. Spomer’s early presence was a harbinger of more good things to come, and I discovered quickly that it was just that.



Figure 10. Shane Doyle at 3 Tipi Day.

By 11am, over 30 people had arrived and were already in full conversation mode, with the chatter and laughter of old friends and relatives filling the air. As the lead organizer of the event, I spoke loudly as I asked people to gather around so we could officially begin the collaborative discussions in the tipis. I explained that the events of the day would be recorded, and would be used as part of an academic study, and I then distributed copies of the consent forms to everyone, and read through the paper, making sure that everyone had an opportunity to ask questions before signing and agreeing to the conditions of the study. I reminded the assembly that there were three foremost questions to consider in their tipi discussions:

- 1) How are you connected to this place, the site of the Absaroka Agency, and why is it important to you?
- 2) Do you know any historical stories from your family or friends about the Absaroka Agency?
- 3) What should we do to inform more people in Montana about the historical importance of the Absaroka Agency?

I explained to the group before we gathered in the tipis that each tipi would have a discussion moderator within it, and that person would help direct the collaborative discussion. I moderated the discussion in the center lodge, while Penny Redli moderated the conversation in the southernmost tipi, and Casey Olson, the Columbus high school English teacher, moderated the north tipi. The main purpose of the moderator was to provide a point of reference for the discussion participants, in case of an unforeseen circumstance. My experience as the moderator in my tipi was quite fulfilling and not cumbersome or difficult in any way. The discussion flowed freely and respectfully, in a clockwise fashion, and all of the participants were given an opportunity to share their story or feelings about the Agency.

I reminded the group that we would conclude our group discussions with a barbecue lunch at 12pm before going to the Museum of the Beartooths to celebrate the unveiling of Crow architect Daniel Glenn's small-scale model of the Absaroka Agency fort – which was commissioned by the Museum of the Beartooths from a grant through the Montana Historical Society. I invited everyone to select a tipi and take a seat inside, as the facilitators in each lodge would promptly get individual introductions underway.

A common theme in each tipi was that one or more tribal elders spoke at greater length and held the floor for a longer time than the other participants. Seemingly following the natural laws of the experience and respectful deference, the elders spoke up, and the younger people listened. The next hour seemed to last only 15 minutes, as the dialogue and stories coming from each lodge flowed swiftly and freely, and the occasional outbursts of muffled laughter emanating from neighboring tipis were indicative of the good times and good spirits that the event brought forth. Each tipi had about 13 people.

As the lead coordinator of the events at the site, I was relieved and ecstatic to watch the event unfold successfully and without any major glitches. The dream that I had first envisioned in December of 2010, had come to fruition six months later, and the many hours of planning and preparation that went into it seemed well worth the effort. The existing relationships and ongoing partnerships with strategic collaborators provided the foundations to make the vision of 3-Tipi Day a reality, but the hardest work of the day was provided by my small, but completely volunteer crew of tipi raisers and food caterers – aka Mike and Alex Sweeney. Without them, 3-Tipi Day would've been No Tipi Day.

Mike Sweeney arrived with his son Alex at my place at 5am that morning, driving a jam-packed 1979 Chevy Suburban and hauling a full-loaded flatbed trailer that tidily carried over 40 tipi poles – a red flag tied to the end of the longest. Literally, the conglomeration amounted to a traveling three-ring circus, minus the elephants and trapeze artists. The 2 hour drive to Absarokee would take us 3 hours at the least, as our heavily loaded suburban strained to reach a maximum speed of 55 mph. Arriving at the site at 8am, we wasted little time in unloading our tipis and cooking gear and beginning

preparations for the day's lunch of potato and corn chips, potato salad, pork and beans, barbecued hamburgers, an orange and chocolate cookie for dessert, and lemonade and coffee to drink. Needless to say, the lunch, like the tipi discussions, was a hit.

The story of how Mike and Alex ended up at the site of the Absaroka Agency on June 4th is a long one, but is rich in relationships. Mike Sweeney first became familiar with members of the Crow community in 1969, when he attended Bozeman Senior high school with a Crow student named Carrie Old Coyote. The two young men participated in cross-country running, as well as track and field together, and quickly became close friends. Their friendship led Carrie's father, Barney Old Coyote, to ceremonially adopt Mike as his very own son. Since that time, Mike has been accepted by the Crow community as one of their own, and he has embraced them as an extended family member as well.

My friendship with Mike came about the same way that many friendships develop in Indian Country – common friends, common family, and common interests in tribal ceremony and culture. Mike and I share a Crow style sweat-lodge in Bozeman – a gift from my adopted father and Mike's friend and spiritual mentor, Frank Caplette. We also have a professional partnership in the summer, taking Montana teachers Indian reservations throughout the region, and providing food, lodging, and cultural education along the way. As a means to implement Montana's Indian Education for All Act (see appendix) since 2007, Mike and I have taken over 40 teachers to 9 reservations, in Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota. When I asked him for his help on June 4th, he volunteered without hesitation to do whatever he could do to make the event a success.

Reflecting back on the 3-Tipi Day, it is clear that the success that it enjoyed was a direct result of the strong collaborative relationships that had already been developed prior to the actual event itself. Mike and Alex Sweeney were not the only people at the site who had volunteered their time and energy to help make the day a success. At my advisor's invitation, Jim Vernon and Bill Frieese, who are both employees of the MSU Education Department, took the time to venture the 200 miles round-trip from Bozeman just so they could assist as camera-men in filming the day's events. In the face of a many obstacles, including disastrous flooding on the Crow reservation, the event still brought out a large contingency of people; those people who participated in the 3-Tipi Day were pulled to the event that day because of their relationship to the place and the people who are deeply connected to it. When I later reviewed the names of the participants that day, one of the most recognizable themes that emerged was that many of them were personal friends or relatives of mine whom I had persuaded to attend the event, despite the great costs of transportation and time that it took to participate.



Figure 11. Joe Medicine Crow Receives Medal of Freedom.

A final anecdote about the event came to me from Penny Redli the next day.

When I called to congratulate and thank her for a great collaboration, she mentioned that one final invited guest had arrived at the Museum of the Beartooths late in the afternoon. Just as she had closed the museum door and began to walk to her car, she noticed a van had pulled up outside of the Museum, seemingly with the intention of visiting the museum. As she approached the van, and the passenger window rolled down, she could see that it was Crow tribal historian Joe Medicine Crow. Joe had arrived a little late, but he made it nonetheless, and Penny related that she was delighted to see him and his son Ronnie. She greeted them, and welcomed them into the museum to see Daniel Glenn's model. Penny noted that Joe expressed his satisfaction at seeing the model in the museum.

Penny's delight and enthusiasm at seeing Joe Medicine Crow arrive at the Museum of the Beartooths is understandable, as Mr. Medicine Crow is nothing less than a living legend among the Crow people, and simply one of the most famous and notable tribal elders in the United States. As both a scholar and as a war hero, Joe has left an indelible mark in American history. A decorated veteran of World War II, Joe received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama on August 12, 2009, and continues to enjoy good health and amazing longevity, as he is currently the oldest living member of the Crow Tribe. Neither Joe nor his son received any compensation for traveling to Columbus, yet their commitment to attending the event was ultimately undeterred.

Volunteer Day

The Absaroka Agency Volunteer Day occurred on July 8th, and was the first of a three-day volunteer workshop that was designed and coordinated by Project Archaeology in collaboration with Penny Redli and Steve Aaberg. The idea for the volunteer workshop came about primarily as a result of the unprecedented public interest in the Agency excavation. After advertising through local media and the web, over a dozen archaeological volunteers were selected to participate and most of them gathered at the Museum of the Beartooths on that first morning for a basic training in archaeological excavation techniques, as well as a short history lesson about the Absaroka Agency and the Crow tribal presence in the area.

That morning of July 8th, I rode my bike to my doctoral advisor, Dr. Michael Brody's house, where he and Bill Friese, along with Dr. Jack Fisher, were gathering to carpool to Columbus and on to the site of the excavation. Crystal Alegria had previously invited me to take part in the day's events, and so I took advantage of the opportunity to attend them. We arrived at the Museum of the Beartooths at 9:30am, and sat in on the workshop already in progress. Crystal Alegria was giving a power-point presentation to the volunteers, most of whom were public school teachers who had an interest in taking their learning experiences back to their classrooms. Crystal politely acknowledged our arrival, and a few minutes later invited me to share some of my perspective and knowledge about the Absaroka Agency, and how it was closely related to my family history.

I spoke to the volunteers for about 20 minutes before the session ended and the focus of the events shifted from the Museum and to excavation site. I shared stories with the volunteers of my great-great grandmother, Sarah, and her amazing life story, and I spoke about the importance of this particular research for myself and my family. I also remarked that I was surprised and happy to see that one of my elder friends from back home, Rabbit Knows Gun, was in attendance as a volunteer, and I prompted Rabbit to offer some words as well. As an articulate and strong speaker, Rabbit captivated the crowd with his words of wisdom and remarkable insight. Within 10 minutes of talking, Rabbit succinctly described the multi-cultural historical legacy of the Agency and proposed a powerful idea for commemorating the site well into the future. Rabbit's words about renewing and reconciling our multi-cultural relationships and building on those relationships for a better future was still echoing in my ears as we drove the 20 miles from Columbus to the Agency site.

Once at the site, the technical and scientific realities of the excavation became the primary focal point. Lead archaeologist Steve Aaberg gave us a short tour and explained where the bulk of the excavations were occurring. As our group walked around the site, it occurred to me that Rabbit's presence could once again provide an important moment of reflection for the event, and I approached Steve Aaberg with a suggestion. "You should ask Rabbit to say a prayer," I said. "Yes, that's a good idea, I can do that," Steve replied. We took Rabbit aside and asked him to do the honors of blessing the day's events. He graciously agreed, and said an eloquent prayer, asking the Creator to bless the

event, and the excavation. For the second time that day, Rabbit's presence and words set the tone and lifted the hearts and minds of the participants.



Figure 12. Volunteers help with excavation.

The afternoon was filled with the archaeological science of digging, scraping, screening, and collecting artifacts. Volunteers kneeled and sat down cross-legged in the square plots, working close to the earth with gloves and trowels. Slowly, steadily, and deliberately, the excavation process began to take on the steady hum of a well-oiled machine. Just as things began to get interesting, the morning was over and everyone was ready for a lunch break. Each person brought their own sack lunch, and we informally

and unintentionally sat in a large circle in the open alfalfa field where one month earlier a different group of volunteers had sat in similar circles, inside of tipis.

Sitting in the circle at lunch, I spoke to the volunteers and the excavation crew at length, giving them my perspective on the site and the land surrounding it. Most of the key collaborators of the summer's events sat in the circle that day, including Steve Aaberg, Dr. Jeanne Joe, Dr. Jack Fisher, and Crystal Alegria. The conversation flowed freely, but I felt compelled to speak a more than most, and partially because I understand the expectations of me as a cultural facilitator, and I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to educate the volunteers about my perspective and opinions regarding the place and what it means to contemporary Crow people. Steve Aaberg also spoke frequently during the lunchtime talking circle; so many unique perspectives came forth from that collaborative lunch.

Crow Elders Day

The Crow Elders Day occurred on August 2nd, and it was a noteworthy event for many reasons, but primarily because it was by far the largest contingency of Crow Indians to visit the excavation. The back-story of how the day came to realization is another compelling account of how relationships can open doors and build bridges between communities. It was a Bureau of Land Management Tribal Liaison who approached Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Officer William Big Day, about inviting archaeologist Steve Aaberg to Pryor to speak to the tribe's elder assembly known as the "107th Group". William Big Day's father Heywood is one of the key leaders of the 107th, and so it was an easy connection to establish. The 107th Group is a contingency of Crow

elders that was created in the early 1990's when the tribe was negotiating with the Northern Cheyenne Tribe over a surveying error on the 107th meridian. Over the years since that era, the group has maintained its stature and viability, and continues to influence contemporary tribal issues. The group was so compelled by Steve Aaberg's presentation to them in Pryor, they immediately began planning a trip to the site, with only one important condition – it had to come before Crow Fair, which always occurs on the 3rd weekend in August. Aaberg later recalled with surprise and delight at how quickly the group decided, "They said ok, let's go before Crow Fair, August 2nd. Just like that, they decided."

Crystal Alegria and filmmaker Katie Thomas picked me up at my house in Bozeman on the morning of August 2nd, and we I traveled stopped along the way in Livingston to pick up another local history buff, Marsha Fulton. Our drive was uneventful, but we were all excitedly anticipating the morning ahead with the Crow elders. A merciless sun was already baking the ground as the four of us arrived at the Agency site around 9:30 and were greeted by Steve Aaberg, Jack Fisher, and Victoria Bochniak. Steve was anxious to show us how much of the foundation had been uncovered, and it was an impressive tour.



Figure 13. Excavations on Crow Elders Day.

As we meandered around the excavation site it was clear that much had occurred since our June 4th meeting, and even since the last time I'd been there on July 8th. The summer sun had taken a toll on the land, as lush green grasses that covered the soil a few months earlier had turned light brown and thinned on the dusty earth. Beyond the change in the seasons, the focus of the dig had also shifted; moving from the dump area, located on the western side of the highway, to the alfalfa field on the east side where the stone foundation of the original Agency compound had been unearthed. We were awestruck at the perfectly preserved foundation walls, and were contemplating the significance of the find. In fact, the unearthing of the foundation was such an important and surprising discovery, the MDT had to reconsider its original road plan so as to protect the remaining foundational structure of the fort.

As we chatted and toured the site, a contingency of about a dozen people showed up to greet the elders, including Penny Redli. Around 11am, an enormous Greyhound

style charter bus with dark black tinted windows pulled into the Alfalfa field, and we knew that the elders had arrived. Steve Aaberg immediately entered the bus, with the door closing behind him, and spent several minutes talking with the elders, passing out maps and other materials and explaining to them what they would be looking at when they got off the bus. Although I never asked Steve, I assumed that he was talking to the group on the bus because of the convenience of having them all in one place, as well as in a comfortable and air conditioned environment.

Once off the bus, about 25 elders sat in folding chairs that had been set up in a semi-circle facing to the south, and in front of a large white table covered with artifacts that had been recovered from the excavation. Dr. Fisher stood at the table and spoke briefly to the elders about the objects before inviting the elders to roam around the area as they wished, and that he would be happy to talk more about the artifacts if they had more questions.

The elders were fairly quiet as they walked around the site, seemingly in a contemplative mood. After about 45 minutes of sitting and walking in the sun, they had seen enough and were ready for lunch. As the group gathered up to depart, a poignant and unplanned moment of reconciliation occurred. Prompted by a phone call from a minister in Oklahoma, an elder Crow lady approached Crystal Alegria, and requested that Crystal relay a message to Steve Aaberg; Aaberg would be asked to offer an apology to the Crow people for the historical injustices that had occurred at the Agency. Crystal quickly consulted with Steve Aaberg, and without hesitation, Aaberg agreed to say a few words to honor the request. Seeing that Aaberg was willing to make the symbolic

statement, the elder woman then spoke to Heywood Big Day, a Crow Sundance Chief, and asked him to honor Steve's words by saying a prayer of thanks and reconciliation. The group gathered in a circle for the remarkable exchange, and after Heywood Big Day's prayer, the elders loaded back onto the bus and drove into town to have lunch in the Absarokee Public School cafeteria.

Walking into the old school was a jarring experience that felt very much like stepping back in time to a bygone era. Large, sepia toned images of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln hung conspicuously on the wall, setting a tone that contrasted sharply with the mood of the moment. When everyone had sat down and the food was ready to be served, Heywood again prayed on behalf of the elders, saying thanks for the food and asking that good things come from the day's events.



Figure 14. Aaberg with Crow Elders at Excavation.

Following the lunch, there was more informal visiting while the group prepared to return to Pryor. Crystal and Katie filmed short interviews with some of the elders while

the rest of the group chatted and laughed, telling old stories and new jokes. Before loading onto the charter for the ride home, I stood in front of the bus in the 90 degree heat with 90-year old Charlie Decrane, historian Elias Goes Ahead, and a younger friend from back home, Aaron Brien. I had a good time chatting and catching up, but I was most amazed at Charlie Decrane's ability to stand in the hot sun and seemingly remain so cool. Aaron Brien said it best when he succinctly described Charlie to me earlier that day, "they don't make them like that anymore."

Michael Brody took a mental picture during the event of three elderly Crow men perched and reclining on the front bumper in the shade of a large charter bus. This image of the Crow elders sitting in the shade of the charter bus captures a moment of noteworthy meaning. Without adequate shade provided for the elders, they were forced to find whatever block from the sun was available, including the towering face of their charter bus.

As the day ended and my group departed back to Bozeman, our car was buzzed with conversation about the day's events. We agreed that the collaboration had gone well, and wondered what the next step in the process would be. Although the summer was nearly over and the excavation would end along with it, it seemed that the collaborative processes and the energy behind them were just beginning to mature and become vitalized. I wondered what the events meant to the participants, and I began to consider the process of interviewing the key individuals to explore their perceptions and opinions.

Although the August 2nd event had been a success by almost any measure, there was a sense that an opportunity had been missed to make more of the day. Yet, the same could be said about all three of the events. Despite their success in terms of number of participants and overall approval of their experiences, all of the events had weaknesses as well, that worked to define the events.

