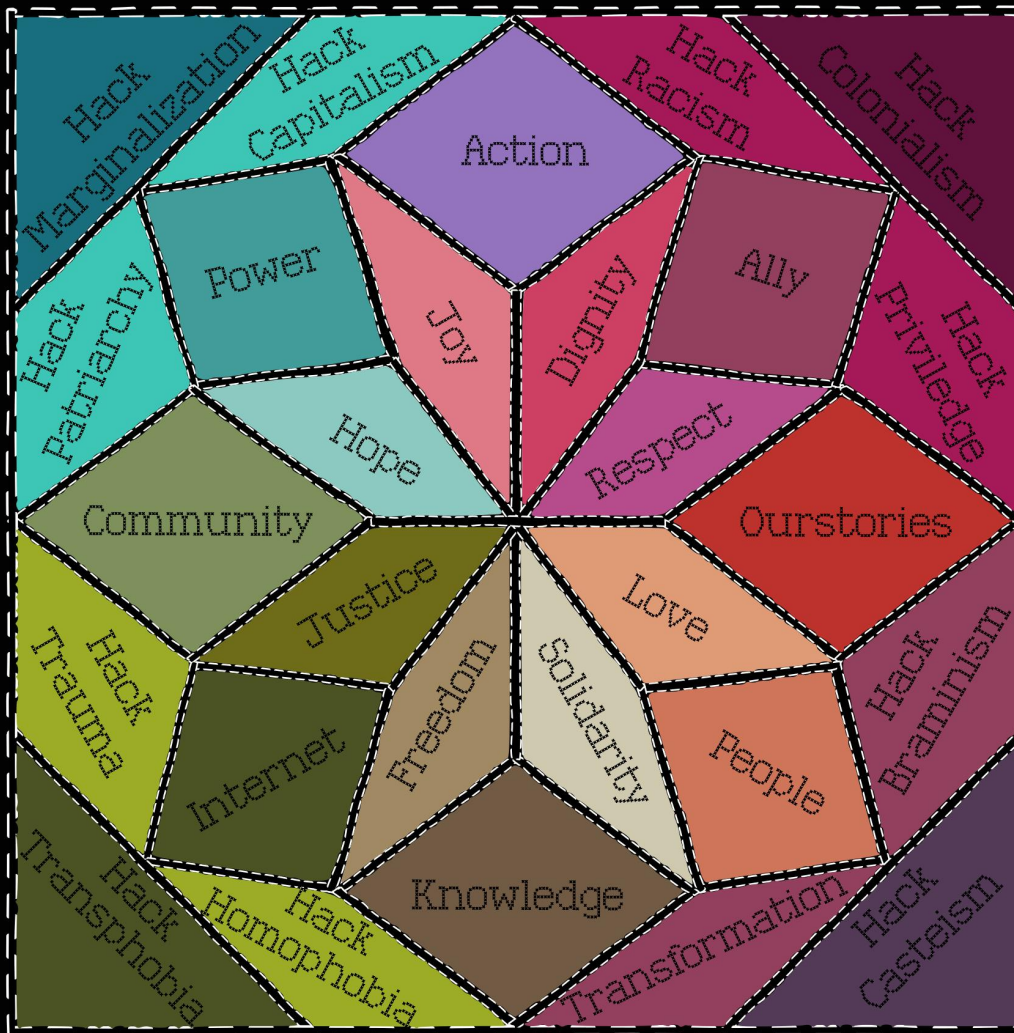


# OUR STORIES



# OUR KNOWLEDGES

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*Shuttleworth Foundation*

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*November, 2018*

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## RESOURCES SERIES

# "OUR STORIES OUR KNOWLEDGES"

### PART I

#### DECOLONIZING OUR STORIES AND KNOWLEDGES

### PART II

#### TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGES

### PART III

#### ADDING OUR KNOWLEDGE TO WIKIPEDIA

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#### HOW TO ALLY AND BE A GOOD GUEST

# PART II - TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGES

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# OURSTORIES



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO KUMEYAAY LAND

Eyay... eyay... eyay  
long... long... ago

Tule boats plied the waters of the kelp beds. Fishermen cast nets in the bay. Grey Whales plied the waters as they do now, moving seasonally to their southern calving waters. Oak and pine woodlands dominated the landscape. You would have seen villages of Kumeyaay utilizing the resources of the land and sea in a relationship built on the accumulated knowledge of generations. Their relationship with the life around them created an abundance that supported many thousands of people throughout the region.

