

Ethnography and Archaeology as Ideology: The Case of the Stein River Valley¹

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world today, the environmental and social sciences have assumed a new role in resource development. Much of this work is undertaken through the burgeoning field of "impact assessment," whether environmental, social, or heritage. The nature of impact assessment "science" is a growing topic of debate, given the conflicting interests of the environmental, native, government, and corporate interests which are involved in and often pay for this work.

In this paper I shall examine one resource conflict where impact studies have played a major role. In particular, I shall review the ethnographic and archaeological studies done as a result of the proposal to construct a road into, and to log in, the Stein River Valley of British Columbia. My analysis results from my own work as an ethnographer actively involved in the issue as a consultant for the native bands for almost ten years. I analyze the problem, therefore, as experienced from inside the debate, but the perspective set out here is larger than simply that of one "side" of the debate.

Increasingly anthropology is being evaluated as a vehicle for self-critical social analysis (or "deconstruction") and thus as a method of contemporary cultural critique. Written in such a spirit, this paper provides a critical survey of the social scientific research (in this case, ethnography and archaeology) associated with a recent native/environmental/logging controversy in British Columbia. Its purpose is to show how "science" serves social interests. As such, the paper builds on the perspective put forward by James Clifford (*The Predicament of Culture*),² George Mar-

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² Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.

cus, and Michael Fischer (*Anthropology as Cultural Critique*),³ who argue that anthropology should be brought “forcefully into line with its twentieth-century promises of authentically representing cultural differences and using this knowledge as a critical probe into our own ways of life and thought.”⁴

Background: What Is the Stein and Who Is its Community?

The Stein River Valley is located only 160 kilometres from Vancouver. It is an intact watershed, measuring 1,060 square kilometres, surrounded on all sides by high ridges which stand above sweeping forests and meandering valleys. It is an ecological whole — a major river, large long tributary side-creeks, a varied forest, high alpine meadows, glaciers, and mountain peaks.

The Stein River’s lower reaches cut through an old community which stretches along the west bank of the Fraser River from below Lytton to roughly twenty-five miles above Lytton (an area known locally as “the westside”). Except for the large Earls court Farm and several small homesteads, the entire westside is continuous reserve land supporting a population of a couple of hundred people. With its gravel roads (often impassable in spring), gravity irrigation ditches (some of which are still in use), family fishing stations and drying racks, DIA homes (some still without electric power or telephones), the occasional use of horse and buggy, the westside’s identity is distinct. Its integrity is preserved, for one thing, by the area’s dependence for access on an old, motorless two-car reaction ferry which crosses the Fraser River. The ferry is greatly affected by seasonal changes in the river, which can close down vehicular access during high water. The local population walks across the sidewalk on the railway bridge when “the ferry’s out.”

Prior to the road-building and logging boom of the 1960s, the Stein, like many other valleys in British Columbia, was a quiet place, where local people, mostly native, hunted, fished, trapped, and gathered cedar-root, mushrooms, berries, and edible roots. By 1972, however, every other major valley in the area had been logged, and the Forest Service began to look seriously at the feasibility of logging the Stein. The proposal sparked minor resistance which gradually grew over the years. By the mid-1980s a Stein preservation movement emerged, comprising environmentalists, natives, hiking enthusiasts, and local residents. Before, during, and even apart from

³ Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 42-43.

the political conflict associated with exploitation, ethnographic and archaeological information has been central to activities in the valley.

Culture and Development

At the heart of both pro- and anti-logging arguments has been economics — the numbers of jobs and amount of timber lost or gained; the cost of road building and timber hauling; and the potential for tourism development. But equally as important has been the cultural/historical information associated with the valley. To those opposed to logging, the Stein has been regarded as a place for fishing, hunting, food-gathering, and, above all, a sanctuary imbued with a spiritual power that has sustained countless generations of native inhabitants. To those in favour of logging, the valley has been viewed as public Crown land suitable for a multiple-use strategy incorporating logging and recreation, as well as some wilderness and heritage values.

These two “sides” have used ethnographic and archaeological information to construct their arguments. In the case of British Columbia Forest Products (BCFP), archaeological work was undertaken to satisfy the conditions of section 7 of the British Columbia Heritage Conservation Act. This section required that, prior to any major development which would disturb or alter the landscape, and thus endanger heritage sites, a site survey or site investigation be done to locate and evaluate heritage resources in the area, and to assess the impact on these of the proposed development.⁵ The company proposing the development (in this case, BCFP) was responsible for funding the study and for presenting it for review by the Heritage Conservation Branch (HCB), then the department within the Ministry of Tourism, Recreation and Culture designated to manage the province’s heritage resources. Between 1986 and 1988, the Lytton and Mt. Currie Indian bands compiled their own ethnographic and archaeological

⁵ Section 7 of the *Heritage Conservation Act*, (1979 R.S.B.C., Chapter 165), states:

(1) In this section “site investigation” means the examination of a heritage site for recording, removing or salvaging a heritage object; “site survey” means the examination of land for assessing the heritage significance of the land or other property located on the land.

(2) Where, in the opinion of the minister, land contains a heritage site, he may order a site survey, or, where he considers circumstances warrant, a site investigation.

(3) Where, in the opinion of the minister, a heritage site may be altered, damaged or destroyed or is likely to depreciate or become dilapidated, he may order (a) a site survey, or, where he considers circumstances warrant, a site investigation; and (b) the owner of the heritage site to (i) pay for the site survey or site investigation; and (ii) preserve the heritage site until the site survey or site investigation is completed.

reports, first in response to the BCFP report and later as a basis for their own alternative proposal for a Stein tribal heritage park. Two Vancouver-based organizations (the Institute for New Economics and the Western Canada Wilderness Committee) also participated in this heritage study. Their objectives were explicitly to challenge the logging agenda.