The Interviews

A total of 13 separate interviews were conducted with nine individuals who participated at least one or more of the three collaborative events at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011. The nine participants selected to be interviewed were representative of the three groups most essential to the collaborative endeavors at the Absaroka Agency; three archaeologists, three educators, and three Crow tribal elders. Although the same basic questions were asked to each participant, the setting and background of each interview was distinct and unique, and the perceptions and views of each of the participants were both reflective and embodied by this variance. The following descriptive passages are meant to provide a more complete sense of context to each of the interviews, from which more meaning and insight may be gleaned. As a part of the interview protocol, participants were asked to read and sign consent forms which clarified that their participation was completely voluntary and that their participation would be anonymous. To prompt and refresh memories of the events, interviewees were shown short video clips recorded at the collaborative events.

The codes used in the interview text are represented with three capital letters. The first letter signifies one of the three events, the second letter corresponds to one of the three decolonizing qualities, and the third letter represents the first name of the person who made the quote. The acronym “VVS”, as utilized in the Steve Aaberg interview, means that the comment embodied Steve Aaberg’s recognition of tribal voice at the Volunteer Day event.

The Archaeologists

Steve Aaberg, 11am Thursday, December 15. I made contact with Stephen Aaberg through his email address on December 9 and arranged to meet him in Billings the following Thursday at 11am, to conduct the interview at his office. Steve’s office and company, Aaberg Cultural Resources, is located in a suite at 901 Broadwater Square, just across the street from Kuchera Furniture. As I pulled my car into the parking lot at 901 Broadwater, I chuckled to myself when I thought about how improbable and ironic it was that I would be interviewing Steve Aaberg just across the street from the comfortable and commodious furniture showroom where I had interviewed Rabbit Knows Gun just a month earlier. It seemed that the contrast in setting and circumstances of those two interviews was only enhanced by the closeness of the locations where they occurred.

As I entered the building I was greeted by Steve and two employees, and invited into Steve’s office to conduct the interview. Sitting behind his large desk, he made me feel welcome by offering to get me coffee and voicing his whole-hearted support for my study. After getting coffee and chatting briefly, we began the interview, which lasted for

50 minutes. Because Steve was not available to attend the June 4th Absaroka Agency Day of Commemoration and Meaning, our conversation focused on his experiences at the July 8th Volunteer Day and the August 2nd Crow Elders Day. Steve's great enthusiasm for the Absaroka Agency excavation was clear throughout the interview, as he spoke with insightful reflection and deep conviction about his experiences at the collaborative events on July 8th and August 2nd. After reviewing about five minutes of video footage from the events of the day, I asked Steve to recall his preparation and thought processes going into the day. In his response, he explained how he had asked Crystal Alegria and Project Archaeology to take the lead with the Volunteer Days, because he was too busy directing the excavations.

People were chomping at the bit to volunteer. I was getting so many calls that I decided that I can't really – I don't have the time to handle organizing it myself. I mean, it was everything I could do to organize the excavation and keep my crews going and all that. So I talked with Crystal about the project archeology, organizing the whole volunteer event, and it was great.

Without any further prompt from me, Steve described his satisfaction and appreciation of the collaborative process as he watched the day unfold. As he continued, his thoughts shifted to two movies that had made powerful impacts on him. The films that he described in the interview were the same two films that he mentioned at the site during the Crow Elders visit, and they both focused on the experiences of Jewish families who had suffered and endured through the horrors of the holocaust.

I was watching not only Crow tribal members, but the white volunteers out there, it became very apparent that emotions were a big part of the experience....I can't remember whether I had spoken to you before about a couple movies that I think are

really important, that I think are directly related to the three-day event, that give a sense of the emotions that were expressed out there. They remind us of the past, that we're not just dealing with artifacts, we're dealing with past life. And we're not always certain what that past life was like. The *Red Violin* movie – everyone in anthropology should see it. The story orients around the long history of this violin that was very mysterious. But what was interesting about the movie was that people were so focused on getting this red violin, and the movie starts from a modern perspective; people are trying to get this red violin, but then it transitions back to when the violin was made, and where it went, through the course of its history; the people that had it...this story revolved around this red violin. It makes you stop and think about when you're handling an artifact. So much human energy, life, emotion, revolves around this one artifact. And that's the feeling I got from the first three-day event, watching the American Indians participate as well as the whites. There was a lot of emotion there. (VVS)

And another movie I'll make reference to is called *Everything is Illuminated in the Light of the Past*. I've given away the storyline now, but you should see it. It's kind of a complex story, but essentially it's about a Jewish kid who's become a collector of family things, after speaking with his grandparents. He ends up taking a journey to the Ukraine, trying to learn about his grandmother, and the history about her. He comes to this place in the Ukraine, a rural setting, and the imagery is really powerful. There's an elderly woman living in this cabin and she looks out and sees this kid...the guide for the Jewish kid explains what he's looking for. She invites him in, and it turns out she has boxes and boxes of artifacts. They're things she'd saved from the destruction of an entire Jewish community in the Ukraine by the Nazis. She gets this ring that it turns out was given to her by the kid's grandmother and she says, why do you suppose she wants this? Well, it was valuable. I don't think so. She wanted somebody to find it. Well, I suppose, but I don't think that's the real reason either. And the kid's puzzling over this; like, "Why?" It's so that he will remember. You look at an artifact, and it reminds you about what happened. That's what was so important to me about both events, quite frankly – just seeing the emotion that was so far beyond digging up artifacts. That what it's all about. We're not going to preserve

history and archeology unless we get to the emotion of the science, of the sites, the life (VVS)...and I think that three-day event was really important.

The stories from the movies that Steve described were in many ways analogous to the stories of survival that the Crow people experienced; tribal peoples who refused to forget or discard the culture and history of their ancestors, despite the overwhelming forces that work to eradicate it. Understanding the deep psychological chord that the place held for contemporary Crow descendants, Steve stressed that it was the deep emotional connection to the place by the modern Crow descendants that made the Absaroka excavation such a unique and powerful experience.

Quite frankly, I think the emotional experience of the Agency project added an emotional perspective that I might not have had on archeology in general... I wish all of us could have those sorts of experiences in projects we're involved in (VVS). It may be a little more emotionally accessible to experience a historic site where the history is known to a degree, where Crow people can say, yeah, my family lived out here; specific figures from their family tree. (VCS) We get to a pre-contact archeological site, older than the Crow migration into Montana and it may be more difficult to get people involved, from my perspective.

To underscore the potency of the raw emotions that were brought to the surface through the collaborative events at the site, Steve shared a story of how those emotions suddenly, and surprisingly surfaced in him a few weeks later. His description of his emotions reflects his great sadness towards the injustices of the past.

And after that event, there was another tour bus that came out to the Museum of the Beartooths, and I was giving the tour of the site. It was a big bunch, a couple weeks after the elders had been out there, and I was giving the tour and some historic context to what people were looking at. And I was talking about the importance of that site, and said this is where Crow people came to the realization – at the same time they were meeting out here and talking with the agent, trying to communicate with the government and say, OK, you can't live like this; we've got to try this farming thing, and if we try will you stop trying to take our land?... I just

got choked up at that point, partly because of a lot of what I experienced at that moment was because of the visit to Pryor. (VVS) I don't usually get choked up, but I did....Part of that sadness was a realization that my culture was not very honest with the Crow people, and that's an understatement ...so at the moment I got choked up, there was a lot hitting me. I realized what my culture had done. (VVS) That was what that moment when the elders visited was all about; those people were experiencing powerful emotions that weren't particularly happy at the time.

As he continued, his thoughts turned to one of the most significant and enigmatic events of the day; a seemingly spontaneous moment, in which he accommodated the wish of an elder Crow woman who asked that he apologize, on behalf of his white culture, for the historical transgressions that the Crow people had endured at the site they were excavating. His empathy for the Crow woman who voiced her desire to hear an apology was especially poignant, as he repeatedly mentioned his deep sadness over her own expression of sorrow and historical trauma.

Well, for one thing, I don't think any of us in archeology can assume that we know whether we're always in touch with the emotions of any particular site. (VVS) And recognize that there are people who have a direct connection or are direct descendants of that, and not just historic. From here on, I think I'll always remind myself that what we're doing goes beyond science. It doesn't just involve past cultures, dead cultures. It involves a lot of our contemporary, living peoples, and there's a lot of emotion attached to that. I was very sad, when I heard her express her feelings about some of the bad emotions that they still feel, and so just great sadness at the fact that the Crow people were feeling sad. And they were probably feeling sad because of the loss of a traditional life. Even though it happened some time ago, we're not that far removed from those times.

Steve concluded the interview by reiterating the profound impact that the entire summer excavation had on him. He emphasized how the broad range of community

support and interaction, in particular the August 2nd collaborative event with the Crow elders.

Yeah, and all of those experiences, collective experiences and emotions, really compelled me to do everything I can to see that that site is preserved. (VCS) I'm not sure, if we hadn't seen that kind of collaboration and support from the Crow people, from the local community out there, project archeology, my own crew – everyone was sort of spoiled by everything about that project. I feel like there were powers beyond me that made it come together... Well, I just wish we could experience that on every project.

As our interview concluded, Steve mentioned that he was planning on taking on an excavation of a tipi ring site somewhere north of the Missouri River in eastern Montana during the summer of 2012, and he generously gave me a standing invitation to accompany him and his crew. I thanked him for the interview and his invitation, and I assured him that as much as I would enjoy such an Montana archaeological adventure, it was doubtful that I could attend.

Dr. Jack Fisher, 11pm, Sunday, January 8. As a member of my doctoral committee, Dr. Jack Fisher has always been a click of an email away – even when he's on sabbatical, and doing research in Cape Town, South Africa. Dr. Fisher quickly responded to my email requesting an interview of him, and we settled on 11pm Sunday, January 8, as a suitable time to speak over the web. At Jack's suggestion, we conducted the interview using Google email, as he'd used the software before when speaking to his son. We greeted each other over the computer promptly at 11pm, although it was 8am in Cape Town. Sitting with his back to the window of his office, I could see the summer

breezes swaying the green leafy trees behind him; a stark contrast to the cold and dark winter evening I was experiencing in Bozeman.

Because he was present at each of the three events being studied, I started the interview by asking him about his experience at the June 4th event, and moved chronologically through the July 8th and August 2nd collaborative events. When I asked him about his thoughts going into the day, and if he had any expectations, he voiced a theme that seemed to be common among most of the interview participants; he said that he really didn't know what to expect. His uncertain, yet optimistic outlook on the June 4th event indicated his faith in the collaborative process.

I didn't really know what to expect; I knew in a general sense that you were going to set up some tipis and there'd be some activities associated with that. Again, more in the context of your committee, I knew you would be carrying it out, and you laid out your ideas at our meeting -- so I did have a sense of what would happen. I didn't have expectations, because I wasn't sure who would show up, and these things are kind of unpredictable when people are invited to come to a place that's not where they live and so forth. I thought I'd just be open and see how things transpired. (3CJ) So I didn't have a strong set of expectations going into it for the event that you held in the field at the Absarokee Agency.

Jack described his experience in the tipi as being respectful and informational, and he reflected that the collaborative process went very well within the structure of the circle. He also commented that more of these types of events are needed in order to create a "collaborative foundation" upon which future growth could be cultivated. Although he believed the sessions were successful and important, he also implied that much more could be achieved with an on-going collaborative relationship.

So that's what we did; we took turns and were sitting in a circle in the tipi and we all explained who we were and our connection to the Absarokee Agency. I thought that was good, and one of my feelings coming away

from that was that in terms of collaborative inquiry, that was a very positive event. Because everyone in our tipi was respectful of who was speaking; sometimes they asked questions, and the speakers were all respectful to people in the audience. There was no haranguing or anything, so from that standpoint I thought it was very effective...reaching out and trying to understand where the other person was coming from and so forth...It was worthwhile, and in retrospect, more of these kinds of events would be beneficial toward establishing a more collaborative inquiry foundation, because it was a good way for people to get to know one another; for me to meet other people who were interested in the Absarokee Agency. (3CJ)

When considering the site from his career perspective of over 30 years of archaeological field work experience, Jack echoed Steve Aaberg's sentiments; he stressed the unparalleled historic significance that the place and the excavation held to both descendant and non-Indian communities.

.... It was pretty unique for me. Of all the archeological sites I've participated in excavations with, the Absarokee Agency is the most compelling site for trying to develop and establish a collaborative inquiry effort that brings together people from different backgrounds: archeologists, members of the Crow tribe, and people from other areas. The connection is so strong and direct between members of the Crow tribe that are living today and their ancestors who lived at that site. As an archeologist doing excavations at this site, there's a very clear connection I can't think of any other site that I've been part of that the value and potential for collaborative inquiry is as strong as the Absarokee Agency.

One of the strongest themes voiced by Dr. Fisher throughout the interview was his belief that the collaborative events during the summer of 2011 were a positive and important first steps towards creating a collaborative foundation between archaeologists, tribal members, educators and other community members. In summarizing, he reinforced his belief in collaborative processes, but emphasized that long-term relationships are the ultimate goal, as they offer the opportunity to create more educational and meaningful relationships than the one-time only encounters such as the 3 Tipi Day.

So that's why I see this as a great first step, by providing a context where we can begin to know one another. There needs to be more time spent together, getting to know each other on a more personal level. (3VJ) So I didn't see this as a negative at all; I saw it as a positive beginning step toward what I hope will be a collaborative archeological inquiry manifestation some day. This was probably an essential first step in that direction. I think that I already had an inkling that this would be a long term process, but I think these events reinforced that in a positive way. (3VJ) These were the opportunities to bring archeologists and non-archeologists, and Crow elders and non-Indians, all together and see what happens. And everything that did happen was positive, I felt. There are vast cultural differences between Indians and non-Indians, and between archeologists and non-archeologists, because archeology is an academic discipline, and it's hard for non-archeologists to understand at first. There are logistical difficulties...and all this reinforced that this is a process. As a professional archeologist, fairly late in my career, seeing the value and importance of this collaborative inquiry, it's something that I want to continue pursuing.

Victoria Bochniak, October, 29, November 16, 27. Victoria Bochniak

participated in all of the collaborative events held at the excavation site, and mostly because of this, three separate interviews were conducted. I contacted Victoria through email and we arranged to meet at the Sola Café, located just south of campus, on Thursday, October 29, at 10am. We met inside and both got coffees before deciding to go outside and do the interview sitting in a warm October sun. We watched a few minutes of video clips from the June 4th event, and I asked her to comment on her experience on that day and what she learned from it. Her memories of sitting in the tipi and hearing family stories from local people highlighted her experience, and she underscored the powerful atmosphere of the day.

I think it was an incredibly powerful day, just having the tipis out there on that land, just kind of thinking about the last time that probably happened. (3VV) And then, being able to have so many people there, and a variety of people, I guess those events are so great because the people who

showed up really had a great interest in it. (3CV) Really overall, the best part was sitting in the tipis, having a meeting about the place, which I have done a little research on, not being from the place, so it was really nice to just sit back and learn from the local people about the place. (3VV) It was just really good for me to be able to hear those stories, because like I said I didn't have those personal stories, so it was nice to become part of that though in a way. (3VV)

Victoria and I agreed to conduct our second interview in a conference room in Wilson Hall on Wednesday, November 16th, at 10am. We picked up our discussion where we had left off a few weeks earlier. When I asked her to comment about the video clip of Howard Boggess talking on June 4th about his belief that the foundation of the Agency was still largely intact, the conversation shifted to the excavation and the discovery of the foundation. She wondered aloud how Howard Boggess could have known that the foundation was still intact.

We weren't expecting to find any foundation.... When we found it, the place was just buzzing. It was so exciting, I mean, it was amazing that it was still there, and it wasn't particularly deep either. But ya just his comment, it was, I wonder then, if he thought it was still gonna be there just because he wanted it to be there, and knew that's where it was so it should be there, or if he really thought about the farming... I wonder if he has knowledge on that and that's why he knew it would be there... the ground, the roots and the soil was so hard, we stopped screening the first 10 centimeters just because it was too packed, that probably contributed to keeping everything stable underneath.

As she went on to describe her role and experience in the July 8th collaborative events at the Agency, Victoria accentuated the importance of Rabbit Knows Gun's presence at the site on July 8th and voiced her disappointment at the fact that the Crow community's interest and overall interaction with the site came with so little time left in the summer.

I think it was his presence on the site that really drove that meaning home for us, you know he was the one who could really talk about how important it was that the site was found again...(VVV) it really helped me to understand why we were there. I was there to do a job as a contract archaeologist, but the cultural side of it is what brings meaning to it... It's a shame that we didn't have more Crow involvement until so late. It's a shame that didn't happen from the beginning, but it's a contract job, so the cultural aspects are what give it the deeper meaning.

Victoria's overall impressions from the August 2nd Crow elders visit to the site were a mixture of gratitude and surprise at being able to spend one-on-one time with elders and hear from them personally their thoughts and feelings about the Agency. Her appreciation for the Crow visitors was also tempered with thoughts of how much more could have happened if the collaborations had occurred earlier in the summer, and she seemed to second-guess the efforts to bring more awareness of the excavation to the Crow Agency community.