From the lands of the present day University of San Diego could be seen dozens of villages, each possessing Sh'mulls or Clans who harvested and protected the lands of their birthright. The concept of nature, separate and apart from humankind, was unheard of. Instead, the people of this land practised a belief structure rooted in the concepts of balance with the forces of the spiritual, and harmony with the cycles of the cosmos. From the University of San Diego campus, the rising of E'muu, the three Mountain Sheep, at the winter solstice, must have been wonderful coming up above the mountains to the east. From E'muu, who Europeans named "Orion's Belt", come stories, songs and ceremonies that are but one small way the skies, the land and the sea are integrated into the concepts of identity for Kumeyaay people. Many other constellations, songs and stories make up the traditional knowledge base of the Kumeyaay. From such a beautiful location, songs of praise and gratitude must have carried into the sky long before new ways intruded into the landscape.

The University of San Diego campus sits on a strategic location. Warriors, fighting to preserve their identity and way of life, must have gathered on this very land to prepare for battle or watch the comings and goings of invaders. No doubt there lay hidden caches of funerary urns within these lands cradling remains of people whose lives carried meanings both familiar and exotic to modern sensibilities.

People from many cultures and locations around the world now walk upon this ground. They are seekers of knowledge, looking toward those credentialed for topics perceived to be useful to the modern world. But as you walk about the campus remember to open your mind to other sources of knowledge. Learn from the land, the plants, the cosmos and the songs. Feel the presence of those who loved, fought, lived and died on the very land beneath your feet. Learn to respect balance in life, harmony in worldview and gratitude for the creation that will be home for your time here.

## ABOUT THESE RESOURCES

In August 2018, we traveled to the traditional territory of the Kumeyaay Nation in Southern California, United States to spend four days writing together.

We held close Michael Connolly Miskwish's acknowledgement to Kumeyaay land as we walked and worked on the campus of the University of San Diego.

We came together as ten people from a few different communities, organizations, each traveling from the lands of different indigenous communities in Bosnia, Catalonia, India, and the United States:

- Az Causevic and Belma Steta from the Bosnian Herzegovinian LGBTIQA organization, [Okvir](#)
- Maari Zwick-Maitreyi and Sanghapali Aruna from the [Dalit](#) feminist organizations [Equality Labs](#) and [Project Mukti](#) respectively
- Michael Connolly Miskwish ([Kumeyaay Community College](#)) and Persephone Lewis ([University of San Diego](#)) from the Native American communities of the Kumeyaay and Shoshone
- Jake Orlowitz from the [Wikimedia](#) movement
- Siko Bouterse and Anasuya Sengupta from [Whose Knowledge?](#)

In addition, Laia Ros facilitated the [Book Sprint methodology](#) which helped us bring our embodied knowledge to the page.

We met to create a set of resources to support marginalized communities in centering their knowledges online. These include:

- *Decolonizing Our Stories and Knowledges*, giving context about ourselves, communities, and work, and discussing some of the structures of power we're dismantling
- *Transformative Practices for Building Community Knowledges*, a set of practices and tools for marginalized communities
- *Adding Our Knowledge to Wikipedia*, sharing what we've done and learned from work on the online encyclopedia
- *How to Ally and Be a Good Guest*, with tips and suggestions for allies

The group was convened by Whose Knowledge?, with funding from the [Shuttleworth Foundation](#), and hosted by the office of the tribal liaison at University of San Diego.

In this collection, we are sharing some of our personal and community stories and knowledges. We do not write to represent the breadth and depth of our communities; our individual voices can never do them full justice. We write to introduce you to our communities, ourstories, and some of the ways in which we are building and sharing our communities' knowledges, including online. As our friend Hvale says, this will always be a work-in-process.

