

Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian presents

Dr. Anthony Seeger



Changing our ICH Story from Loss to Potential through Audio-Visual Archives

When: **12:00-1:30pm** on **Wednesday, March 18, 2015**

Where: Smithsonian Castle Library, 1000 Jefferson Drive, Washington, D.C. 20560

Please RSVP to PedersenA@si.edu to ensure event capacity and record staff attendance.

Abstract:

There is a dominant narrative of loss in discussions of intangible cultural heritage. This perception of loss can probably be traced to ideas in *The Book of Genesis* and before, but it became the dominant narrative of many studies and publications in folklore and the social sciences in the second half of the 19th century. "Salvage" recordings of "endangered" or "disappearing" traditions became (and continue to be) legitimate objectives for both research and the establishment of archives. But there is another story about musical traditions and also about archives, and this is the story of innovation and creativity. With a song, 25 years of experience in audiovisual archives, and examples from Brazil and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, this paper will discuss the competing narratives of loss and gain and their interaction with ethical issues, archival policies, intellectual property laws, ideas of intangible cultural heritage, and power.

Bio:

Dr. Anthony Seeger is an anthropologist, ethnomusicologist, archivist, and musician. He is the third generation of his family to deal with issues of intangible cultural heritage (preceded by his grandfather Charles and his uncle Pete Seeger, among others). He is distinguished professor of ethnomusicology, emeritus, at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), director emeritus of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, and current research associate of the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. A specialist in Brazilian Indian music, he has served as director of the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, curator of the Folkways Collection at the Smithsonian, founding director of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, and faculty director of the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archives. Active in professional organizations, he has served as president of the Society for Ethnomusicology, president and secretary general of the International Council for Traditional Music, and founding chair of the Research Archive Section of the International Association for Sound and Audiovisual Archives.

Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian is generously supported by the Smithsonian's Consortium for World Cultures. For more information, please visit: www.folklife.si.edu/ich