In terms of, is it important...I mean, just the feeling of them being there – I thought so, especially when they'd say that, driving by, their relatives would point out where the agency used to be, so I feel like it's still been part of their life throughout. But I guess my expectations – it went further than that, because I wasn't expecting one-on-one with me...(EVV) So that wasn't what I was expecting, being able to go one-on-one with some of them. So it was really nice for me. It would have been nice for this to happen earlier too, though, because it was after Tim McCleary came with a couple people too, and it felt like everything happened so late, and we could have probably had a lot more awareness at the Crow agency about what's going on.

The Educators

Crystal Alegria, November 11, 22, 29. I called Crystal Alegria on her cell phone to request an interview, and then followed up with an email to confirm the time confirming an interview time. We engaged in three separate interviews, covering her

experiences at all three events. The August 2nd Crow Elders Day was a highlight of the summer, and she recalled her excitement over the event.

Well, I was really excited; I was really looking forward to it, just because it's so near and dear to my heart. Just to experience something like that was really...I felt like this event was going to be the most significant thing to happen. I didn't know how many people were going to be there, at one point it was like five, at one point it was 50, and it turned out maybe 30 or so? But I was kind of excited about the possibility of 50 people, but I also wanted to – I was little nervous because I wanted everything to go well for Steve and everyone there, so I was hoping it was going to go good, and they were going to actually make it, and all that stuff. So I think I was really feeling good about the day and looking forward to it.

Crystal recalled being surprised in the number of different groups who were represented at the event who were not Crow elders, and she added that some had come at the last minute, including Penny Redli, because they were so interested in being at the site with the tribal elders.

But there were a lot of other people there that I didn't realize were going to be there, like the SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) office was there, Wellness and some of those folks were there, which I thought was kind of interesting, because it added another layer to the day, because the SHPO kind of oversees all this...and Penny was there – I think she had just heard about it and kind of came at the last minute – and it was good to have her there, and Patty was there too. (ECC) So it was just more than the Crow coming. Everyone was there wanting to hear what was going to be said about the place.

As she detailed her experience that day talking to the elders, she relayed a message that had come up before in earlier conversations between her and I; researchers may ask questions of Crow historians and elders to provide information about a specific place, such as the Absaroka Agency, but Crow elders often do not speak to their questions directly.

It went pretty well. I ended up talking to Elias Goes Ahead most of the time, and he talked a lot about things not so much right there, but around that place. A lot of people didn't have real specific things...but they had stuff from around the place, that had happened around it... (EVC)

When I asked her why she thought that this was such a common occurrence, she reflected thoughtfully about what possible meanings this may have by placing her experiences and her research conversations into a cultural context. She considered the possibility that the Absaroka Agency did not hold great value from a ceremonial or other Crow cultural standpoint.

I've thought about this a lot. It means that either people didn't talk about it as a significant place, or it was the way that the Crow people talk about it as this larger area. They're talking about the mountains and the rivers and everything around it. (EVC) I've noticed that about Fort Parker too: we'll ask about Fort Parker, and we'll hear things about Sheep Mountain and the Absarokee mountains and the Crazies – I feel like I want people to talk about that specific spot, and that's not the way it works. So that kind of came up again at that time... I want them to talk about exactly that. But their family members probably didn't tell them about it because maybe it wasn't a big part of their lives...it was such a short time period, too. In oral traditions, that goes back thousands of years – but this is like a little blip. And, it wasn't a very good place for them, especially the second agency. But the mountains around were, so maybe that's why their family members told them about other things that happened in that area, that were positive or something they wanted their children to know. (EVC)

When I asked Crystal to recall the most noteworthy event of the day, she began to describe the episode in which an elder Crow woman approached her and asked her to tell Steve Aaberg that he needed to be part of moment of reconciliation and prayer. She described what was said by the key people, including Steve Aaberg. She concluded by stating her belief that the moment was the most important of the day.

it was really interesting because a woman whose name I have written down somewhere but can't think of now came up to me and said that this place was a really important place, and she said that – she was very

Christian, Baptist or something – she heard of a story where someone came to a place like this in Oklahoma, and she said that what they did at that place is the white people and the Indian people got together in that place and they talked through this and they made apologies to each other. And she thought that's what needed to happen here, today. And she said, "And you need to tell that guy, who was Steve, that he needs to do that." (EVC) She called the preacher on the phone too, and I talked to him for a while, and he told me the same story, and a lot of other things too...it was pretty interesting. That's when Steve went up to Haywood, and she said that Steve and Haywood had to do this together. They then had this really powerful interchange; (ECC) Steve started off by thanking everyone for coming and saying that it was a real honor to excavate at this site. He said that really felt that it was an interesting place to excavate, because it was definitely Crow people that were living there, and there were things that happened there that weren't good, and he wanted to apologize on behalf of all white people for those things that had happened. (ERC) And Haywood took it from there... He spoke in Crow for a long time, and he was smoking tobacco and was doing a ceremony to the four directions. Then when he spoke he said that yes, it was a hard time there, and it was important that the archeologists...their digging now will go better because they had asked permission. To me, that was the most important part of the day.

Crystal reiterated her impressions of how successful the collaboration turned out to be that day. She stated that the day ranks as one of the most important days of her working life.

I think it was collaborative and – it's hard to collaborate, but somehow the stars aligned for that day...maybe it was meant to be. Things just fell into place; you and I had both been trying to do that in the prior events, and for some reason, it happened on that day. It was archeologists, museum folks, Crow people, historians, a couple educators – I don't think Jeanne was there – but it was an interesting collaborative experience. (ERC) You know, that day is right up there with the most important days I've had in my working life. It's way up there.

I asked her to summarize her thoughts about all three events, and how she could compare her experiences between and among the three distinct days. She noted the

importance of all three, and the fact that all of them had success despite a limited budget for any expenses, including travel and food.

Well, they are all three really different – I think they were all very collaborative, and there was different collaboration in all three, and they were all really important. People at the third event were saying, ‘We need to buy this place, the Crow need to own this place.’ At your event, I think that’s where all these people who really know a lot about the place came and interacted a lot together, which is probably the first time that ever happened. And I think bringing people to a place just ramps it up. With people’s experience, history, archeology. I don’t know. Maybe because you’re using all your senses: you see beautiful things, you smell the grass, you hear the creek bubbling, you touch the dirt – you’re using all your senses. It just imprints more. I don’t know. But it sure did for these folks. We had not very much money at all; a little from the MDOT, and that was it. The BLM did pay for the bus for the elders. But one thing that came out of this is that so many people did this out of their own time, energy, and money. So that’s really interesting too. There was no funding for hardly any of this. Just think what we could have done if we’d had money!

Crystal voiced that ultimately, the most important thing that needs to come from the events is that a greater sense of awareness about history and how it relates to contemporary issues such as those that the Crow tribe has been forced to overcome. She explains how education and knowledge can expand our empathy and compassion as individuals and as a society, and she makes a final reference to an individual who participated in the July 8th Absaroka Agency Volunteer Day.

I think it’s connecting us to our history. And it also informs people what happened here, why the Crow are on this reservation they’re on, and why they’re in poverty. Because look what happened to them here; at why they have diabetes: because, in 1875, they were given flour, sugar, and coffee. Think about it that way. And the history can really explain historical trauma, a lot of things that we talk about but have no real understanding of, because we don’t know the history. Hardly anyone in Montana does, so if we made that more a part of what kids learn, they maybe would have more compassion for each other. I guess it’s just cultural understanding. If we talk about it more, bring people out to these places, they’ll be more

interested. And they'll teach their children, and those children will know that the Crow Reservation went all the way to Livingston, and they're on Crow land. Things like that. And I think that the volunteers – I was just reading the evaluations we did for the second event – they are huge. They changed people's lives. This one guys said it was the most important thing he'd ever done in his entire life. And people said it was meaningful and they didn't realize that this history was here...

Jeanne Moe, 3pm Wednesday, December 14. I interviewed Dr. Jeanne Moe in her office in Wilson Hall on the afternoon of December 14th. As a close working colleague with Jeanne, she had supported and encouraged this study from the beginning and was happy to participate in the interview process, albeit with permission from her federal supervisors. Once granted approval to speak as a federal employee within this research study, we quickly scheduled an interview. Jeanne's office is also the headquarters for Project Archaeology, a nationally renowned educational project founded by Jeanne in 1990 and funded through the Bureau of Land Management. Under her leadership, Project Archaeology has grown exponentially, and in November 2011 was awarded the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Partners in Conservation award recognizing exemplary conservation partnerships.

Jeanne attended the first two collaborative events, but was unavailable to be at the site for the Crow elders visit on August 2nd. We started the interview by talking about the 3-Tipi Day. She emphasized her commitment to supporting the project, and spoke about the visual power of seeing the tipis on the site as she arrived that day. She went on to clarify her official capacity that day.

Well, I think I came because you invited me to the event, and I just wanted to be there to see what you were doing and to support you in any way possible... I think I expected it to be a very different and interesting

experience, and that was definitely true. Well, I was really thrilled to see the three tipis there, that was really neat – there was no mistaking it; you knew right where you were going; I don't think I'd been to the site before then. And I went on my own time, not as a BLM employee. As, by contrast, I am acting as a BLM employee today, because I've been involved in the project both on my own time and federal time as well.

When I asked her what her collaborative experience was like inside the tipi, she spoke with slightly mixed feelings about how the nature of the discussion was not inclusive to everyone in the circle, but rather was dominated by two or three individuals. She recognized that the collaborative nature of the discussion was stifled during that time, but she withheld judgment of the interlude.

Well, my experience in the tipi I was in -- I might have come in a little late... the conversation was already going strong between mostly Daniel Glen and I've forgotten the gentleman's name – between the two of them and one other gentleman, and another woman of Crow descent. Well, also I'm remembering that Casey, the teacher, was going to be the facilitator for that tipi, and he came in very late. I remember Casey did talk and made some effort to bring a few more people into the conversation, and maybe one or two came in, but that was all. So in the tipi I did not speak at all, and quite a few other people didn't either. So I just listened. And it was very interesting; it was really going back and forth. There were a whole lot of things I didn't know, so it was hard to follow; I sort of picked up some snippets. (3VJ)

Jeanne also described how some individual stories of family history and rediscovered relationships with long-lost ancestors were revealed in her tipi.

One of the most memorable moments was when Daniel Glen realized he was related to Nelson Story. He didn't think too much of Nelson Story, but through this conversation he realized he was related to him. And it beats me as to what that connection was, but that was a very amusing and memorable moment. (3VJ)

Reflecting on what was said in the tipi during her discussion session; Jeanne stated that she learned a lot, but not necessarily what she had expected to hear. The

theme that dominated the conversation in her tipi was primarily about extended family, and without the in-depth knowledge to contextualize names and places, wonderful anecdotes lose their power. Nevertheless, the event left a significant impression on her.

And it was very knowledgeable speaking, and it had a great deal to do with family relationships, not so much about the place. (3VJ) Some references, but pretty complex family relations that I didn't know much about. A few names were familiar, but other than that I didn't know anything about it. I guess – I was very glad to be part of it; it was a seminal experience to me. Just to be part of it; I didn't feel like I participated a whole lot and that's OK. But just to be there, I learned a lot. (3CJ)

When I asked Jeanne to speak about the Volunteer Day, she emphasized three main points, which are represented by the quotes highlighted below. She first explained that although she had helped in the planning of the July 8th events, her participation throughout the day was as a volunteer.

I was there on July 8th as a volunteer. I helped plan it with Crystal, and Kathy worked on it a little too. I did that as part of my work, but the actual time out there was as a volunteer. I spent one day, the day before, excavating with the crew, just to know more about the place. So we started out that day in Columbus at the museum, training the volunteers. And then we spent that day out at the site, and then repeated the process on Saturday and Sunday. We had different people in the training each day; at least two of the people – four or five stayed the entire time.

Dr. Moe expressed her particular thankfulness at the presence and words of the Crow elder, Rabbit Knows Gun. She conveyed that Rabbit's speech had a moving effect on her, as it had many different and substantial meanings to her.

Well, for Rabbit, I almost cried several times. (VVJ) His words were so meaningful and so validating for the work I've been trying to do for so long; that we've wanted to collaborate with descendant members, we have these laws that we have to do something about - we have compliance with these laws - but at the same time, really thinking about the human elements, about what does this really mean in the overall picture of things.

(VVJ) That's why I have my job, is to protect archeological sites. It's mandated by law, through the Archeological Resources Protection Act. So that's the basis for my entire career for the last 22 years; that's what I do.

Jeanne finished the interview by describing her perception of the collaborative processes that occurred on July 8th. She expressed some disappointment that the collaborative process had fallen short of her expectations, but was still an important learning experience for everyone involved. In a final word, Jeanne reiterated her belief that the collaborative process must proceed in a non-judgmental way.

I guess the only thing I would say is that I had hoped that you would be teaching with us, and that I'd get to work side by side with you. It was more that we taught, and you and Rabbit were there, and the lovely Terry, but it wasn't as collaborative as I wanted it to be. But I was a little disappointed, because even though we've worked together a lot, I'd love to have the experience of teaching side by side with you, about all these things we've been thinking about for all this time. Learning about collaboration, for me, I learned a lot about it – it certainly doesn't always go how you think it will... But I think just keep coming back together is the key to that, just being open and saying, let's try this now, or here's where we are in the process now, and how do we go forward? I'm really glad to have been a small part of your study... and as we discussed before, it's respectful and inclusive -- it's nonjudgmental. It's clearly a journey, and you don't know what the outcome is going to be."

Penny Redli, 11am Thursday, November 17. I contacted Penny Redli through email in October to schedule our interview at the Museum of the Beartooths on November 17th. I arrived at the museum just before 11, and Penny was ready with coffee and a recorder if I happened to need one. The museum's archive workroom provided a comfortable space for the interview, with a large table in the middle for placing old photos and other papers. I placed my laptop computer on the table and showed Penny some of the video clips I'd collected at the summer's events. We started the interview by

reviewing the 3-Tipi Day. She began by expressing her appreciation at being part of the overall collaborative experience, and richness and importance of the relationships that she'd formed because of it. Her focus then switched to the tipis, as she spoke about the strong feelings invoked by seeing them at the Agency site that day.

I need to start out by saying that the entire project has been a wonderful experience – I've developed new friendships; it's just been great. I can't say enough about it. And I want to learn more... Yeah, it's just been a great relationship with everyone, and the more you do the more you want to learn. The June 4th event was a great event in my eyes because I did learn so much. To be part of an event like that...I don't even know how to explain it. I keep thinking about driving up there and seeing those tipis set up. It hit, even for me... It was almost a feeling of set back in time, to see the tipis there, and knowing a little about what happened at the site.

When I asked her what she expected going into the day's events, she reflected most participants experience by saying she didn't know what to expect. Her description of what occurred in her tipi was brief, but very positive. She then went on to speak about the importance of the relationships that had been formed during the overall collaborative processes, and how those relationships had progressed, despite a variety of obstacles in their way.

I don't know what I expected, but there were a lot of people... For me, I led the discussion in my tipi, and we really enjoyed it and had a great time. Everybody had something to say, and it was pretty laid back, and we had fun. There were so many people involved, and new people that I hadn't been around – your family, and others – and it just go to show that that place means a lot, to a lot of people... It was huge, with the flooding going on – the day was beautiful, and there was no funding to help these people come, and they still came. It just amazes me; they still came.

Penny also made a comment that was repeated by other interview participants. She believed that as the summer progressed, the interest around the site grew substantially from that first collaborative event on June 4th.

But I also think there was more excitement and interest by the Crow tribe later on, towards the archeological dig, because more were showing up toward the end. They didn't realize, I don't think, the impact of what was there, and rightfully so, because it wasn't a happy a place for them necessarily. So now, I think you'd get a lot more people.

When I asked about her collaborative experience on the July 8th Volunteer Day, and first described how she had collaborated with Crystal Alegria on the project.

Yes. She had planned to do the volunteer day, and of course I wanted to do a little fundraiser for the museum and give a tour, and so it worked well together. Starting here and then going up to the site, and the people volunteering at the dig got to take part in what we were doing, and vice versa.

After watching the short clip of Rabbit Knows Gun speaking at the museum on July 8th, she reacted with enthusiasm as she recalled how his words had moved her at the time. She then continued to speak at length about how the nature of the collaborative process took on a life of its own as it moved forward in an extensive and inclusive way.

I agree with everything he said. (VVP) I remember standing there that day, listening to him, and shaking my head, "Yes!" We do need to go ahead, but we learn from our history, like he said. Like he said, a beginning for friendships and relationships, and learning more and more about the site and its history. (VVP) Going forward, rather than forgetting about the site and the bad things that happened, moving forward and recording it. You and I both know that this project has ballooned into something huge. Some of us don't get any sleep, because we're thinking about researching more pieces, so it's difficult to figure it all out. I think it started out with a small group of people and it's mushroomed into a bigger group, and it's only going to get bigger. I have worked with Steve Aaberg early on, because he and I talked about how cool a model of the Crow Agency would be. I've worked with Mardell Playing-Feather quite a bit, and then I knew Howard from being on the Museum Association of Montana. So I had some small connections, and those were kind of bigger groups. We're going to interview Marvin Stuart in January about the Little Nest Bundle. I'm really excited about that; I spent some time on the phone with him a couple days ago. He's a really neat guy; I can't wait to get him up here.

When I asked Penny about the August 2nd Crow Elders Day, she described the type of miscommunication and chaotic last-minute calls that can often occur in during large collaborative events.