It's rare for most of us to find this much time, space and energy to reflect and document our experiences and learning, and we've learned a lot from wrestling with the process together. Writing for many of us as members of marginalized communities is a complex act of uncertainty, pain, and then power. We hope you'll find meaning and use in these resources, as we did while creating them together!



# TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGES



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## CARE : A FOUNDATION FOR TRANSFORMATION



For marginalized communities, there is no “off” switch between who we are and what we do. We come from peoples who have experienced multiple past generations of trauma and bear the burden of this trauma on our bodies and in our spirits. This turbulence in our bodies and minds means that our people die younger, we lose leaders often, we sometimes translate our external trauma into abusive relationships with one another, and our social justice movements become fragile. Many times over, our people have to start their work from scratch.

To break this cycle, our pathways to liberation must include visions for how we can heal and transform along the way. We know that a foundation of practices for both self and collective care is core to our survival. We are all inspired by Audre Lorde’s words: *“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”*

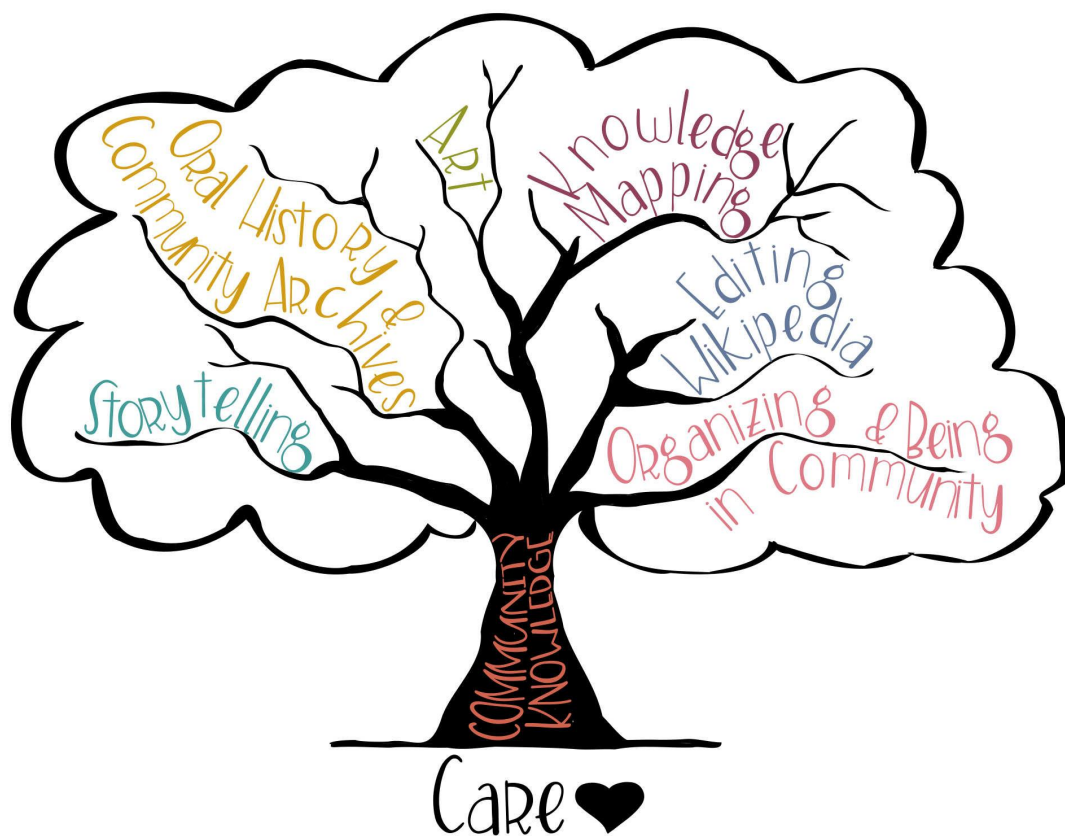
Yet the ways we sometimes seek *self-care* originate in the wealthy (often Western) world and focus on personal practices of relaxation that take time and money. While this can be helpful, these practices also tend to isolate, draw us inward and pull resources out of our communities. Over time, we have learned that we can move away from this commodification of our trauma by focusing on *collective care*. Practices for collective care seek to lighten burdens for ourselves and our future generations, building resilience and achieving transformation with one another.

