

Clara NiiSka
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Summary:

teaching • writing • editing • photography and graphic design • indigenous philosophy • anthropology • oral history • publications production • radio • ‘traditional’ arts and crafts • acting • multicultural professional and personal background

Experience:

Current: Writing Ph.D. dissertation (*Linguistics from an Ahnishinahbæó’jibway Perspective*). Anthropology Department, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

✓ **Consultant.** Contract research, writing, and photography for the Indian Land Tenure Foundation, Little Canada, MN. Winter 2005 - Spring 2007.

✓ **Actor.** Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis, MN. *The Falls*, Summer 2006. Opened the play as the “Tour Guide,” historical cameo as the “Native Woman.” Also cultural consultant, did photographic documentation of process of creating the play.

✓ **Managing editor.** *Native American Press/Ojibwe News*, St. Paul, MN (now relocated to Bemidji, MN). *Press/ON* was the only privately owned weekly Indian newspaper in the U.S. Oriented toward grassroots community, its policy was to “print the news accurately, to provide a forum for the ‘voices of the people,’ and to encourage Indian people to empower ourselves by exposing corruption and demanding accountability from our governments.”

- responsible for weekly production of broadsheet newspaper, encouraging and mentoring volunteer contributors, envisioning and creating content.
- required competence in editing, investigative reporting and other research, interviewing, writing, public relations, photography, and occasional ad design and layout.

April 2001 – April 2003. In June 2003, *Press/ON* and publisher Bill Lawrence received the Peter S. Popovich Award from the Minnesota Society of Professional Journalists for the newspaper’s exemplary “fight for First Amendment rights.”

✓ **Graduate school - teaching assistant.** Anthropology Department, University of Minnesota. T.A. in the context of ongoing Ph.D. program:

- Anth 1003W. Understanding Cultures, Fall 2000.
- Anth 3047W. Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspectives, Spring 2001.

Writing-intensive courses. Taught class sections, advised students, graded papers and exams.

✓ **Research and writing.** In collaboration with husband Wub-e-ke-niew: research and writing *We Have The Right To Exist, A Translation of Aboriginal Indigenous Thought, The first book ever published from an Ahnishinahbæó’jibway Perspective*. 1984 – 1994. Published in 1995 by Black Thistle Press, New York. In print, publisher’s top-selling book.

- extensive archival research in conjunction with oral history, compilation of comprehensive genealogical database pertaining to Red Lake reservation.
- translation from Ahnishinahbæó’jibway paradigms and concepts into Western ones, some aspects of which are addressed in the book.

Other experience:

- **Website design.** Designed, own and maintain three websites, mostly relating to Native history and genealogy (anishinaabe.net, maquah.net, and ojibwe.info).
- **Radio.** KFAI Radio, Minneapolis and St. Paul. Currently serve on board of directors. Collaborative production and hosting of Womanist Power Authority, 2005-2007. Certified broadcast engineer.
- **Grassroots community work.** In contexts of the Ahnishinahbæó'jibway Dodems, the Red Lake Peoples Council, and informally structured community: grant writing for community-owned economic development projects (1984-1985), encouragement of community members' political awareness and self-empowerment through dissemination of historical information and current policy documents, writing, research, and 'traditional' enterprises including gardening and making maple sugar. 1984 – 1997.
- **Bilingual curriculum development and illustration.** Collaboration with White Earth Ojibwe writer Ignatia Broker on series of children's books in Ojibwe and English. Part time, December 1982 – July 1985.
- **Curriculum development and teaching.** Initiated and co-taught three quarter sequence of graduate courses in visual anthropology at the University of Minnesota. Collaborated on production of one-hour videotape/multimedia presentation of cultural-interactive view of mental retardation. Part time, for academic credit, 1978-1979.
- **Editor.** Twin Cities Area Urban Corps. Monthly newsletter and other Urban Corps publications. October 1974 – August 1975.
- **Photojournalism and publications production.** Gump & Gump Photography, Clara NiiSka Photography. Self-employed, mostly in the Twin Cities area. Publications initiated, designed, and produced included two photographic directories at Macalester College (1971, 1972). Photo clients included the Associated Press, United Press International, Macalester College, Augsburg Publishing; also did portrait photography. Cover-story photo essay on the Rodiya people of Sri Lanka in the Minneapolis *Tribune Picture* magazine, 1978. (Published under the name Clara Gump, 1971-1973.)
- **Teaching.** Set up and taught photography classes for the Macalester College Art Department (1972) and the Atlanta Urban Corps (Summer 1973).

Details of additional experience, skills, and interests available on request.

Languages:

Conversational Spanish. Have also studied: Ojibwe, French, Dutch, Sinhala, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, and German. Academic research involving Icelandic, modern Ojibwe, Ahnishinahbæó'jibway, and Palauan.

Education:

- Anthropology Department, University of Minnesota, Ph.D. candidate. Current.
- Master of Liberal Studies Program, University of Minnesota.
- Macalester College, St. Paul. National Merit Scholar, B.A. Anthropology major, minor concentrations in art and journalism.

(Academic transcripts are under full legal surname, NiiSka-Ngiratregd.)

References, sample publications, and other verification available on request.