I was completely excited about it. Steve felt bad he didn't let me know it was happening; I actually found out from the newspaper. So I called Victoria immediately, and she said, Steve was supposed to call you! And I talked to him, and he apologized and said, "You have to be here!" I said, "I'm there!" I wasn't completely prepared, or I would have had video and whatnot.

Penny went on to describe how the Crow Elders Day allowed her an opportunity to reconnect with Crow people whom she'd recently collaborated with, as well as to connect with new faces she hadn't already meet.

But I was not overwhelmed, but excited to meet more people, and of course I invited them to the museum, which was not part of the plan. (ECP) So they all came here, and I talked to Haywood...William Big Day's been here twice, Aaron Brien - I talked to him a couple times on the phone. So that has grown into more relationships and connections; more people working together. And in fact, when I talked to Marvin that day, he was upset that he wasn't able to go that day.

Penny also related her overall amazement with how the elders reacted to being at the excavation site. She shared a short story of how her visit with Heywood Big Day helped them both discover something new that day about the 1951 Centennial Celebration of the 1851 Ft Laramie Treaty.

For me it was amazing to see how everyone reacted to the site. What their thoughts were. Right away, when Haywood started talking about remembering being there at a big event, and we realized it was the 1951 Centennial Celebration of the 1851 Treaty, I was excited again on another path of research. Every little thing we do brings out something new. (EVP) The more people we can talk to and collaborate with, the more we can learn about this place. (ECP) Marvin said he has stories of this place too. I asked him to tell them when he comes.

Penny concluded the interview by emphasizing one final point that she believes is a guiding motto that should be followed in every collaborative effort; humility.

I think the one thing I'd like to add...I'm not afraid to ask questions, and I think that's important, and I'm pretty easy-going and can go with the flow – I don't want to make waves; I'm just here to learn and be part of the project. I don't want to be the boss! Others can learn something about how well this project has worked, working with so many different people and organizations. It can happen. I think the big thing is that no one organization wanted to be the boss, like you said, or wanted to be take charge and get big-headed, and say, This is all what I've done. It's not what any one of us has done; it's been a collaborative effort... I was just along for the ride.

The Tribal Voices

Howard Boggess, 11am Thursday, November 3. I contacted Howard Boggess in late October by calling his cell phone, and he invited me to come to his house in Billings on November 3rd to conduct the interview. I had already taken Howard out to lunch at Famous Dave's in Bozeman the week before, in preparation for our interview in November. When I spoke to him the previous week to schedule an interview, he mentioned that he was on his way to Helena, and would be passing through Bozeman, so I offered to take him for lunch to show my gratitude for his help. The time we spent eating in Bozeman was worthwhile, and we had an enjoyable visit, talking about history and the Crow community. When he left, I mentioned that I would be in touch soon to schedule an interview in a more comfortable and suitable environment, ostensibly his home.

Howard was present at the 3-Tipi Day, but not at any of the other events, so our interview focused only on his experience that day. After some brief conversation, I

showed Howard a few short video clips of the 3-Tipi Day event, including a short clip of him speaking about the Agency site. I asked him to reflect on the clips, and his experience that day, and he began his response with a story about the Absaroka Agency.

I do have one story that's really interesting. What was happening is that, oddly enough, there would be attacks on the fort in the middle of the night. And they'd get these wakeup calls, there would be gunshots fired, everybody would be up in arms, but nobody got killed. And it was happening all the time, and then somebody realized that it was not the Lakota. It was the Crow attacking their own fort, just to harass them.

After his story, Howard went on to describe how he had arrived at the 3-Tipi Day meeting, and echoed his comments in the tipi that day in June, that he had a disagreement with the lead archaeologist, Steve Aaberg, about what still remained of the Agency site. He recalled that he had insisted to Aaberg that the road needed to be moved in order to preserve the site.

I rode up with Peggy. She was going up and called me at the last minute and asked if I wanted to go along, and I said sure. Well, I was curious. I'd been up there to a couple meetings before that, the one with Steve Aaberg. He did a talk at the school one night, and we went to that. He said lots of things that night that I disagreed with; it was kind of a disagreeable meeting for me because of the things he was saying. He was saying that there was nothing up there, and he kept saying he wanted the site to move to the east and go up to the middle of the fort, and I totally disagreed with him. I said, "You need to go around that -- whatever the cost is, you pay it. That's the way it is." The interstate went through the middle of Fort Parker, and Fort Parker doesn't exist anymore, as far as I'm concerned.

Howard reflected on his expectations of the day, saying that he, like most others, had no idea what to expect from the experience. His description of his interactions at the event indicate that he enjoyed himself, and although he said that he didn't learn anything new, and could only remember making one new acquaintance, he implored that the event was worthwhile and that he took good things from it.

I didn't know what to expect. I never really expect anything.... Oh yeah. It doesn't do any good to have a meeting in Billings or Absarokee. Generally that's what they do, and it does no good at all. You've got to go to the right place. (3CH) You get a feel of the land and what's there, just by standing in it. Yep, and everyone out there was very, very interested in that. (3CH) Oh yeah, I like tipis. (3CH) I liked being able to sit there. That made it so much nicer to have those. To be confined in a different group, from one another....Yeah. It was nice to give people - the three groups privacy from one another. (3CH) You could talk and we didn't have to listen to the guy next to you. (3VH) I met a guy from Washington state. (3VH) Oh yeah, it was very worthwhile. You always take something home with you. (3RH) In fact, that day I bought that book from the high school. That wasn't the only thing I took home with me; I took numerous little things. Steven's really nice. I got to visit with him a little bit. (3VH)

Howard's final comments on the day reflected his commitment to preserving the site of Absaroka and Mission Creek Agencies, and he summarized his belief on the power of the archaeological sites by using the same words that Steve Aaberg.

I think it should be saved. I think we really need to collectively have a meeting someplace and just see how much money they've got and how much they need. There's no grant money out there to buy land. Well, all I can say is we need to save those two areas. Yeah. We need to buy both of them - we're going to have to pay through the nose to get them, like \$10,000 an acre - Yep. That's what I'd like to see, is a visitor center put up at Mission Creek, and a path under the interstate, down to the Indian encampment. It means that we don't forget our history. We don't forget our history.

William Big Day, 2pm Friday, December 30. I contacted William Big Day through his cell phone about a week before our interview, having received his cell phone number from his daughter, whom I had seen at my nephew's Naming Ceremony in Crow Agency in early December. When I spoke to him I explained that I would be visiting Crow Agency over the New Year's holiday to see my family, and it would be a good time for me to interview him if he was available. He invited me out to his house in Pryor, and

we scheduled an interview for Friday afternoon, December 30th. When I placed a phone call to him a few hours before I arrived at his house, he asked me to stop in Billings to pick up a 10' PVC pipe, as his pipe to his septic system had broken, and I was in a perfect position to save him a trip to Billings. He told me that he would reimburse me the \$14.00 for the pipe when I got to his house, but I wanted to buy it to show a small gesture of appreciation for his help with the interview. When I arrived at his house, he was busily getting organized outside, preparing for my arrival with the pipe, which he was happy to see I hadn't forgotten. A hard and bitter cold wind was blowing, so we quickly went into William's double-wide modular home, where his woodstove made for a cozy living room. William's wife and 3-year old granddaughter were home and watching the Disney film "Tangled" on television while William and I conducted the interview at his kitchen table.

William had attended the August 2nd Crow Elders Day, and was a key collaborator in the organization process, but his comments about the event were brief, and the interview only lasted 18 minutes. Although his comments were positive, they also seemed to reflect an overall lack of affective impact on him personally; he liked it, but didn't appear to be deeply moved by the experience of the event itself. Despite what may have been a lack of personal intrigue, William expressed his appreciation at what he perceived as an important change in archaeological attitudes, and was thankful that the group was invited and treated with respect.

It was good, it was exciting. (ECW) It was surprising to see what they found... the archaeologist was surprised too... it was good, it was good. (ERW) I asked the state, 'why didn't we know about this?' I want to see what's going on out there, and the elders they wanted to see too. (ECW) I

was feeling very good that we had that opportunity. (ERW) Long time ago the people didn't have the chance to be a part of this... (ECW) the elders were saying that was good that was there. (EVW) It was very interesting, hearing the stories of the elders about way back then, when they heard the stories from their parents and grandparents... (EVW)

When I asked William to summarize his experience, his thought turned towards the future, and his hopes that the potential learning opportunities that the place offers can someday be realized. In closing, he commented that in his official role as Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, he has spoken to state officials and asked that funding be allocated to educate the public about sites so important to tribal history in the state.

... later on this could be something for the crow people out there, something in the future, maybe we could go back to that landmark and make a museum or some sort of every year thing, the crows could have a celebration... this is how you say it, "apsaalooka" not "absarokee", I told the state, we need some money to make some things happen there.

Rabbit Knows Gun, 5pm Wednesday, October 26. I called and spoke to Rabbit Knows Gun just a few days before I met him at Famous Dave's Barbecue Restaurant in Billings. I offered to buy him dinner to say thanks for his help with my study, and he took me up on my offer, recommending that we eat at Famous Dave's before 4 pm to get the lunch deals. I arrived at the restaurant shortly before Rabbit, and got a table. Like my luncheon with Howard Boggess, the eating and the music didn't allow time or space for a suitably recordable discussion, so we decided to conduct the interview after we ate. When we left the restaurant, Rabbit led me to Kinko's, where he made photocopies of some biographical information about him, as well as information about art shows and raffles that he was sponsoring. After he made copies, I was a bit surprised when Rabbit told me that we would do the interview at the Kuchera Furniture store, on Broadwater

Avenue. A cold wind was blowing from the west as we left Kinko's and made our way northward on 2th Street West to Broadwater, then eastward to the furniture store. As we entered the store we were welcomed by the owners, who left us to our own devices. It was obvious that Rabbit was trusted and somewhat beloved by the management, as his oil paintings and posters advertising his art auction and raffles hung from the showroom walls. Rabbit led me to a comfortable living room ensemble, and began to get comfortable, preparing for the interview. I was a little concerned that the mood music of the store would disrupt the recording, but it turned out to be negligible. I began the interview process by showing Rabbit video clips from the July 8th event, including the clips of him speaking at both the museum and saying a prayer at the site of the excavation. I asked him to explain how he had ended up there that day, and what his expectations were going into the event. He spoke eloquently and at length about his invitation and his motivation for going, as well as his overall experience.

I want to share with you, Shane, that the folks that invited me was Marsha Fulton from Livingston, and Crystal. They had mentioned it to me over the email, and I decided that I'd like to take part in this... I wanted to see the old Crow reservation site, and I wanted to see any new information that could be obtained from that place and that could be used to promote better cultural relations between our people, and the state of Montana, and the others that were working on the site.

The strongest message that Rabbit wanted to impart, was one of reconciliation between tribal people and non-Indians; the need for people and cultures to come to terms with the past, and then move forward into the future on a new path because of that knowledge. Rabbit also reaffirmed the importance of prayer in everything that is done, including archaeological digs.

I was very fortunate to be there that day and to have a better understanding of where the site actually was; we went there with the group, and we were able to take part in some of the archeological dig. (VCR) It was a very special opportunity for all of us to come together that way, and they asked me to go ahead and offer a prayer for the group for a successful archeological dig, and I was able to do that. (VCR) And I shared some of my insights of some history of the Crows, and I was very thankful for the opportunity to share what I did (VRR)... I think the most important message that we need to have in order to write a better understanding of the authentic history that occurred there is to have these archeological digs that occurred there. Another important part of that was requesting God's help to do this dig. So that was important... Well, because we need God's help on a daily basis to have that understanding – to understand the spiritual elements of the people that lived there and what they did, historically, to establish the Crow reservation. The archeological dig is going to revive information that will help us better understand what went on there. Being involved as a speaker at any of these events was more like an effort to help reconcile our peoples. Our thoughts, feelings, desires to have history done correctly. (VVR) In the past, most of history was done by what was called the conquerors. (VVR) Even though we were not a conquered tribe per se, we were still treated like one. We have treaties going back to 1825. It was something especially important to the Crows to have their say, so that they can see their side of the view.

Nearing the end of the interview, Rabbit spoke philosophically about my involvement in the overall collaborative process.

Even your involvement, Shane, would be very important to this because this is how history is told in its correct terms. (VVR) One person told me one time, I think it was Howard Boggess, he said, "Even in a battle situation, not everyone has the same story, because all the warriors are located in different parts of the event, and everyone has their perspective." And that's true of anything, especially when we talk about history. (VCR) One person writing history cannot write the full story. It's got to be taken from every person that participated in the event. And that's very important today, to have the understanding of Native Americans, so that the history that's written is going to reflect all these viewpoints.

Near the end of the interview, Rabbit echoed the sentiments of William Big Day and Howard Boggess, when he articulated a vision of the Absaroka Agency for someday being reconstructed in the same place where it once originally stood – providing a

permanent symbol of the Crow Tribe's significant history in the area. Rabbit spoke passionately, as did William Big Day, about educating the non-Indian public on the Crow tribe's proud and rich history in the region and at the Agency site in particular.

I think one way is to take history as it was and use it to apply to future events. Now for instance, a fort was once built there. What if all these efforts culminate into establishing a fort-building kind of activity like they did at Fort Union post, that re-establishes a facility of some sort, and shows the fort the way it was at one time? That would be very special. Maybe even establish a museum and say, this was the actual Crow site back in 1878. Then people could come there five, ten, 15, 20 years down the road and say, this was an actual fort, they did the archeological digs there, found all this information, artifacts, and now we have a place to house the history of all the Native American culture here that lived during this time, and also the fort that was built by the federal government. All that can be used to teach history, and to teach togetherness and teamwork.

When I asked him to summarize his experience and offer any final words, he again spoke about the important ideal of collaborative teamwork between cultures and communities, moving forward. He reiterated his strong belief that everyone involved in the collaborations needed to work together, and build on the foundations already established, both literally and figuratively, to create a model for the future.

I just want to say that this is something that the people can work on together, all these different groups -- this will be a building block. (VCR) This will be a foundation for future events that could culminate into something that would provide a pictorial; actual tangible evidence of what went on over there. Maybe establish a building, a cultural center, whatever you want to call it -- the fort -- re-establish the authentic fort so it looks like the one that was once there, and bring people in and just let them celebrate it.

Data Table

Table 2. Decolonizing Collaborative Archaeology.

Decolonizing the Collaborative Events at the Absaroka Agency											
		3- Tipi Day			Volunteer Day			Crow Elders Day			Total
		Voice	Respect	Reciprocity	Voic e	Respect	Reciprocit y	Voice	Respect	Reciprocit y	
Archaeo	Aaberg	NP	NP	NP	**	***	*	*****	*****	*****	21
	Fisher	***	*****		*	*		*****	***	*	17
	Bochniak	**	***		**	**		*****	***		17
Educator	Moe	*****	***		*****	***	*	NP	NP	NP	15
	Alegria	*****	*****		***	***	***	*****	*****	***	30
	Redli	*****	*****		*****	**	*	*****	***	*	26
Crow	Big Day	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	***	***	**	9
	Boggess	***	*****	*	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	8
	K Gun	NP	NP	NP	***	*****	*	NP	NP	NP	8
Totals		22	24	1	19	18	10	28	21	12	

* = statement embodies citation NP = Not Present at Collaborative Event

Deconstructing the Table

Connecting the Interview Questions with the Data Table

The interview questions that were asked to each individual can be connected directly to the data table through the perspective of decolonizing methodologies. The research questions were broad, and allowed the participants to elaborate on their experiences. The length of the interviews varied from 15 to 65 minutes, which indicated the diverse nature of the experiences and the reflections that each participant considered important and worth expressing within the interview format.

The data table shown above, entitled “Decolonizing Collaborative Archaeology”, displays the interview data as it relates directly to the primary research question being explored in this study. “How did the events at the Absaroka Agency reflect and exemplify collaborative archaeological inquiry and decolonization?” provides the context from which the interview data is organized and represented. At the top of the table the three collaborative events are listed and divided into three columns, which each column representing one of the three core aspects of decolonizing research methodologies identified in the literature review. The column on the left side of the graph indicates the principal group affiliation of the interview participant.

Recognition of Tribal Voice

Asterisks appearing in the column entitled “Voice” represent significant statements made by interviewees that personified the simple, but profound act of hearing and connecting with the voices of tribal people in the collaborative inquiry context. In

fact, the significance of this engagement cannot be understated, as the process of decolonizing research methodologies begins with the simple action of inviting and listening to indigenous communities in which research may potentially occur. (Wilson, 2004) The key words that were tracked to identify these significant statements include the terms such as “voice”, “hearing”, and “listening”.

The total number of asterisks accumulated in the voice columns for each of the three days indicated that the Crow Elders Day accumulated 28 significant statements, while the Volunteer Day had 19, and the 3 Tipi Day had 22. While three of the interviewees did not attend the 3 Tipi Day or the Crow Elders Day, only two of the interviewees were not in attendance at the Volunteer Day. An average of 3.6 asterisks per person was recorded for the voice column in the 3 Tipi Day, while 2.7 asterisks per person were recorded for the Volunteer Day, and 4.6 asterisks per person was recorded for the Crow Elders Day. The quantitative total of the asterisks indicates that the Crow Elders Day generated the most responses from interviewees, recording almost twice the average rate of significant statements per interviewee.