We learn from our ancestors to weave care through the work you do in the community, for the community. For us, that has meant radically transforming the ways of seeing and being that we see all around us in the world every day. We have created these shared spaces and practices of community healing that also are spaces of community knowledge building. These are not only radical strategies for social change but also healing projects. We share them with you, in solidarity, here.

## MAKING COMMUNITIES' KNOWLEDGES VISIBLE

Knowledge exists in multiple forms and does not have to be linear. We believe that every person owns their story through knowledge of their lived experiences in their own authentic structure of memory and comprehension. It is important to locate that personal knowledge in the larger context of community and ultimately world knowledge. But that making and situating is also a participatory and collaborative process, rather than just a product.

For our part, we have explored several collectivist processes — storytelling, oral histories and community archives, art, knowledge-mapping, editing on Wikipedia, community organizing, and just being in community.



# STORYTELLING AS A WAY OF KNOWING AND SHARING



For centuries, our ancestors and communities have used stories to pass their knowledge from generation to generation. Storytelling is a powerful technique to document and share our communities' histories, struggles, and celebrations. Stories can be shared from a personal perspective, as well as a community's perspective, and they situate us epistemologically within the world. There is also a healing and transformative effect from telling your own story and from making the issue, cause or experience visible. Technology has also extended the impact of storytelling, offering more options for anonymity, wider outreach, and digitalization of pre-existing material.

Some of the stories we present below illustrate these ideas and how they play out.

## THE NEWE CREATION STORY (PERSE)

*The Newe creation story depicts the journey of the people from the north to present-day Nevada. Coyote is the central character. He is a frequent protagonist and provides many lessons. In this story, he is charged by Upah to carry the people (contained in a basket) to a specific destination. Because he is always a curious creator who is impulsive and rarely follows instructions, Coyote opens the basket to peek inside. After satisfying his curiosity, he fails to properly replace the lid. This mistake allows the taller people to escape from the basket. When he arrives at the final destination, only the short people are left. While the story can seem like a fun tale, it presents important information. First, it explains how the Newe (Western Shoshone) came to be in this geographical location. Second, it illustrates the consequences of not following instructions. Third, it explains the phenotypic differences between Native American people from different regions. For the Newe, oral tradition provides the information needed to know who we are as a people. It is a tool that teaches group norms and expectations for behavior, our history, and cosmology. Performative and situational, it supports a looped learning process where the listener learns different lessons depending on when, where, and by whom the story is told. It is also reciprocal; the*

storyteller also learns. Colonization and subsequent Federal policies viewed our stories as folklore, pushing them to the margins. Today, folks are recognizing the importance of oral tradition as a form of knowledge transmission, resulting in a resurgence of indigenous stories.

### OKVIR'S DIGITAL STORYTELLING (AZ AND BELMA)

Digital stories are a powerful and healing way for both individuals and groups to process their experiences. Each participant writes/tells/creates the story from their own perspective, using their own voice and words, choosing images and accompanying music. This is recorded in a digital format, and the stories run for 2-3 minutes. Interactive, open-source, digital media storytelling is a resource and a tool for social change for raising the visibility of authentic LGBTIQA experiences in Okvir's community. In the collection, *Freedom in My Own Way*, digital storytelling provides a participatory model to develop, articulate and share stories of what freedom means to LGBTIQA persons, sharing some of the most important events and issues that affect us and that have shaped us.

Some of the topics in this collection are self-acceptance of one's transgender identity and/or sexual orientation, overcoming the trauma of gender and sexuality-based violence, and the importance/lack of friendship and support, among others. Parallel to this process, each person gains a set of skills in using open source programs (GIMP, Audacity, etc.). All material used and produced is Creative Commons licensed, but at the final stage of the process, each storyteller chooses the terms and conditions of their consent, including whether or not they want their story to be published. This is especially relevant in LGBT-phobic and oppressive contexts, where the teller is not publicly out with their sexuality, gender identity or specific traumatic experience. Along with the consent, the storyteller chooses their own preferred name and whether or not to remain anonymous, which also is highly relevant in oppressive contexts.

