

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: VIDEO INTERVIEW WITH GREGORY YOUNGING

“On Indigenous Editing Practices”: Interview with Gregory Younging

Interviewer: Rachel Taylor

<https://vimeo.com/304963730>

Outline of Video Interview

0:00 - 1:45	“Indigenous Literatures: Now a Canon of Its Own”
1:46 - 2:00	“Indigenous Publishing is an Extension of Indigenous Storytelling”
2:01 - 5:20	“Best Practices for Editing Indigenous Text”
5:21 - 7:53	“Editing Indigenous Trauma”
7:54 - 9:00	“Now we have political will... for the first time, ever”

Summary

Gregory Younging was a member of the Opsakwayak Cree Nation. He worked at Theytus Books, the oldest Indigenous publishing house in Canada, as managing editor and publisher, in turn. He was also a writer, professor, and expert on First Nations copyright, among other roles. In 2019, he was posthumously honoured with the President’s Award, the highest accolade bestowed by the Association of Canadian Publishers. In this interview, Younging discusses the advent of Theytus Books, the canon of Indigenous Literature, as well as Indigenous publishing and editing practices.

Questions to Consider While Listening

1. How familiar are you with the Indigenous literary canon? Can you name at least three books and/or authors who would be considered part of this canon?
2. Younging states that a common problem in mainstream writings is that Indigenous peoples and practices are often talked about in the past tense (4:50). Can you think of an example from your own reading or from past school experiences? What can you do to address this problem in a classroom, a textbook, recent news article or other form of media?

3. Summarize Younging's advice for writers and editors working with Indigenous knowledge. Think especially about what you can apply to your own work when discussing or writing about Indigenous peoples and histories.
4. Referring to the Canadian federal government, as well as the wider population, Younging states: "Now we have political will for the first time, ever, to move forward on Indigenous issues" (7:54). What does he mean by this? How can that political will be harnessed to bring about lasting and sustainable change?