Respectful Collaboration with Indigenous People

The column entitled “Respect” signifies the noteworthy statements made by participants that embody the essence of respectful collaboration with tribal people. As defined in the literature review, authentic and respectful collaboration with indigenous communities has many aspects that must be considered, including the four basic principles of collaborative inquiry: 1) The intended result is the creation of new

knowledge that becomes the basis for new action, 2) the members of the community or organization in which the research is conducted are central to the research process, 3) research data come from the experience of the participants and are collected and analyzed systematically, and (4) research purpose is to create change. (Brooks & Watkins, 1994)

As defined by the Indigenous research institute, the principle of respect means that research partners must value and prioritize indigenous epistemologies, knowledge, cultural protocols, and healing practices. Respectfully collaborating with tribal peoples is not a “one-size fits all” endeavor, as all tribal communities are unique and may hold different opinions about what is deemed as respectful collaboration. Most Plains Indian traditions place a significant value on engaging in respectful protocol when engaging in research of any kind. Key words and phrases that were utilized to classify statements included “collaboration”, “respect”, “working together”, and “coming together”.

A tally of the number asterisks in the respect columns of each of the three events shows that the 3 Tipi Day garnered the most significant responses from the interview participants, with a total of 24, and an average of 4 asterisks per person. The Crow Elders Day had 21 total asterisks, for an average of 3.5 asterisks per person, while the Volunteer Day had 18 asterisks and an average of 2.5 asterisks per person.

Reciprocation to Participating Descendant Communities

The third principle of the decolonizing framework is represented under the column entitled “Reciprocity”. Because the realization and success of the collaborative events faced logistical obstacles, the most obvious being that they occurred at a site

approximately 200 – 300 miles away from the home communities of the descendant members involved, the term “Reciprocity” is used in this study to refer to the overall assistance provided by event organizers to participating descendant community members. Participation by tribal peoples within the collaborative events required great time and expense, and therefore the aspects of reciprocity that were most relevant to this study were given the greatest consideration. The one exception made to that general rule in this study comes within the context of tribal participants, who if explicitly stated that they received reciprocity for coming to the event, were acknowledged within the data matrix as reflecting the spirit of that decolonizing methodology.

As argued by Linda Tuhiwai Smith in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, scholars can no longer ignore the people whose cultures they have mined for profit. Smith further states that researchers have, “a responsibility to give back to the community beyond data/knowledge sharing.”

Interviews were transcribed and read through several times to identify significant statements that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Significant statements were grouped into clusters of common meaning, and those themes were then contextualized within a graph to indicate how they correlated to the foundational research questions which focused on decolonizing research methodologies. As identified within the literature review portion of this study, the three fundamental aspects of decolonizing research methodologies – recognition, respect, and reciprocity, are utilized as a priori codes to best interpret the research data and answer the primary research question.

The tabulation of the asterisks in the reciprocity column shows a significantly lower number than that of the Voice or Respect columns. The Crow Elders Day received the most statements signifying reciprocity, with a total of 12, and an average of 2 asterisks per person. The Volunteer Day received a total of 10 asterisks, with an average of 1.4 asterisks per person. 3 Tipi Day recorded only one asterisk, with an average of .16 asterisks per person.

Interpreting the Data Table

Decolonizing Results from 3 Tipi Day. The overall results from the 3 Tipi Day indicate that the strongest part of the day was respectful collaboration that occurred within the tipi setting. As a reflection of that respectful collaboration, the column for recognition of tribal voice also tallied over 20 asterisks. The data suggests that the respectful collaboration during the event allowed the tribal voices to be heard. The area of reciprocity represents a significant hole in the data, and suggests that this area be considered more fully. Without the means to provide transportation or transportation costs to tribal attendees, the most basic and important form of practical reciprocity was essentially missing. Despite this weakness, interviewees did not express themes of dissatisfaction with the overall collaborative events.

Three of the nine participants interviewed, including lead archaeologist Steve Aaberg, and Crow elders William Big Day and Rabbit Knows Gun with the June 4th, 3-Tipi Day, as represented in the table with an NP. Steve Aaberg indicated that he could not attend the 3 Tipi Day because of other commitments.

The graph indicated that most of the participants spoke at length of authentic experiences at the event site that embodied the decolonizing research methodologies of recognizing tribal voices and respectful collaboration, as significant statements represented by asterisks appear in a moderate to high density within those vertical columns.

A significant hole in the matrix is apparent in the vertical column entitled “Reciprocity,” as there was almost a complete absence of significant statements from the interview data that correlated to the principles that defined reciprocity within this study. Only one significant statement that reflected and exemplified reciprocity to tribal participants was recorded and signified within the data matrix. This hole in the data receives further attention in the analysis portion of this study.

Group Results from 3 Tipi Day. The data indicated that the two archaeologists who attended the 3 Tipi Day were most impressed with the respectful collaboration that occurred during the event. The recognition of tribal voice also received a combination of seven asterisks between the two archaeologists. The data suggests that the process of engaging in collaborative discussion was the most impactful aspect of the event to the participating archaeologists. Sitting in a circle in the tipi seems to have naturally facilitated a more respectful collaborative discussion.

The data reflects that the three educators believed that the 3 Tipi Day was successful in achieving respectful collaboration, as well as allowing participants to hear the indigenous voice. Although the idea of intellectual and/or intangible reciprocity was a

theme that emerged frequently, the practical reciprocal relationship with tribal peoples was not articulated by the teachers, as reflected by the data.

The lone tribal elder interviewed who attended the June 4th, 3-Tipi Day made several significant statements in the areas of recognition and respect, but only one recordable comment that embodied the definition of reciprocity that was articulated earlier in this study.

Group Results from Volunteer Day. The overall data trend from the archaeologists indicated a fairly low number of significant statements that correlated to the three categories of decolonization, with only 1.9 asterisks per person in those columns. The data suggests that the archaeologists did not hear tribal voices or engage in respectful collaboration with tribal peoples to any great extent. In fact, the comments made by the archaeologists about the Volunteer Day suggested that the nature and goal of the event was not designed to address pursue either of those objectives. Rather, the day was designed as an educational and “hands-on” event.

The data gathered from interviews with the educators indicated that each of them had experienced significant instances of hearing the tribal voice at the event. Comments made by Dr. Jeanne Moe about the power of Rabbit Knows Gun’s words were representative of this. The respect column also indicated that the educators experienced a strong sense of respectful collaboration with tribal people throughout the day, while the column for reciprocity contained the fewest asterisks, with only five combined.

The tribal elder who attended the Volunteer Day event made several significant statements reflecting his experience of both being heard, and recognizing other tribal

voices at the event. Rabbit Knows Gun also made significant comments that indicated he had experienced respectful collaboration during the July 8th event. His comment about being asked to share his words of wisdom with the group was indicative of his understanding of his role as both collaborator and tribal leader.

Decolonizing Results from Crow Elders Day Three of the nine participants did not attend the Crow Elders Day, including Project Archaeology Director, Dr. Jeanne Moe, and Crow elders Howard Boggess and Rabbit Knows Gun.

The data table indicated that the three archaeologists who participated in the Crow Elders Day each experienced a strong sense of hearing tribal voices at the event. Each archaeologist recorded five asterisks per person in their column corresponding with the recognition of tribal voice. Respectful collaboration also received a high number of tallies in each of the columns, with an average of 3.6 asterisks per person. The lowest number of asterisks was recorded in the Reciprocity column, with an average of 1.8 asterisks per person.

The two educators who participated in the Crow Elders Day also indicated that they experienced a strong sense of recognizing the tribal voice at the event, with an average of five asterisks per person in the Voice column. The data suggests that because there were tribal voices in abundance that day, the educators took advantage of the opportunity to be attentive listeners. The column for reciprocity again received the fewest asterisks, with an average of 2 asterisks per person.

The Crow elder who participated in the event on August 2nd made several significant statements that indicated his appreciation of the event and the respectful

manner in which he and his fellow elders were treated. His responses tallied an average of 3 asterisks per column, which reflected an overall satisfaction with the decolonizing nature of the event. As William Big Day said, “It was good.”

Invariant Themes

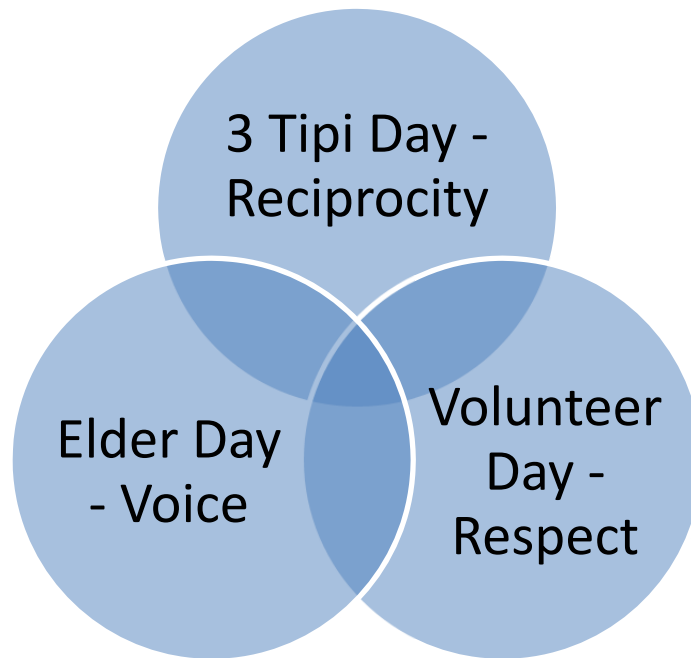


Figure 15. The Interrelationship of Collaborative Events.

Invariant themes that arose within the study are represented by the venne diagram above. The place in the middle of the venne diagram signifies the “sweet spot,” in which the three “R’s” are crystalized and encapsulated by transcendent moments. Despite the fact that there was little data from the interviews that corresponded directly to the theme of reciprocity as defined within this study, Mike Sweeney and his son’s generous donation of time, money and hard work, gave the event what it needed to be successful. The essence of Mike Sweeney’s effort on June 4th is tied to his deep connection and rich

relationships with the Crow people. Because of his feelings of respect, appreciation, and affection, he wanted to reciprocate his good fortune towards the Crow community. The tipis and lunch that he provided to the group on June 4th was the essence of giving back, and it is the underlying strength in tribal communities.

The Volunteer Day also provided a key moment of respect towards indigenous people. Rabbit Knows Gun was given respect and deference by the collaborative organizers, which ultimately allowed his voice to be recognized. This simple, yet profound act is at the heart of decolonizing research methodologies; deference to tribal peoples.

The Crow Elder Day event on August 2nd provided a noteworthy example of hearing the native voice. The apology that was issued to the Crow elders on that day, on behalf of Steve Aaberg, demonstrated the power of listening and responding to the voices of tribal peoples with compassion, dignity, and deference. Steve Aaberg embodied all of those qualities when he sought to confront the issue with respectful understanding and great sympathy.

Taken together, the three moments that converge at the “sweet spot” of the venne diagram exemplify the spirit and body of respectful collaboration. These moments occurred throughout the events, within and among the numerous individual participants, and they cannot all be recorded and verified. Yet, the examples shown here are indicative of what is possible when the stage is set properly for collaborative inquiry.

One invariant theme that arose among the interviews with the Crow elders was their desire to someday see an interpretative center of some sort reconstructed at the site

of the Absaroka Agency. The idea of having a museum built on the same foundations that the original Absaroka Agency fort sat on was a compelling prospect to the tribal elders, and one that struck a deep chord with them; using the Agency to both build on the future, and commemorate the Crow tribe's history in the region.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, SUGGESTIONS

Answering the Research Questions

To answer the three research questions posed at the beginning of this study, the interview data was analyzed using Colaizzi's method of qualitative analysis. This method required that the interviews be transcribed and read through several times to identifying significant statements and themes. Meanings were formulated from the significant statements and phrases, and codes were applied to those statements.

How did the Events at the Absaroka Agency
Reflect and Exemplify Collaborative
Archaeological Inquiry and Decolonization?

The unique nature of each event that occurred in the summer of 2011 is an obvious and important factor to consider when attempting answering this question. In their own specific ways, the three events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011 reflected and exemplified collaborative archaeological inquiry and decolonization on many different and important levels.

Regarding the process of recognizing indigenous voices, the data suggests that all three events both invited, and provided space for, the voice of tribal people. All of the participants made several statements that reflected a strong experience of clearly hearing, and often being emotionally and intellectually moved by, tribal voices. The data indicated that the event with the strongest recognition of tribal voices was the August 2nd Crow Elders Day. The 3 Tipi Day also received many statements reflecting the

participants experience of hearing tribal voices, and despite the fact that the Volunteer Day was not designed to focus on tribal voices, it still received several statements reflecting the experience of participants who were strongly moved by tribal voice.

The data suggests that recognition of tribal voices is an essential step in the overall collaborative process, and must be considered beforehand in order to ensure that tribal voices are invited and given ample opportunity to participate and be heard within the collaborative process. Tribal people must first be invited and given space to be heard before they have the opportunity to be recognized.

The data indicated that the 3 Tipi Day had the most success at providing an opportunity for participants to engage in respectful collaboration. Within a circle and under the shelter of a comfortable and well lit tipi, the data indicated that the collaborative discussions unfolded with respect and deference. The other events had strong moments and instances of respectful collaboration, but neither of them made respectful collaboration the main goal of their events in the same way that the June 4th 3 Tipi Day did. An all important aspect to the respectful collaboration was the space that was provided for it to occur. Without the tipis, there would have been no shade or shelter from the elements, and no natural context for conversations to occur. The tipis not only provided an even circle for participants to sit within, but they also maximized the number of participants, making the conversations more manageable and ultimately more understandable.

The issue of reciprocity within the context of decolonizing collaborative inquiry can be complex and have widely varied meanings. As defined in this study, reciprocity is

the basic process of providing tribal collaborators with as much or more resources when they leave the event as when they arrived at the event. In other words, tribal collaborators should not leave an event with less than what they came with, either monetarily or otherwise. The event that garnered the most asterisks in the reciprocity column was the Crow Elders Day, and it is clear why this is the case. The Elders Day, which provided transportation and lunch for over 25 Crow tribal elders at the site of the Absaroka Agency, was sponsored in full by the Bureau of Land Management

What did their Participation in the Collaborative
Archaeological and Educational Processes at the
Absaroka Agency Mean to those Individuals?

Although every participant had a unique individual experience and interpreted the events from their own perspective, the data indicates that the specific meaning taken from the collective experiences was remarkably similar. All of the participants spoke about the positive and important aspects of diverse people coming together to share and learn from each other. A common theme that was voiced by everyone was a sense of gratitude that they were able to participate in the events, especially among the tribal elders.

One perspective emphasized by the tribal elders was that their presence at the events was an important aspect in the educational process of non-Indians about the history of the Crow tribe. The tribal elders wanted to be at the events to have their voices heard and to set the record straight, from their point of view. Although the archaeologists and educators also voiced a similar theme, none of them spoke about correcting the historical record for the Crow Tribe in the same manner that the elders did.

The most significant meaning expressed by everyone involved in the process was the place in history that their collaborative efforts would hold. The tribal elders voiced the strong desire to protect the sight and build a museum of some sort to honor the memory of the Crow presence in that area. The archaeologists understood the incredibly unique nature of the excavation and the need to make the most of the opportunity. The educators viewed the meaning of their participation as both professionally and personally rewarding. All of the groups understood the importance of breaking ground with new collaborations, and building towards a future where collaborations such as those at the Absaroka Agency are more common and frequent.

What did Participants Experience during the
Collaborative Events that Occurred at the
Absaroka Agency 2011 Summer Excavations?

Although most of the participants expressed a common refrain of “not knowing what to expect”, prior to the events, none of them expressed disappointment with any aspects of the collaborations. In fact, most participants made statements that reflected a personally rewarding experience. The most visceral of the experiences were uncovered in the interviews, and it was those experiences that allow everyone involved to reflect on their meaning and significance. The sights of the tipis, the sounds of the tribal elders, the smells of the barbecue lunch and the feel of the summer heat were all critical components to the overall experience that people took from the events. The experience of being at the site of the Agency seemed to provide the energy to spark our excitement and kick start the collaborative process. The land at the Absaroka Agency spoke to everyone who spent

time on it during the summer of 2011, and to the Crow elders it was saying, “build it and they will come.”

The most compelling experience that the participants articulated within the interviews was the experience of overwhelming emotion that the events brought forth within them and others who were involved. The power of the raw emotions was a surprise to most people, but after further reflection most viewed the spontaneity of the collaborative moments as surprising, and not necessarily the emotions themselves. Yet, it was the emotions that brought the excavation and the history of the place to life for most of those involved. Experiencing the heavy emotions brought forth during the collaborative events at the Absaroka Agency also brought forth a new understanding and insight for everyone involved in the process.

Essential Vignettes

Following the identification and graphing of significant statements, the statements are compared and contrasted, and then triangulated to reveal and illuminate the most symbolic instances of the collaborative experience. These are the quintessential moments that best defined collaborative indigenous archaeological inquiry, and captured the essence of the decolonizing methodologies characteristics identified within the literature review and on the data table. The meaning and significance of these seminal moments are explored here within the context of a series of descriptive vignettes.

