



Archives by way of Museums: Material Culture and the Writing of Indigenous History

Graduate Workshop in Research Methods
Newberry Consortium in American Indian Studies (NCAIS)
National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, D.C.
March 8-10, 2018



From "Gathering Wild Rice," 1853. Ayer 250.45 E2 1853a

Presented by
Prof. Brenda Child, University of Minnesota

This workshop is a joint venture between the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI-Smithsonian) and the Newberry Library. Both institutions are invaluable to scholars. The Newberry Library is home to an unparalleled collection of books, maps, and documents, and the NMAI is home to a similarly significant collection of material culture that amounts to over 800,000 catalog entries. This workshop will encourage scholars to incorporate both collections in the writing of American Indian history and Indigenous studies.

The workshop asks how we build alternative archives, and what stories clothing, beadwork, baskets, photographs, and other forms of material culture tell us about Indigenous history. How might clothing—moccasins, leggings, or jingle dresses, for example, be used to analyze broader issues of cultural change, colonialism, and even legal claims. What do musical instruments reveal about Indigenous performers? What can wild rice knocking sticks tell us about American Indian labor history? Are photographs and paintings of Indigenous life underutilized sources in the writing of Indigenous history and other scholarship? How do we find new archives, just as we ask new questions in American Indian history and Indigenous studies?

One student from each NCAIS institution may participate in the three-day workshop as part of an introduction to critical methodologies in American Indian Studies. **Interested students should apply directly to their NCAIS Faculty Liaison.** Housing will be provided and participants will be reimbursed up to \$600 for travel.