In the end, a press conference for Coming Out day in 2016 presented the stories to the wider public, using them to promote and make visible the voices from the LGBTIQA community. In this way, digital storytelling was used for our own personal experience and empowerment.

## DALIT AUTOBIOGRAPHIES AND DIGITAL STORYTELLING (MAARI AND SANGHAPALI)

*Dalits have always used the format of telling the “life-story” as a form of knowledge exchange. Telling your own story is a means to share the wisdom you gathered so younger ones don’t have to learn things anew. It can be told by one person to many in the community at the same time. For the teller, it can be cathartic. Story-telling in Dalit communities is often performative, affective, full of modulating intonations that evoke emotions that are used to solidify the content of the learning in the mind of the listener. Often the telling can be translated into a community performance of street theatre. In post-“independent” India, the written word began to become the major means with which to communicate to a “national” audience. Stemming from the familiarity of the style of village storytelling, many of the first books written by Dalits were their autobiographies. A spate of autobiographies started coming out in the 1970s. The books addressed Dalit struggles within and outside their communities, their relationships, and the ways they resisted and persevered. Some of the earliest autobiographies are “Baluta” by Daya Pawar, “AjunUjadayace Ahe” (There is Time for Daybreak) by Madhav Kondvilkar, and “Majhya Jalmachi Chittarkatha” (The Kaleidoscope Story of My Life) by Shantabai Kamble.*

*One of the first autobiographies written in this way by a Dalit woman is “Jina Amucha” (The Prisons We Broke) by Baby Kamble, which highlights the plight of the Dalit women. It depicts the transformation in their life because of the outcomes of the Ambedkarite Movements for liberation. It shows how Dalit women gave up all the customs and religious beliefs that made them slaves for thousands of years. The path they ventured on, of self-respect and rejection of the gods and goddesses of the Hindu religion, is the key feature of The Prisons We Broke. Baby Kamble is also critical of the internal systems of patriarchy in her own community.*

*Since the early 2000s, many Dalits took this writing to digital platforms. Digital platforms came as a great relief as most established publishers were unwilling to publish authentic Dalit issues and wouldn’t even publish Dalit writing without large-scale distortions of their work first. Digital platforms such as social media and blogs such as [Velivada](#) became very popular sites to present personal viewpoints, politics, art, and creative writings. “Dalit History Month” used [Facebook](#) to post about Dalit/Adivasi/Bahujan leaders (those marginalized by caste, religion, and ethnicity), important milestones in history, and atrocities against our communities. We also worked on platforms, such as [Medium](#), and created our own historical timelines including [dalithistory.com](#), a participatory radical history project. “Our story may have begun in violence but we continue forward by emphasizing our assertion and resistance.”*



# ORAL HISTORIES AND COMMUNITY ARCHIVES



Most of the world's knowledge is oral. And because so much of our knowledge has not been written down or published, it can be easily invisibilized in Western hegemonic knowledge structures. Conducting audio and video oral interviews to record our communities' oral knowledge and housing those records in an archive is one way of making our oral histories visible. When the archive is made available online, this allows even more visibility to the broader world.

Archives hold a powerful potential for justice, transformation, and healing once a story is told, recorded, and shared. More importantly, our stories tell of the process, and the process becomes transparent, inclusive, and open for all to participate. Our archives are our community sites of location of memories and practices, intersecting past, future, and present, and sites of reflection as well. They contain complex, messy, human stories and essence. They embody non-linear temporality in the sense of memory, being and doing. They can be territorially or physically scattered, and they provide a polyvocality of stories and standpoints, and (non) identities, which are normative and non-normative. We use storytelling, open source and multimedia tools to do this work, identifying those points that can breathe light, subsequently heal, and strengthen our political capacities.