To conclude the data analysis process, a summary discussion of the collaborative events aims to crystalize the textural and structural qualities of the participants’

experiences and offer a final reflection regarding the implications of the findings for the field of decolonizing collaborative research.

The Apology

The public apology that occurred during the Crow Elders Day event on August 2nd represented a seminal moment of the summer collaborations. Although it could be considered a problematic encounter, those individuals who participated in the apology seemed to gain some positive and healing qualities from it. The quotes from Steve Aaberg and Crystal Alegria demonstrate the significance with which both viewed the apology. The quotes also indicate the transcendent nature of the occurrence; it seemed to be a larger than life moment that was inescapable.

I was talking with the gal, this elder; she was very emotional when she said, “You have to do this. We have to get something good coming from all of this.” I will remember that for the rest of my life, the visit and that particular moment because I can say without question that I’ve never experienced anything like that on any other site I’ve worked on. It was something...From here on, I think I’ll always remind myself that what we’re doing goes beyond science. - Steve Aaberg, Lead Absaroka Agency Archaeologist

She (Crow elder) heard of a story where someone came to a place like this in Oklahoma, and she said that what they did at that place is the white people and the Indian people got together in that place and they talked through this and they made apologies to each other. And she thought that’s what needed to happen here, today... That’s when Steve went up to Haywood, and she said that Steve and Haywood had to do this together. They then had this really powerful interchange... and he wanted to apologize on behalf of all white people for those things that had happened. And Haywood took it from there... their digging now will go better because they had asked permission. I think Haywood said that. To me, that was the most important part of the day. - Crystal Alegria, Project Archaeology Program Coordinator

By around noon, on August 2nd the relentless summer sun had taken its toll on the Crow elders and the rest of the participants, and the group began to make its way back towards their vehicles to drive to lunch. That's when an elder Crow woman approached Crystal Alegria with a message for the archaeologist, Steve Aaberg. Standing close by, I heard the woman telling Crystal that "we need to do this," but couldn't make out exactly what it was we need to do. When Steve Aaberg began to speak a few moments later, I was captivated to discover that the woman wanted Steve to apologize on behalf of his culture for the injustices that had occurred at the site of the Agency. While Steve Aaberg prepared to deliver his apology, the elder lady gathered the group in a semi-circle to hear him out, along with Heywood Big Day, who said a prayer of reconciliation out of respect for Steve's goodwill and generosity.

Watching the apology unfold felt surreal, and the incident was made even more extraordinary by the way in which it was manifested; the elder lady who prompted the impromptu moment was being directed and advised over her cell phone by an Oklahoman preacher. I considered the audacious nature of the exchange, and afterwards considered the fact that the moment would have been impossible 20 years ago, before cell phones became common commodities. Both unpredictable in its arrival and jarring in its raw power, the apology was truly an unforgettable moment for everyone involved.

The Reconciliation

The power of collaboration is revealed most profoundly within the human relationships formed and continually strengthened by them. The Reconciliation describes another subtle, yet groundbreaking moment that occurred at the Museum of the

Beartooths on the July 8th Volunteer Day. The moment captured the essence of the recognizing tribal voice, as Rabbit Knows Gun spoke to a group about the meaning of history and how we can use our history to propel ourselves into the future. Rabbit's voice hit the heart of those who were in attendance, and their quotes indicate the power of his words.

Well, for Rabbit, I almost cried several times. His words were so meaningful and so validating for the work I've been trying to do for so long: that we've wanted to collaborate with descendant members, we have these laws that we have to do something about - we have compliance with these laws - but at the same time, really thinking about the human elements, about what does this really mean in the overall picture of things. The phrase that I tried to get across is that there's the law, but beyond that, by taking care of these places that are our heritage, we're taking care of each other. - Dr. Jeanne Moe, founder of Project Archaeology

Being involved as a speaker at any of these events was more like an effort to help reconcile our peoples. Our thoughts, feelings, desires to have history done correctly. In the past, most of history was done by what was called the conquerors. Even though we were not a conquered tribe per se, we were still treated like one. We have treaties going back to 1825. It was something especially important to the Crows to have their say, so that they can see their side of the view. - Rabbit Knows Gun, Crow Artist

Like he said, a beginning for friendships and relationships, and learning more and more about the site and its history. Going forward, rather than forgetting about the site and the bad things that happened, moving forward and recording it...Some of us don't get any sleep, because we're thinking about researching more pieces, so it's difficult to figure it all out. There's a lot of information out there, and how do we work together to gather it all? I don't know. - Penny Redli, Executive Director, Museum of the Beartooths

Rabbit Knows Gun's unrehearsed and spontaneous speech at the Museum of the Beartooths on July 8th, was powerful enough to bring attendees to tears and make their life's work flash before their eyes. There may be nothing more moving in the public sphere than a moment of authentic reconciliation between people, and even more

symbolically, between cultures. The power that reconciliation has to renew the spirit and bolster one's belief in the future cannot be understated, as all of the participants alluded to in some form or another. On a personal level, reconciliation goes far beyond academic decolonization. While decolonization is often an intellectual endeavor, reconciliation is a decidedly emotional event, and in the end must be one of the ultimate goals of decolonizing research methodologies.

The Interlocutor

The Interlocutor vignette focuses less on a singular moment, and more on completing the full-circle trip that began in Chapter 1 of this study. Penny Redli is the interlocutor of this vignette, and she gathered the information and set the stage for me to complete the circle by returning to my great-great-grandparents homestead that had been lost. Her contributions as museum leader, historical detective, and all-around collaborator, helped to define the character of the 2011 summer events, and the quotes taken from her interview display her inclusive disposition.

But I was not overwhelmed, but excited to meet more people, and of course I invited them to the museum, which was not part of the plan. So they all came here, and I talked to Heywood...William Big Day's been here twice, Aaron Brien - I talked to him a couple times on the phone. So that has grown into more relationships and connections; more people working together. And in fact, when I talked to Marvin (Stewart) that day, he was upset that he wasn't able to go that day.... I have worked with Steve Auberg early on, because he and I talked about how cool a model of the Crow Agency would be. I've worked with Mardell Plainfeather quite a bit, and then I knew Howard from being on the Museum Association of Montana. So I had some small connections, and those were kind of bigger groups. I worked with Crystal and Project Archaeology to put on our part here at the Museum.... Of course I knew Paul Shea for a long time; all the people he worked with ended up coming to our June 4th event. So here

again, we're all coming together. - Penny Redli, Museum of the Beartooths Executive Director

As the quote above demonstrates, Museum of the Beartooths Director, Penny Redli does much more than just manage exhibits. Penny builds bridges between people and communities, and between the past the present and she does so with an unassuming and magnanimous style of leadership. Her low-key management and headstrong advocacy of the Crow Indian presence and perspective within the Museum of the Beartooths, has endeared her to her colleagues throughout the state and to the Crow community. Neither the June 4th “Day of Commemoration and Meaning,” nor the July 8 – 10th, “Absaroka Agency Volunteer Days”, could have occurred without her support and participation. Penny approaches her role as museum director with boundless enthusiasm and good humor, both deciphering local history, and then connecting local people with that knowledge – which is what she did for me.

Through a combination of happenstance and determined curiosity, Penny discovered, while attending a wedding reception in August of 2011, the exact site of the original cabin where my great-great-grandparents, Sarah and Thomas Shane, had lived and headquartered their 320-acre ranch. She wasted little time in sharing this timely and amazing find with me, as she was well aware of my compelling interest in the site of the original Shane Ranch. In preparation for my visit, Penny compiled a file folder for my family archives. It included about a dozen photos from the 1880's, as well as maps of my ancestors land holdings, wedding certificates, death certificates, wills, and even land sale receipts, all documenting the life of my great-great-grandmother, Sarah.

Death Certificate

1. Name: Patrick Shane 2. Residence: Shane Ranch

3. Date of Birth: 1899 4. Date of Death: 1999

5. Place of Birth: Stillwater, Mont. 6. Place of Death: Shane Ranch

7. Burial: Yes 8. Date of Burial: 1999

9. Name of Burial: Patrick Shane 10. Name of Burial: Shane Ranch

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Figure 16. Death Certificate.

The wheels for this particular trip had been set into motion long before Crystal Alegria pulled her car up to my house on a cloudy and blustery day in early November to drive down the Yellowstone to Columbus. The collaborative team that accompanied me to the Shane Ranch included Crystal, Marsha Fulton, and Stores Bishop, and we met Penny and her partner in local history, Patty Alpine, at the museum before driving to the actual site and meeting with the current landowners. After being warmly welcomed and invited to walk around the ranch at our leisure, our team began exploring the area just downstream from the house, among the wooded flood plain along the Shane Creek and near the Stillwater River; ostensibly the same area where my great-great-grandfather and his two sons were buried over 100 years ago. We surveyed the ground intently, searching for traces of the graves we knew were there.

Having been there once before and surveyed the area with Steve Aaberg, Patty and Penny pointed to a depression in the ground next to a huge cottonwood tree that they thought could be the spot. We were quiet as we considered the possibility, wondering if we would ever know for sure if Tom Shane was buried here. It was close to the Stillwater River, and fit the description of where he probably was laid to rest, and that was the best we could do that day.



Figure 17. Shane Doyle poses with his great-great grandfather's wagon.

We spent a few more moments by the river before slowly walking back up the Shane Creek, to our parked cars. Along the way Penny and Patty took us on a slight detour to see the remnants of an old wagon sticking out from a cut bank along the Shane Creek. It was my great-great-grandfather's wagon, with the wooden axles still holding the steel wheels intact. I climbed into the creek embankment to touch the wagon's wheel and let the ladies take my picture with my cell phone, which I quickly texted to my mom and uncle. They both responded by asking me to inquire into getting the wagon, but

Penny was way ahead of me on that, and the answer she'd received months earlier was "no." I wasn't surprised, but I wasn't disappointed either, because although I wouldn't get a wagon wheel out of the deal, I certainly had come full circle.

Penny Redli's influence and ability are some of the most important reasons why I was able to discover and rediscover my great-great-grandparents home site. As an interlocutor, Penny represents an invaluable leader, without whom many relationships would not be developed. Her role at the events is just a small portion of her much larger role, one that she excels at and embraces. Inviting and recognizing indigenous voices, respectfully collaborating with them, and offering as much reciprocity as she can, Penny's interaction with the Crow people and her inclusion of the Crow perspective within the museum setting embodies both the spirit and practice of decolonization.

The Voice in the Dark Illuminated

The Voice in the Dark Illuminated vignette describes the captivating story of Crow historian Howard Boggess' prediction that the foundational structure of the Absaroka Agency was still intact under the alfalfa field, waiting to be discovered. Howard's presence at the 3 Tipi Day was especially significant because of his belief and prediction about the archaeological remnants of the fort, and what made his outspoken comments even more remarkable was that they were recorded on video during the collaborative discussion.

Yeah. He did a talk at the school one night, and we went to that. He said lots of things that night that I disagreed with; it was kind of a disagreeable meeting for me because of the things he was saying. He was saying that there was nothing up there, because it had been plowed for over 100 years...Well Ft. Custer, that's been farmed for how many years, and I can

still show you the path through every privy, I can show you where every privy was set and where every building was located. He kept saying he wanted the site to move to the east and go up to the middle of the fort, and I totally disagreed with him. I said, you need to go around that -- whatever the cost is, you pay it. That's the way it is. - Howard Boggess, Crow elder and Historian

We had talked about that before, because that was the last place we started, was the main compound area... we, before we started, we weren't expecting to find any foundation... When we found it, the place was just buzzing. It was so exciting, I mean, it was amazing that it was still there, and it wasn't particularly deep either. We were probably 40 or 50 centimeters deep... We found every single corner of the foundation, and even the original gate and wood from the fencepost was still in the ground. Finding it changed everything. - Victoria Bochniak, site Archaeologist

I know Howard Boggess was the main talker in our teepee but that's because he was an elder and he, that was his place, and everyone in the teepee felt like that was his place, and our place was to listen, because I think in any culture, people understand that you should respect that oral tradition, respect your elders. So we listened. And I thought that was pretty interesting. - Crystal Alegria

Crow elder and historian Howard Boggess knew all along that the Absaroka Agency foundation was still intact and waiting to be unearthed. Whether Howard's belief was based on solid evidence or made tangible scientific sense is open to interpretation, but because of the power of video and audio recordings, there is indisputable proof that Howard was saying something that none of the professional archaeologists who worked on the site either believed or dared to say out loud. Howard claimed that the 130 year old Absaroka Agency foundation was sitting beneath about two feet of soil in a field that had been plowed for over 100 years – still in perfectly preserved.

Victoria Bochniak's quote verifies the shockwaves that the discovery sent through the excavation crew, and how those same shockwaves are still reverberating. As the MDT considers the next steps in the widening of Highway 78, the foundations of the

Agency will likely be a prime consideration moving forward, and no one should be happier about that than Howard Boggess.

The 3 Tipi Day allowed Howard to tell the world what he thought, uncensored and emboldened. Nearly every angle of Howard's experience at the 3 Tipi Day represents the decolonization of collaborative research inquiry. All of us in the tipi that day heard Howard's words, and no one was left unmoved by his passion and his compassion. Yet, none of us could have realized how much wisdom and truth he was actually imparting when he motioned downward with his hands while he sat in the tipi that day, "It's all right here. We're sitting on it."

Vignette Conclusion

The four vignettes that are highlighted in this study were selected because they personified the essential elements of the respectful collaborative experience. The decolonizing ideals of recognizing indigenous voice, respectful collaboration, and reciprocity are all embodied within these essential occurrences. Although each of the three decolonizing research qualities is unique, they all share a common thread of dignified interaction among people. Taken in a greater sense, these occurrences of dignified interactions between people who step across cultural borders become sacred moments that guide the collaborative process moving forward.

Discussion & Final Thoughts

Reflections on the Events

All of the events had great strengths that should be noted for future collaborative archaeological endeavors. Taking successful strategies from these events and applying them to the on-going collaborative process is a key to building stronger relationships among everyone involved.

The greatest structural strengths of the 3-Tipi Day were the tipis themselves and the on-site barbecue lunch. The tipis provided a number of significant elements to the collaborative process. First, they provided a beautiful and authentic symbol of the Crow culture from within the discussions would occur. Secondly, people sitting inside of each tipi were naturally situated in a circle, which provided a convenient and open structure for collaborative discussion. Finally, the lodges provided shade from the elements, including the intense Montana summer sun, and allowed participants to visit comfortably. The barbecue lunch added to the comfortable and camp-like feel of the event, all of which added to the sense that we were honoring and celebrating the site itself.

The strength of the July 8th Volunteer Day was in its diversity of experience. Participants in the event spent the morning at the Museum of the Beartooths learning about the processes of archaeology as well as the history of the Agency from educators and tribal members such as myself and Rabbit Knows Gun. Eating our own sack lunches on the ground at the excavation site gave the entire group a chance to visit and engage in an impromptu collaborative discussion about the history and legacy of the Absaroka Agency. Rabbit Knows gun offered a prayer for the ground and the archaeologists, and

asked that good things would come from the dig. Finally, volunteers were allowed to engage in first-hand archeological excavation.

The two greatest strengths of the August 2nd Crow Elders Day were the connections made with the Crow Elders, and the monetary support that was provided to pay for the moderately high costs associated with the transportation and feeding of over 25 people. Mark Sant from the BLM utilized his relationships with both William Big Day and Steve Aaberg to provide a nexus point for connecting the Crow elders with the scientific community. Through recognizing the Crow voice, then engaging respectfully with the Crow community, and finally reciprocating the Crow elders by bringing them to the site of the excavation, the organizers of the day's events followed a decolonizing methodologies framework.

Future archaeological collaborators throughout Montana, the nation, and the world, can look to the events at the Absaroka Agency for lessons in decolonizing collaborative inquiry. Meaningful collaborations are time consuming endeavors that usually move slowly, if they move at all. Setting the stage for respectful collaboration is the key, and when a respectful protocol is achieved, there is no failure in the research, only varying measures of success.

The Power of Relationship

The most powerful and recurrent themes that this study has revealed are importance of establishing and nurturing the growth of respectful relationships within tribal communities. Each of the three events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011 achieved success largely because of the strong relationships

that provided the foundation for the collaborative events. My experience as the lead organizer for the 3 Tipi Day was a remarkable testament to the power of relationships, especially within tribal communities. Nearly all of the individuals who came from Bozeman to participate in 3 Tipi Day were my professional colleagues and personal friends, and none of them received any monetary compensation for their time or travel expenses. The people who came from the east to attend the 3 Tipi Day had strong historic ties to their family history in the place. Despite an overall lack of resources the event materialized from the will and goodwill of friends and family.

Shawn Wilson, in his 2008 publication entitled “Research is Ceremony, Indigenous Research Methods”, writes that the foundation of tribal indigenous epistemology is relationality, and that indigenous scholars must build the epistemological beliefs in egalitarianism and inclusiveness. These values are also at the heart of collaborative inquiry and collaboration in a general sense, and they also are inclusive of the three “R”s utilized in this study: Recognition, respect, and reciprocity. Wilson adds another R in his research by including the term “relationality”, to refer to the dispositional foundation of indigenous knowledge.

