



Smithsonian Institution Archives

National Museum of the American
Indian Oral History Interviews, 2010

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	National Museum of the American Indian Oral History Interviews
Identifier:	Record Unit 9627
Date:	2010
Extent:	0.25 cu. ft. (1 half document box)
Creator::	
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9627, National Museum of the American Indian Oral History Interviews

Use Restriction

Restricted. Contact SIHistory@si.edu to request permission.

Historical Note

A native of Greenwich Village, New York, Gabrielle Tayac (1968-) began her commitment to indigenous activism while an undergraduate at Cornell University, where she received a degree in Social Work and American Indian Studies in 1989. While a student, Tayac studied native Amazon rights in Ecuador and participated in a peace delegation to El Salvador. After graduation, Tayac received the Ralph Bunche Human Rights Fellowship at Amnesty International to continue her work in Native American rights. Tayac received both Master of Arts in 1993 and Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology degree in 1999 from Harvard University. At Harvard and elsewhere, Tayac organized numerous symposia and lectures on native history and rights.

After receiving the doctoral degree, Tayac joined the staff of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. At the museum, Gabrielle Tayac curated exhibits, conducted research, and lectured on topics central to Native American issues. Currently a Historian at the museum, Tayac held previous roles as Curator and Director of Education. Tayac's exhibits included *The Native Landscape*; *Return to a Native Place: Algonquian Peoples of the Chesapeake*; and *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*. Tayac also edited *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*, a companion book to the exhibit.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA) began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also reminiscences and interviews recorded by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

For the American University Oral History Seminar, undergraduate student Thomas Barreiro conducted an oral history interview of Gabrielle Tayac in November of 2010, to document the history of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).

Descriptive Entry

The National Museum of the American Indian Interview discusses her background and work at the NMAI, including work on exhibits and the museum's relationship to the Native American community. The collection consists of one interview of Gabrielle Tayac totaling 0:56:00 hours of interview and a 27-page transcript.

An additional oral history interview of Tayac can be found at the Southern Maryland Folklife Project, St. Mary's College of Maryland, St. Mary's City, Maryland.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Indians of North America
- Interviews
- Museum exhibits
- Oral history

Types of Materials:

- Compact discs
- Electronic records
- Sound recordings
- Transcripts

Names:

- Barreiro, Thomas
- National Museum of the American Indian (U.S.)
- Tayac, Gabrielle

Container Listing

Interviews

Interviews

Session 1: November 22, 2010

Interviews

The interview begins with her role as historian at the NMAI; her role in the recent exhibit *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas* and her decision to pursue that difficult topic; reminiscences of opening day for NMAI in Washington, D.C., in 2004, and the reaction of the Native American community to the new museum; work on *Our Lives* exhibit; NMAI issues with Native American Graves and Repatriation Act; the role of NMAI in reaching diverse Native American communities across the Americas; and experiences at the George Gustav Heye Center in New York; c. 1990s-2010.

Interviews

Transcript, pages 1-27, of audiotape recording, 0:56:00 hour.

Interviews

Audio Recording of Interview: Total recording time: 00:56:00 hours

Note:

- Original Master: 1 digital audio stereo .wav file
- Reference Copy: 1 digital audio .mp3 file.