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## KVIR ARHIV (AZ AND BELMA)

*War, gender, sexuality, and security make an intersecting point for first and second generations of war survivors. We wanted to record the attempts and efforts towards peace and resistance against ethno-nationalist practices from anti-war, feminist, and LGBTIQA persons. Dominant public discourses related to war are highly gendered by stereotypes and present specifically normed historical accounts regarding gender and ethnic identities in favor of the ruling ethno-national parties. Most of the narratives around the war revolve around heteronormative accounts and are ethno-nationally pre-defined.*

*However, queer experiences are today shared rarely and only within the already closed LGBTIQ community, and as such they are officially undocumented, unrecognized, invisible, and further silenced and closeted in broader historical frameworks.*

*Our LGBTIQ Storytelling Project - Kvir Arhiv (Queer Archive) initiative records, documents, collects, and makes visible personal stories, her/their/histories and actions of LGBTIQ persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina during and after the wars of the 1990s in former Yugoslavia. Throughout 2017, we initiated a storytelling collection of more than 40 hours of oral histories (audio and video interviews and a documentary on gender, sexuality, war and security), where more than 50 LGBTIQ, feminist and anti-war activists contributed their personal archives, stories, documents, letters, photographs, and memories. Red Embroidery, a [documentary](#), is a collection of oral histories within the Queer Archive about the intersection of gender, sexuality, war and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia. It is a collection of personal testimonials and political accounts of 12 feminist, LGBTIQ and antimilitarist pioneers on solidarity and their contribution to feminist, anti-war and LGBTIQ movements in these countries. Parallel to this work and supported by Whose Knowledge?, we have generated a timeline of LGBTIQ history covering 30 years. Then we started writing articles on Wikipedia about LGBTIQ activists and artists from the region.*

# ART AS RESISTANCE, EMPOWERMENT, AND IDENTITY



Art has been defined as the human expression of creativity and imagination. However, art is more than this narrow understanding. Art is also a tool of life and resistance. We use art for portraying a collective/personal demand, resistance, desire, and the (im)possibility of our realities. It tells our stories, lives, dreams, suffering and hopes — locating us within human experiences, connecting us to those who came before us and those who will come after us.

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## DALIT ART AND EXPRESSION

*When you hear people talk about India, you would notice how much they talk about the richness of traditional or classical music and dance. That is what 3% of the Indians perform and project as Indian classical music or dance.*

*The indigenous folks have always expressed themselves through various forms of arts. But they are considered too raw and unpolished by the mainstream. Storytelling, songs, dance, and playing dappu/parai were expressions of the process of labor, production and creativity. They are forms of resistance. Our music, our protests and all kinds of resistance movements in India have never been complete without the Parai or Dappu. Playing Dappu or Parai is a collective process that is not confined to just music or dance but is a form of healing.*

*The stories, poetry, autobiographies, music, paintings, and street plays from Dalits always portrayed the violent caste system and the ways our communities have been resisting. These are the ways we assert our rights. Apart from the traditional Dalit art forms, we have also been exploring more contemporary art forms, such as creating our own light signs by “Jhalkaribai Light Society”, projections on prominent public places, film and documentary making, photography, rap music, and die-ins which are an extension of Dalit street theatre.*

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### KUMEYAAY ART

*Resistance can also be manifest in challenging the concepts of what is considered classical music or a fine art in the dominant society. Songs, art and musical instruments from indigenous communities may have origins that vastly predate the generally accepted examples taught in academia. The very definitions of art then become, themselves, the forefront of establishing the validity or equivalency of indigenous art forms in the present context.*

### WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE? ART EXHIBITION

*In 2018, Whose Knowledge? organized an art exhibition at Wikimania in Cape Town. Wikimania is an annual conference where Wikipedia geeks, encyclopedians, community organizers and technologists from around the world gather to talk about Wikimedia projects and “the sum of all human knowledge.” Because Wikipedia and Wikimedia have defined knowledge very narrowly to date, we wanted to try using art to expand attendees’ understanding of what knowledge means to different communities. We asked artists from marginalized communities around the world to share visual artworks responding to the question “What is Knowledge?” The exhibition showcased art from South Africa, Namibia, Spain, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, India, Zambia and the United States. It focused on complex topics at the intersection of knowledge, including gender and sexuality, race, capitalism, and systems of organizing knowledge. The art was seen by hundreds of Wikimedians, helping spark conversations and insights exploring plural, diverse, and expansive definitions of knowledge from multiple artistic perspectives.*