The Crow phrase for extended family, “Aashamaaliaxxlaa”, which translates as “as driftwood lodges” suggests the deep-rooted understanding that there is strength and security against the relentless challenges of life if one is connected within a complex and interwoven community. Adult adoptions, which remain a common form of community ceremony in the 21st century, reflect and embody this belief system. The scientific and philosophical foundations of these oral traditions are rooted in a disposition that

emphasizes the responsibility of acknowledging relationships as the most important consideration in our daily lives.

Decolonizing research methodologies can be compartmentalized as a useful and important academic exercise for researchers, but “going native” means putting relationship at the forefront the agenda. Tribal traditions value relationships with people, but individual, familial, and tribal relationships with the land, water, and other parts of nature are also included within that web of consideration. Broadening that web of intellectual and spiritual considerations is how knowledge and wisdom was acquired in traditional societies such as the Crow, and the wisdom of valuing and recognizing relationships includes a consideration of the past and of the future; a natural consideration among archaeologists.

The strength and the success of the decolonizing methodologies can be gauged by the foresight, care, and consideration, which is displayed and offered by the collaborative organizers. Tribal peoples who have been raised within an oral tradition that values relationship are sensitive and cognizant of its importance, and can clearly see when collaborators are authentic and come with a generous spirit. In these instances, the efforts are successful, no matter the outcome, as it is the means, and not the ends, that justify the relationship.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IRB INFORMED CONSENT (a)

IRB Informed Consent (a)

Establishing the Foundations for a Collaborative Archaeological Inquiry at the Absarokee Agency

Consent Form

Shane Doyle

Michael Brody

Montana State University Education Department

406-209-0109

shanemrdoyle@yahoo.com

All of the events that occur today will be recorded with audio and video equipment and used for the purpose of creating a more informed and meaningful educational opportunity for Montana students and the general public. After audio and video is anonymously transcribed, all electronic recordings will be destroyed. The stories and other opinions shared in at this event will be used as part of a study to help understand how to create better collaborative partnerships between all the stakeholders of a historical place under archaeological investigation.

What the study is about: This study is designed to gain a better understanding of how a collaborative meeting between members of the Crow Tribe, the local Absarokee/Columbus community, lead archaeologists for the Montana Department of Transportation, the Montana Historical Society, the Office of Public Instruction, and some Montana public schools can provide information to better interpret and educate the public about the unique history and cultural significance of the Absaroka Agency. Your voice is what brings life to this study.

What you will be asked to do: Your participation is voluntary, and although the events will be recorded with audio/visual equipment, any comments you make will be recorded as anonymous. Small group discussions will focus on three questions about the Absaroka Agency.

- 1) How are you connected to this place, the site of the Absaroka Agency, and why is it an important place to you?
- 2) Do you know any historical stories from your family or friends about the Absaroka Agency?
- 3) What should we do to inform more people in Montana about the important history of the Absaroka Agency?

If you are currently a student, participation or non-participation will not affect your grade or class standing in any class. You may also be asked to participate in a short, post-event interview about your opinion and perspectives on the event and the collaboration that occurred related to the event. Again, participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits: There is a possibility that one or more of the focus group and/or interview questions may cause you to feel uncomfortable or emotional. Although this event is being held in a spirit of positive collaboration, it is asking people to speak about times, places, and people that may create a strong emotional response. If you are upset by any question or feel uncomfortable at any point in time you may ask that recordings be stopped, or simply stop participating in the event.

Participation in this event may benefit you because you will have the opportunity to share your stories and opinions about the place, and learn from others who have an important personal connection to the site of the Absaroka Agency. Results from this study will be used to document and improve future archaeological collaborations in the state of Montana and elsewhere.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may choose to leave or simply not contribute to the discussion. Participating in this study does not mean that you are giving up any of your legal rights.

Who is funding this project: This event has no formal funding, and lunch is being sponsored by the researcher, Shane Doyle. There is no cost for you to participate in this study.

Please ask questions: If you have any questions regarding this research please contact Shane Doyle at (406) 209-0605 or at shanemrdoyle@montana.edu. If you have additional questions about the rights of human subjects please contact Mark Quinn, Chair of the International Review Board, at (406) 994-4707 or mquinn@montana.edu.

Your answers will be confidential: No names will be used to identify any participants who attended this event. All audio and video recordings made of the event will be used only for the purposes of this study, and nothing else. Recordings will be archived in a locked cabinet for one year before being destroyed to maintain privacy and ensure that any recordings are not reproduced in any way.

Injury and compensation statement: In the event that your participation in this study results in injury, there is no compensation available from MSU, Project Archaeology, OPI, MDT, or the researcher.

If you have questions or want a copy or summary of the study results: Contact the researcher at the email address or phone number above. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

1. For one's own participation:

"AUTHORIZATION: I have read the above and understand the discomforts, inconvenience and risk of this study. I, _____ (name of subject), agree to participate in this research. I understand that I may later refuse to participate, and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Signed: _____

Investigator: _____

Date: _____

2. For the participation of a child or other person not able to give consent for themselves [e.g., someone who cannot read or is otherwise incompetent]:

"AUTHORIZATION: I have read the above and understand the discomforts, inconveniences and risks of this study. I, _____ (name of parent or guardian), related to the subject as _____ relationship, agree to the participation of _____ (name of subject) in this research. I understand that the subject or I may later refuse participation in this research and that the subject, through his/her own action or mine, may withdraw from the research at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Child's Assent Signature: _____

Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

IRB INFORMED CONSENT (b)

IRB Informed Consent (b)

“A Phenomenological Exploration of Three Collaborative Indigenous Archaeological Events at the Absarokee Agency”

What the study is about

This study is meant to examine the subjective experiences of the archaeologists, educators, and tribal members who participated in the collaborative archaeological events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011. The opinions, insights and overall perceptions of the participants will be considered within the context of decolonizing research methodologies experiences of these participants. Your participation will not remain anonymous.

What you will be asked to do

You are being asked to participate in an interview. This interview will focus on three questions about the Absaroka Agency:

- 1) How did the event/events at the Absaroka site reflect and exemplify decolonization and archaeological inquiry?
- 2) What did you experience at the collaborative event/events you participated in at the Absaroka Agency?
- 3) What personal and professional meaning did you take from your collaborative experience at the Absaroka Agency?

This interview will be recorded with audio equipment and used for the purposes of a doctoral research study focusing on three separate collaborative indigenous archaeological events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011. After audio is transcribed, all electronic recordings will be destroyed.

Risks and Benefits

Your participation will not remain anonymous, as your name and voice will be cited within the published research study.

There is a possibility that one or more of the interview questions may cause you to feel uncomfortable or emotional. If you are upset by any question or feel uncomfortable at any point in time you may ask that recordings be stopped, or simply stop participating in the interview. Remember that your participation will not remain anonymous, so your views and opinions will become public record.

Participation in this event may benefit you because you will have the opportunity to share your stories and opinions about the collaborative events that occurred at the Absaroka Agency during the summer of 2011. Results from this study will be used inform future archaeological and indigenous collaborations in the state of Montana and elsewhere.

Taking part is voluntary

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may choose to stop the interview at any time without any consequences whatsoever. If you are currently a student, participation or non-participation will not affect your grade or class standing in any class. Participating in this study does not mean that you are giving up any of your legal rights.

Who is funding this project?

This research is funded solely by the researcher and has no other organization or institutional sponsor.

Please ask questions: If you have any follow-up questions regarding this research please contact Shane Doyle at (406) 209-0605 or at shanemrdoyle@yahoo.com. If you have additional questions about the rights of human subjects please contact Mark Quinn, Chair of the International Review Board, at (406) 994-4707 or mquinn@montana.edu.

All audio recordings made of the interview will be used only for the purposes of this study, and nothing else. Recordings will be archived in a locked cabinet for one year before being destroyed to maintain privacy and ensure that any recordings are not reproduced in any way.

Injury and compensation statement: In the event that your participation in this study results in injury, there is no compensation available from MSU, or the researcher.

1. All interview participants must read and sign the statement below:

"AUTHORIZATION: I have read the above and understand the discomforts, inconvenience and risk of this study. I, _____ (name of subject), agree to participate in this research. I understand that I may later refuse to participate, and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Signed: _____

Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Request for Designation of Research as Exempt from the
Requirement of Institutional Review Board Review
(10/14/2011)

THIS AREA IS FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD USE ONLY. DO NOT WRITE IN THIS
AREA.

Confirmation Date:

Application Number:

DATE: 11/16/11

I. INVESTIGATOR:

Name: Shane Doyle
406-209-0605
Shanemrdoyle@yahoo.com

Department/Complete Address:

Department of Education
Montana State University
P.O. Box 172880
Bozeman, MT 59717-2880
Tel: (406) 994-3120
Fax: (406) 994-3261
E-mail: educ@montana.edu
Location: 222 Reid Hall

DATE TRAINING COMPLETED: 10/20/06 [Required training: CITI
training; see website for link] Name of Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Michael Brody
(if above is a student)

Signature

II. TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: A Phenomenological Exploration of the
Archaeological Collaborations Occurring at the Absarokee Agency

III. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH METHODS.

My research methods will closely follow the systematic procedural steps for transcendental phenomenological research developed by the psychologist Moustakas.

In-depth interviews will be conducted with the archaeologists and educators who were most closely involved in organizing the collaborative events, as well as with Crow tribal elders who participated at the events.

Three general questions will be asked: 1) how did the event/events at the Absaroka site reflect and exemplify decolonization and archaeological inquiry? 2) What did you experience at the collaborative event/events you participated in at the Absaroka Agency? 3) What personal and professional meaning did you take from your collaborative experience at the Absaroka Agency?

The purpose of these open ended questions is to elicit an authentic and richly contextualized descriptive story about the participants' experience. The descriptive data gathered is then analyzed within the context of both the structural and contextual nature of the person's experience.

IV. RISKS AND INCONVENIENCES TO SUBJECTS:

Your answers will not be confidential: This research will be available to the public and will include names and other individual information by which you could be identified.

There is a possibility that one or more of the interview questions may cause you to feel uncomfortable or elicit an emotional response. You may choose at any time to not answer a question or to stop the interview.

Participation in this event may benefit you because you will have the opportunity to share your stories and opinions about the Absaroka Agency. Results from this study will be used to document and improve future archaeological collaborations throughout the state of Montana and elsewhere.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may choose to leave or simply not contribute to the discussion. Participating in this study does not mean that you are giving up any of your legal rights.

Who is funding this project: This event has no formal funding, and lunch is being sponsored by the researcher, Shane Doyle. There is no cost for you to participate in this study.

Please ask questions: If you have any further questions regarding this research please contact Shane Doyle at (406) 209-0605 or at shanemrdoyle@montana.edu. If you have additional questions about the rights of human subjects please contact Mark Quinn, Chair of the International Review Board, at (406) 994-4707 or mquinn@montana.edu.

Injury and compensation statement: In the event that your participation in this study results in injury, there is no compensation available from MSU, or the researcher.

V. SUBJECTS:

- A. Expected numbers of subjects: 10
- B. Will research involve minors (age <18 years)? No
- C. Will research involve prisoners? No
- D. Will research involve any specific ethnic, racial, religious, etc. groups of people?
Yes, Crow Tribal Elders who participated in the collaborative archaeological events at the Absaroka Agency
- E. Will a consent form be used? Yes

VI. FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING SURVEYS OR QUESTIONNAIRES:

(Be sure to indicate on each instrument, survey or questionnaire that participation is voluntary.)

- A. Is information being collected about:
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Sexual behavior? | No |
| Criminal behavior? | No |
| Alcohol or substance abuse? | No |
| Matters affecting employment? | No |
| Matters relating to civil litigation? | No |
- B. Will the information obtained be completely anonymous, with no identifying information linked to the responding subjects? Yes
- C. If identifying information will be linked to the responding subjects, how will the subjects be identified? (Please circle or bold your answers)
- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| By name | Yes | No |
| By code | Yes | No |
| By other identifying information | Yes | No |
- D. Does this survey utilize a standardized and/or validated survey tool/questionnaire? No

VII. FOR RESEARCH BEING CONDUCTED IN A CLASSROOM SETTING:

- A. Will research involve blood draws? No

VIII. FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING PATIENT INFORMATION, MATERIALS, BLOOD OR TISSUE

SPECIMENS RECEIVED FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS:

A. Are these materials linked in any way to the patient (code, identifier, or other link to patient identity)? Yes No

B. Are you involved in the design of the study for which the materials are being collected? Yes No

C. Will your name appear on publications resulting from this research? Yes No

D. Where are the subjects from whom this material is being collected?

E. Has an IRB at the institution releasing this material reviewed the proposed project? (If 'Yes', please provide documentation.) Yes No

F. Regarding the above materials or data, will you be:

Collecting them Yes No

Receiving them Yes No

Sending them Yes No

G. Do the materials already exist? Yes No

H. Are the materials being collected for the purpose of this study? Yes No

I. Do the materials come from subjects who are:

Minors Yes No

Prisoners Yes No

Pregnant women Yes No

J. Does this material originate from a patient population that, for religious or other reasons, would prohibit its use in biomedical research? Yes No Unknown source

IX. FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING MEDICAL AND/OR INSURANCE RECORDS

A. Does this research involve the use of:

Medical, psychiatric and/or psychological records Yes No

Health insurance records Yes No

Any other records containing information regarding personal health and illness

Yes No

If you answered "Yes" to any of the items in this section, you must complete the HIPAA Worksheet.

APPENDIX D

MDT/MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
PROJECT ARCHAEOLOGY AGENDA

Absaroka Agency Collaborative Archaeology Education Project
MDT/Montana State University/Project Archaeology
March 3, 2011
10am to 2pm
Wilson Hall Room 2-111
Agenda

Meeting Goals

- Progress report on the Collaborative Education Project
- Update on associated projects including Shane Doyle's Dissertation and Charles Yarlott's internship
- Discuss the Absaroka Agency Volunteer Project
- Determine next steps

Agenda

10am Report on the education project progress

- Piloting in schools
- Evaluation
- Research results to date
- SAA/MAS paper

PhD Dissertation project, *Absaroka Agency Day of Commemoration and Remembrance Saturday June 4, 2011* (Shane Doyle)

- Making meaning of the Absaroka Agency
- Unveiling of Absaroka Agency model at the Museum of the Beartooths
- Community based collaborative inquiry project
- MHS, OPI-IEFA, Museum of the Beartooths, Crow Tribe, and Public Schools (Livingston, Columbus, and Crow Agency)

MSU/Project Archaeology Internship *Community Based Archaeology* (Charles Yarlott)

Absaroka Agency Volunteer Project

- Dates
- Number of volunteers
- Insurance coverage for volunteers
- PBS documentary

Lunch

1pm Next Steps for Absaroka Agency Collaborative Education Project

APPENDIX E

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

List of Organizations

Aaberg Cultural Resource Consulting Service (ACRCS) – Aaberg Cultural Resource Consulting Service is a business established by archaeologist Steve Aaberg in 1977 aimed at providing cultural resources gained through 30 years of experience in the field of archaeology.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) – The Bureau of Indian Affairs is an agency of the U.S. federal government under the U.S. Department of the Interior charged with administration and management of land held in trust by the government for American Indian and Alaska Natives.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – According to the information provided by the BLM on its website, www.blm.gov, “The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) may best be described as a small agency with a big mission: To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. It administers more public land – over 245 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency in the United States. Most of this land is located in the 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also manages 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM’s multiple-use mission, set forth in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, mandates that we manage public land resources for a variety of uses, such as energy development, livestock grazing, recreation, and timber harvesting, while protecting a wide array of natural, cultural, and historical resources, many of which are found in the BLM’s 27 million-acre National Landscape Conservation System. The conservation system includes 221 Wilderness Areas totaling 8.7 million acres, as well as 16 National Monuments comprising 4.8 million acres.”

Carbon County Museum (CCM) – According to the museums official website, www.carboncountyhistory.com, “The mission of the Carbon County Historical Society & Museum is to preserve and communicate the history of the Carbon County area...The Carbon County Historical Society was formed in 1974 and took over the museum facility in 1980. In 1990, the three-story Labor Temple building was gifted to the Carbon County Historical Society by an anonymous donor. The Labor Temple was built in 1909, entirely by the Red Lodge Miners Local No. 1771, and put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. The historical society reopened the museum's doors with a newly remodeled basement and first floor in 1999.”

Crow Tribe – According to the tribe’s official website, www.crowtribe.com, “The Crow (Apsáalooke) Tribe of Indians has a membership of approximately 11,000, of whom 7,900 reside on the Crow Indian Reservation. Eighty-five percent speak Crow as their first language. The tribe is originally called "Apsáalooke ," which means "children of the

large-beaked bird." White men later misinterpreted the word as "Crow." ... The Crow Indian Reservation is the largest of the 7 Indian Reservations and is located in south central Montana, bordered by Wyoming to the south and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation to the east. The reservation encompasses approximately 2.3 million acres, which includes the northern end of the BASAWAXAAWUUA (Bighorn Mountains), CHEETIISH (Wolf Mountains) and BAAHPUO ISAWAXAAWUUA (Pryor Mountains). The Bighorn River flows north from Yellowtail Dam and joins the Little Bighorn River just outside Hardin, Montana. The city of Billings is approximately 10 miles northwest of the reservation boundary."

