Greg Fields

A Media Companion to the book, *A Totem Pole History*:

Potentials and Limitations of Digital Media to Preserve Oral Literature

The forthcoming book *A Totem Pole History* by Salish Indian elder Pauline Hillaire (ed. Greg Fields) is accompanied by a media companion. Multimedia (integrated text, audio, and video recordings) provides a more comprehensive account of the art, history, and traditional knowledge that the author presents, and also permits a more culturally appropriate means of presenting of oral tradition material than is possible by means of text alone.

Salish totem poles convey history and oral tradition that can be interpreted by a knowledgeable culture-bearer. Pauline Hillaire is one of few elders who carry comprehensive systems of Salish ancestral knowledge. Digital versions of her narratives associated with her father’s totem poles provide a crucial link to the continuation of Salish ancestral knowledge. The audiovisual version of the myth, “Land in the Sky,” featuring images one of Joe Hillaire’s major totem poles, will engage us in discussion of limitations and potentials of digital media to preserve oral literature.