### OKVIR'S THEATRE FORUM

*Having been inspired by Augusto Boal's technique of Theatre of the Oppressed, we used the Theatre Forum as a tool of transformation of gender and sexuality-based oppression. We brought together queer persons, artists and activists through our mutual connections based on creative expression and our collective motivation for social change. Our community designed and prepared a public theatre play (core-group, design group, scenography, audio production, trainers). The play "It" (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian "To", which is a derogatory term for gender and sexual "outcasts") shows our authentic stories of struggle with LGBTIQ oppression in family, education and gender-based discrimination.*

*We combined our poetry, music, graphic design and scenography into one public forum theatre play. The entire process took ten months of monthly workshops until the play was ready. What was special about the play was that people from the audience intervened in one story from the play and changed the course of the story. The process was empowering for every participant where the group connected and felt empowered to share their experiences with wider audience. We also made a brochure in local languages documenting our Forum theatre process for other groups who want to use the same technique. We made a documentary movie as well, but due to security concerns of some of the participants who are not out with their sexuality and/or gender, we did not publish it. Instead, we kept it on DVD and we have distributed it only within our community and friendly groups.*

# KNOWLEDGE MAPPING — VISUALIZING GAPS



Knowledge mapping is yet another way to start making the invisible visible because often we literally can't see what's missing until those gaps are explicitly stated. Whose Knowledge? has explored how to map these gaps with both Dalit History Month and the Queer Archive projects by gathering with members of the community to brainstorm context, key people, events, and issues that are important to the community. Group members can then begin to identify what of this knowledge is already online, for example on sites like Wikipedia, and what remains missing and can be added. The community organizers can then begin to compile sources and prioritize filling those gaps that are most important to them.

If you'd like to try adapting this process for your community, [here](#) is a resource to help you get started. The story of the Dalit community's work around Dalit History Month can provide a good example.

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## MAARI'S AND SANGHAPALI'S STORY

*As part of the Dalit History Month Collective, we were involved in knowledge mapping over several years. Our initial process was of an intensive searching and inquiry with many community members, having folks submit information they want to see represented about themselves online, researching for sources of information, and noting where there were prominent gaps to be filled. The most fulfilling part of our work has been that this process remains dynamic and ongoing. With each passing year, people are using the base of knowledge maps to do what they want to do with Dalit History Month. From creating readable and shareable social media posts to people doing their own events, the Dalit people have taken ownership of this initiative and made it their own. We witness the mapping growing year after year, watching Dalit students, elders, artists, historians, children, queer and trans folks take it and shape it to their needs. We feel it has generated a lot of information, joy, and focus on our community. We are grateful.*

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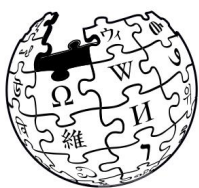
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### OKVIR'S STORY

*Troughout the start of our work, we have used technology as one of the main tools of visibility for the talents of our queer community members. At first we established our website [www.okvir.org](http://www.okvir.org), building it as resource-based, inclusive and networked space for affirmative promotion of creative talents and skills of LGBTIQ persons. Our editorial philosophy is to advocate for the freedom of self-expression of talented LGBTIQ individuals and initiatives, to promote LGBTIQ creative/activist/academic work, and to provide education on LGBTIQ rights and culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina and develop resources. We used our community contact base of queer persons active in formal, informal and independent fields of academia/activism/cultural production to build the platform together. Following this, our work on our website and [Kvir arhiv](#) has resulted with mapping the most important queer persons and events related to our stories and present it in a visual form of a [regional timeline](#), with the support of Whose Knowledge?*

# EDITING WIKIPEDIA



As the world increasingly goes online for knowledge and information, visibility on platforms such as Wikipedia is becoming more and more important. Wikipedia content is often the first search item returned when a Google search is done. And yet, because Wikipedia's editors still skew to being overwhelmingly white, male, straight and Global North in origin, much of the world's knowledge remains missing from the resource.