Little Big Horn College (LBHC) – According to the tribal college's website, www.lbhc.edu, "Little Big Horn College is a public two-year community college chartered by the Crow Tribe of Indians. The College is located in the town of Crow Agency, Montana Baaxawuaashe', the capital of the Crow Indian Reservation in south central Montana. Eight Associate of Arts degrees are offered at LBHC. The courses of study offered are directly related to the job opportunities and economic development on the Crow Indian Reservation and surrounding communities. The majority of the students enrolled are members of the Crow Tribe of Indians."

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) – According to the agency's website, www.mdt.mt.gov, "MDT's mission is to serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment." The MDT is responsible for planning and design, contract administration, materials design and testing, property acquisition, fiscal programming and cost accounting, motor fuel collection and enforcement, enforcement of vehicle weight and dimension laws and the Outdoor Advertising Control Act, management of the state motor pool, highway, bridge and rest area maintenance, public transportation and rail programs and planning, general aviation airport planning and highway traffic safety.

Montana Historical Society – According to the organization's website, www.montanahistoricalsociety.com, the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) "works together with all Montanans to promote the preservation of our state's historic and cultural places. From 10,000-year-old archaeological sites to 100-year-old homestead farms, a lot of history has unfolded beneath the big Montana sky. We encourage people across the state to identify, document, recognize and protect the heritage sites of Montana, preserving our rich cultural landscape for generations to come." Its offices are based in Helena, Montana.

Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) - According to the government agency's website, www.opi.mt.gov, The Montana Office of Public Instruction exists to provide "vision, advocacy, support and leadership for schools and communities to ensure that all students meet today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities."

Montana State University (MSU) – A public unit of the Montana University System, MSU is Montana's land-grant institution established in 1893 and located in Bozeman, MT. It is an accredited college offering associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.

Museum Association of Montana (MAM) – According to the organizations website, www.montanamuseums.org, "Formed in 1967, the Museums Association of Montana (MAM) serves each of our members by providing assistance and professional development opportunities through our annual conference, newsletter, and member network... The Museums Association of Montana (MAM) promotes professionalism and cooperation among the Museums of Montana. MAM is an organization for all types of museums-art, history, science, general, and individuals who are interested in improving and strengthening Montana s museums."

Museum of the Beartooths – According to the museum's website, www.museumofthebeartooths.org, "The mission of the Stillwater Historical Society, through the Museum of the Beartooths, is to collect, preserve and share the rich history of the Stillwater County area." The museum is located in Columbus, MT.

Project Archaeology – According to the organization's website, www.projectarchaeology.org, "Project Archaeology uses archaeological inquiry to foster understanding of past and present cultures; improve social studies and science education; and enhance citizenship education to help preserve our archaeological legacy." The organization is based out of Montana State University in Bozeman, MT.

APPENDIX F

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

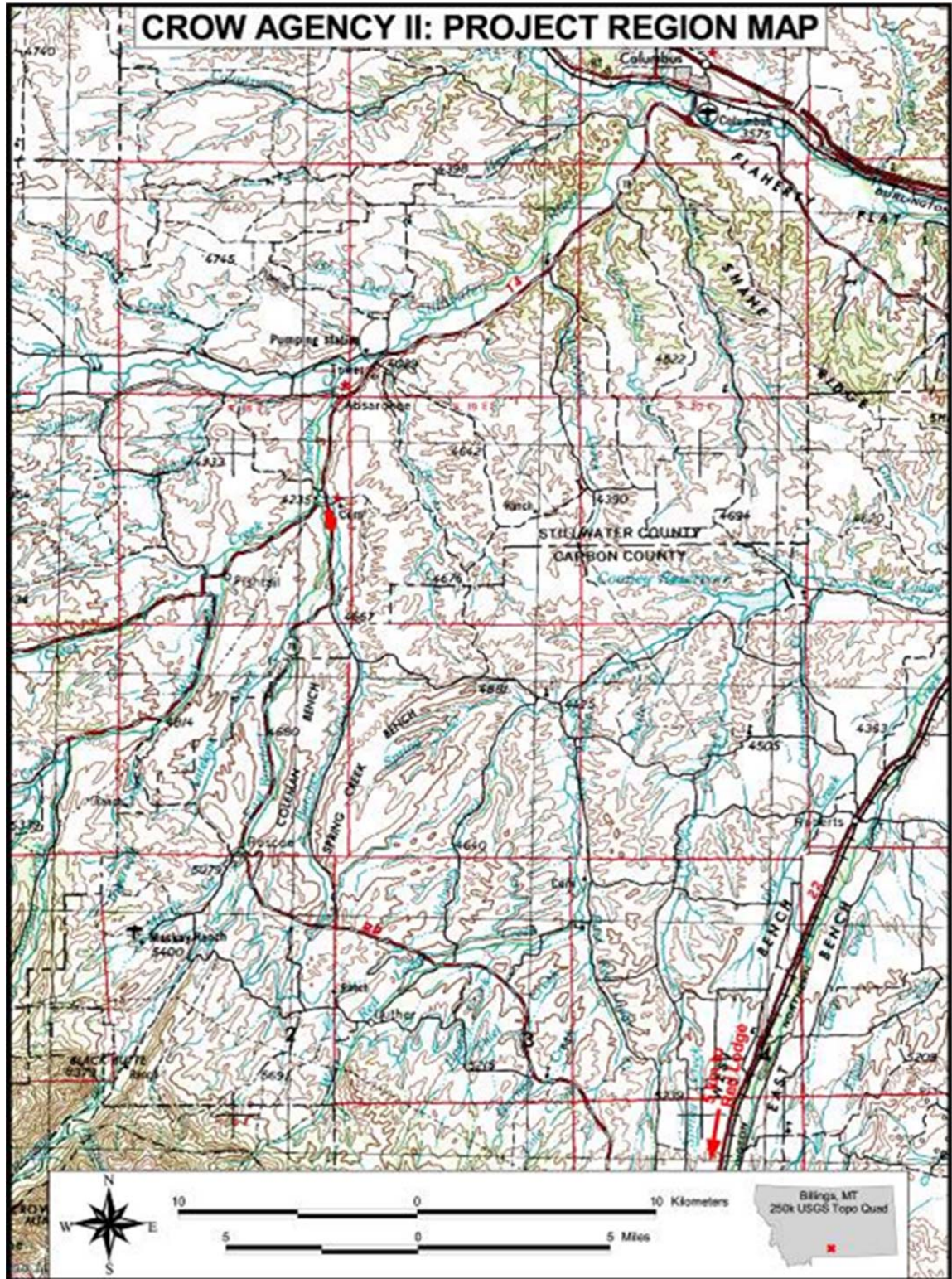


Figure 18. Crow Agency II: Project Region Map.

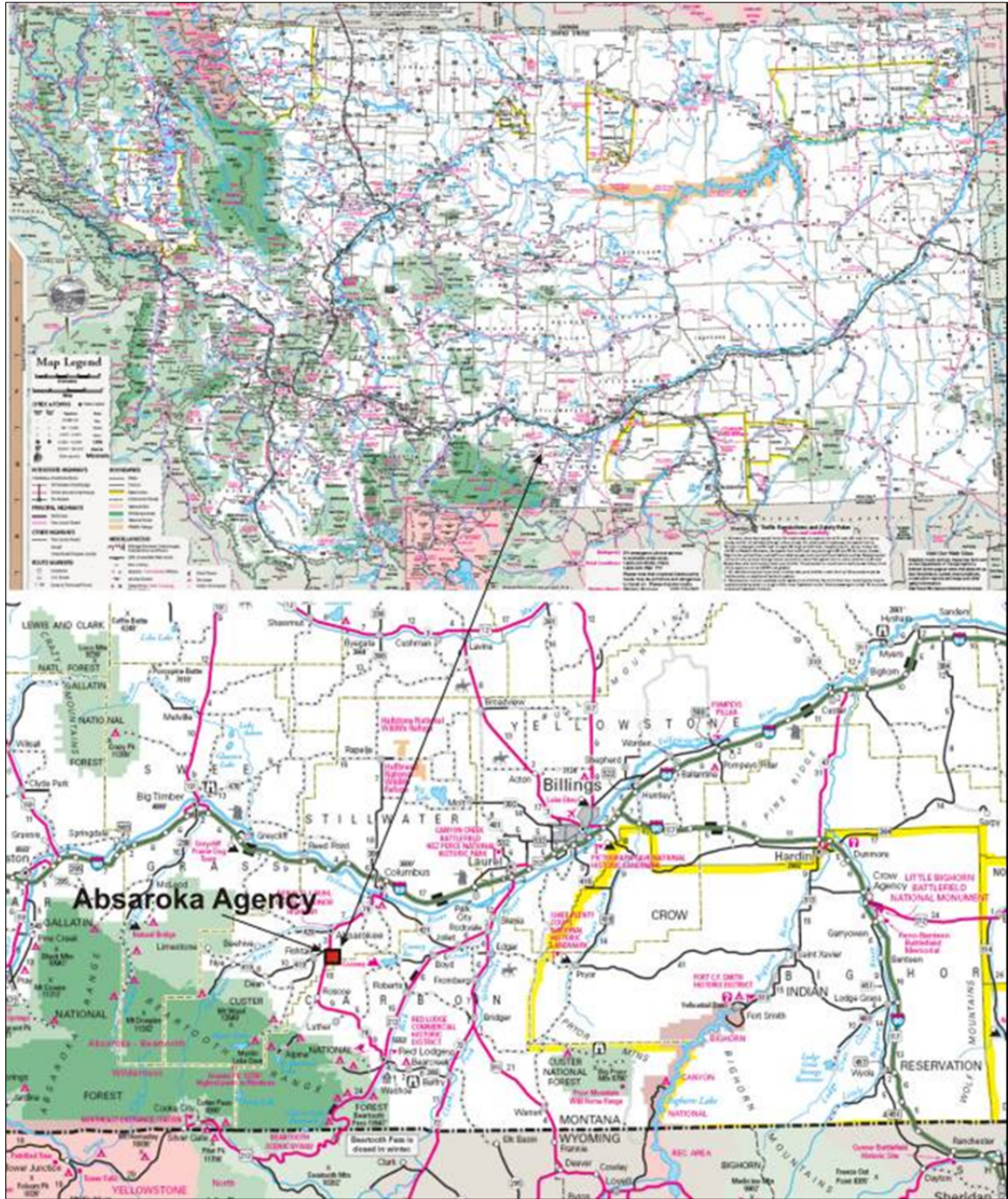


Figure 19. Absaroka Agency.

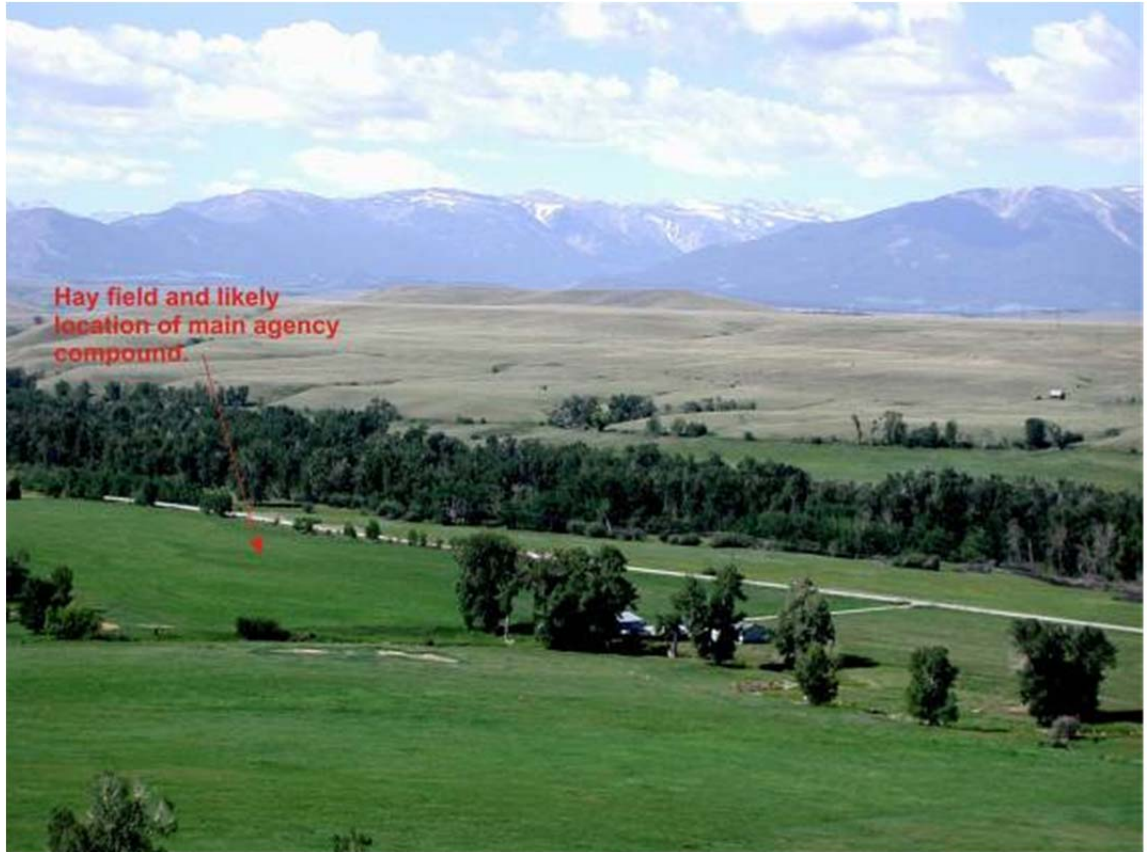


Figure 20. Hay Field and Main Agency Compound.

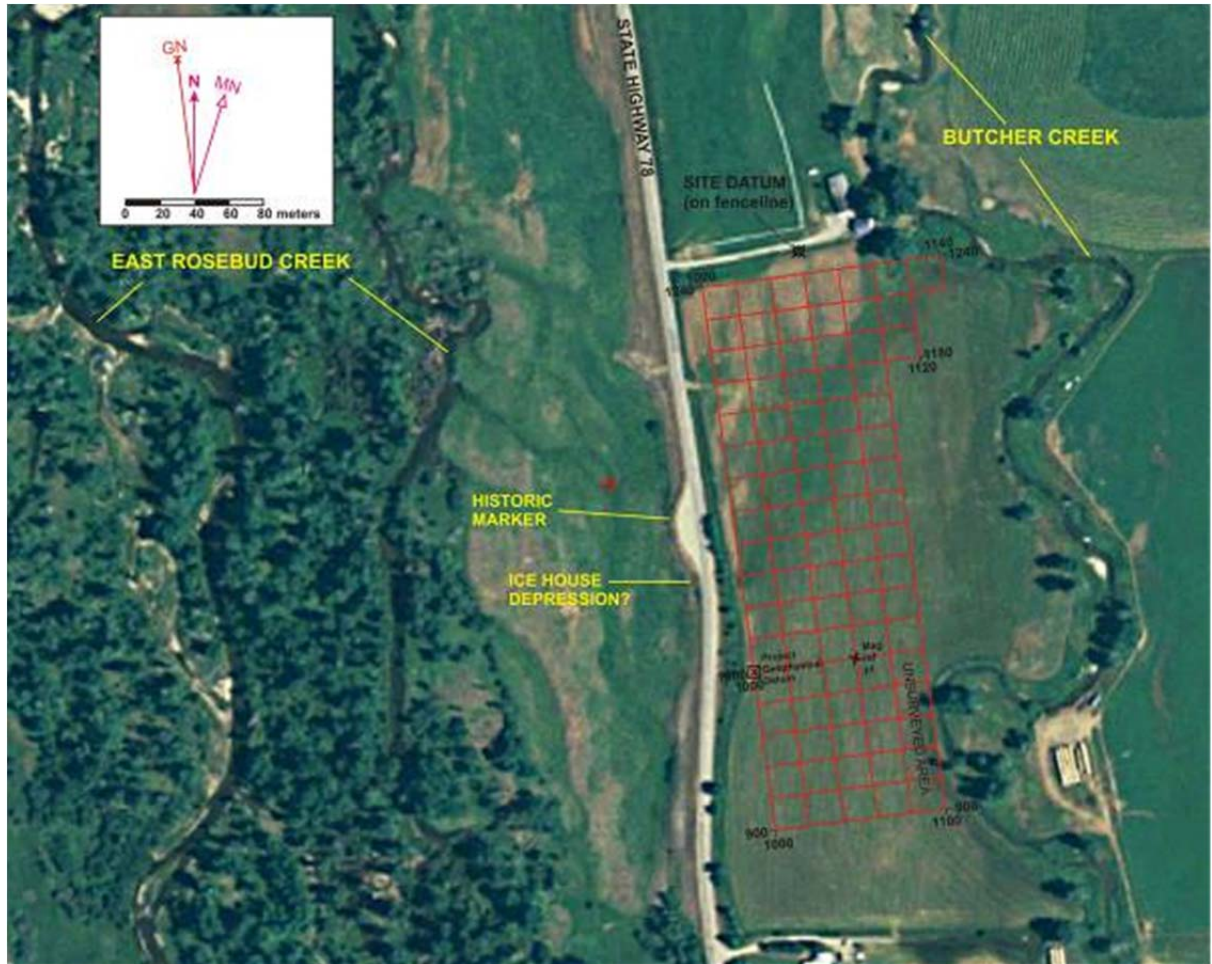


Figure 21. Historical Sites.

Figure 22. 2nd Crow Agency Map.

ALBERTA POLICE