To address this, many marginalized communities are working on adding knowledge to Wikipedia. We all have unique stories of adding our knowledge to Wikipedia, and we're sharing those stories here so that they can inform and inspire more efforts to center marginalized knowledge in the world's most visited encyclopedia.

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## PERSE'S STORY

*I began using Wikipedia in my courses in Fall 2018. I employed place-based learning whenever possible and felt that focusing on the local indigenous Kumeyaay experience was necessary for teaching a course on Indigenous Decolonization in an ethnic studies department at the University of San Diego. The purpose of engaging my students as Wikipedians was for them to deconstruct the ways settler colonialism infiltrates and shapes the body of knowledge. By focusing on English Wikipedia, my students were able to examine a platform with global impacts. The pedagogy I employed included critiquing the assumptions of Wikipedia and utilizing a decolonizing pedagogy to complete the editing project. Assigning readings and assignments that incorporate an Indigenous ontological and epistemological foundations are necessary for creating a decolonizing classroom.*

*In my course, I wanted my students to not only create new articles in Wikipedia, but to write them in a way that honored the four R's of indigenous research: reciprocity, respect, relevance, and responsibility. Therefore, the subjects of the articles were chosen in consultation with Kumeyaay folks (relevance). My students established relationships with the folks they were writing about (respect). They reflected on the ways that they were learning from the community and the importance of the articles being available to Kumeyaay people (reciprocity). Finally, they invited the community to view the articles together and to offer editing suggestions (responsibility).*

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## ORGANIZING AND BEING IN COMMUNITY



How we do this work is as important as what we produce. A whole lot of invisible labor and organizing goes into any method or projects for building and sharing our knowledge.

Mobilizing resources and people, creating guidelines, how-to guides, checklists and other documentation, convening groups, disseminating and communicating what we're doing and what we've learned, and building practices of self-care so that we can continue to do this work — all of these take time and energy to organize.

We also need spaces of joy and celebration to be in community together. For many of our communities, it is in these spaces that we are able to transfer knowledge in informal ways. These experiences ground us in our identities and shape our understanding of ourselves and our place within our communities and the world. Celebrating milestones and successes, enjoying time with elders, playing games, visiting at a queer-friendly cafe, spending time in peer counseling sessions, and attending cultural events are just as necessary and important as the other knowledge-focused projects and processes we organize.

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### PERSE'S STORY

*The summer and fall are the time when Native American Tribes and communities in the United States hold their celebrations. These celebrations include tribal-specific celebrations and ceremonies as well as inter-tribal events, such as powwows, fiestas, and fandangos. These gatherings are not usually a place where formal knowledge-building occurs; however, they are sites of knowledge transference nonetheless. Visiting with folks who end up telling you their family history, ancestral connections, and area history is a common experience. Also, even those who are not purposefully trying to learn songs will pick them up from hearing them at all the gatherings. Even at inter-tribal events that bring indigenous people together from across the United States and Canada, through conversation with others we are able to find connection between and among each other and our communities. Finding a relative or in-law that you never knew you had is a frequent occurrence.*

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### OKVIR'S STORY

*In 2015 we established the very first structured LGBTIQA peer-to-peer counseling in Bosnia and Herzegovina because we felt the need to support each other and be there for each other. With LGBTIQA Counseling we are empowering our community members and encouraging their development and activist engagement. Peer counseling sessions are regularly conducted twice a week at the premises of Association Okvir in person and/or via Skype and social networks. Over the last year, we have also had regular supervision sessions with a professional psychotherapist in order to track our own development progress as counselors. Therapy referrals to LGBTIQA-friendly therapists were made according to the need. Additionally, we have edited and written, printed and distributed a brochure, "Rescue Triangle" on transforming violent relationships for LGBTIQA persons.*

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Don't miss any part of the Resources Series  
"OUR STORIES OUR KNOWLEDGES"

Download parts 1, 3 and 4 here:

**PART I**

**DECOLONIZING OUR STORIES  
AND KNOWLEDGES**

**PART III**

**ADDING OUR KNOWLEDGE TO WIKIPEDIA**

**PART IV**

**HOW TO ALLY AND BE A GOOD GUEST**