A socio-historical analysis of past archaeological/ethnographic research in the Stein reveals two distinct approaches to culture and land. The first (1897-1961) was rooted in the academic and museum community, and focused on culture as a study-object, complete in and of itself. The second, beginning in the 1960s, focused on culture as a component of resource development. Unlike its earlier counterpart, this later phase of research was undertaken outside of the academic institution. Initially it focused on the popular educational and recreational potential of its subject-matter. By the 1970s, however, archaeological research became aligned with provincial land-mapping activity, itself a component of land allocation and development planning. Beginning in 1979, archaeological and ethnographic research had begun to play a role in land and resource development through the new field of impact assessment. By 1988, archaeology and ethnography had become key players in environmental/resource conflicts.

Part II of this paper reviews, in chronological order, the cultural information generated prior to the period of conflict. Part III then examines the cultural research undertaken between 1985 and 1988. This is the central core of the paper, as it contains much of the primary material for this case-study. The final section, Part IV, analyzes the limitations of these recent archaeological and ethnographic positions and offers suggestions for an alternative heritage review process.

PART II: APPROACHING CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

The Stein and Cultural/Historical Research

The anthropologist, Franz Boas (1858-1942), initiated archaeological and ethnographic research at the Stein in 1897 with financial support from Morris K. Jesup, Chairman of the Board of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Boas had designed a five-year long project to study and map the cultural relations between the native peoples of the North Pacific coasts of both North America and Asia. This was a period of enormous change, and Boas believed that it was both urgent and necessary to record as much information (ethnographic, linguistic, and archaeological) about the old cultures as possible before they died or be-

came too contaminated by Western ways.⁶ The regional focus for much of the first year of the Jesup project (undertaken by Boas and a number of his associates) was British Columbia. Lytton, where Boas had spent a few days in 1888 and 1894, was highlighted as an area which might yield good results.

i) Harlan I. Smith

Archaeologist Harlan I. Smith was the first member of the Jesup team to conduct research at the Stein. During the summer of 1897, as part of a larger survey of the Lytton area, Smith studied the north and south banks of the Stein at the mouth, uncovering what he considered to be significant ancient village sites and burial places.⁷ He also hiked several miles upstream, and recorded (with the assistance of his native guide, Jimmie), pictograph sites along the way. In his fieldnotes, Smith commented that at least two of the pictograph sites were places where young people went to fast and bathe during their training period.⁸ He published the results of this summer's work in a Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, entitled *The Archaeology of Lytton*.⁹

Smith also collected as many items from these sites as he could — everything from skeletal remains to shells, pipes, bowls, and other implements — and shipped them to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, where they were catalogued for future academic analysis and evaluated for their worth. Such collecting was considered both important and timely, possibly the last opportunity to obtain these rare pieces of exotica.¹⁰

ii) James A. Teit

James Teit also conducted ethnographic work at the Stein. Like Harlan Smith, he worked closely with Boas on the Jesup project as well as on subsequent projects until his death in 1922. Boas first met Teit at Spence's

⁶ For an overview of the goals of Boas' work in British Columbia, see Ronald Rohner, "Franz Boas: Ethnographer on the Northwest Coast," in *Pioneers of American Anthropology*, ed. June Helm (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 149-222.

⁷ Harlan I. Smith, "Archaeology of Lytton, British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History* 2 (3), 1899.

⁸ This information is contained in Smith's unpublished fieldnotes, a copy of which was obtained from Archives of the Archaeological Survey of Canada, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec.

⁹ Smith, 1899.

¹⁰ For more on this, see, Ira Jacknis "Franz Boas and Exhibits," in George W. Stocking Jr., *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). See also Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985).

Bridge in 1894 and was very impressed by him. He was a Shetlander who had emigrated to Canada in 1884. In just ten years, he had not only familiarized himself with the ways of the local native people, but he had become fluent in their language, and had married a woman from one of the local native bands.

At Boas' suggestion, Teit began to make a written record of Ntlaka'pamux life. This became a lifetime research project, leading to the publication of a major ethnography, *The Thompson Indians of British Columbia*,¹¹ and a series of monographs on basketry, ethnobotany, and tattooing and face and body painting.¹² For all of these, Teit interviewed Ntlaka'pamux Indians throughout the Interior, including Lytton and the Stein. He also collected archaeological and ethnographic artifacts at the Stein.¹³

iii) Charles Hill-Tout

Charles Hill-Tout also conducted ethnographic research in Lytton at the turn of the century. A self-trained anthropologist, he was not directly associated with Boas or the Jesup project.¹⁴ He did, however, assist Smith in Lytton with his archaeological survey during the summer of 1897. Independently, Hill-Tout conducted a series of interviews with Lytton Chief Mischelle on the old ways of his people, which he published as an ethnography of the Nlaka'pamux in 1899.¹⁵ This work contains a number of key

¹¹ *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History* 2 (4): 163-392, 1900.

¹² See James Teit, "Traditions of the Thompson River Indians," *Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society* 6: 1-137, 1898"; "Mythology of the Thompson Indians," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History* 12: 199-416, 1912. See also *Coiled Basketry in British Columbia and Surrounding Region* (Forty-First Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1919-24, Washington, D.C., 1923, edited by H. K. Haerberlin, James Teit and Helen Roberts), in particular, the Appendix. See also James A. Teit, *Tattooing and Face and Body Painting of the Thompson Indians, British Columbia*, Extract from the Bureau of American Ethnology Annual Report #45, 1927-28, 399-439.

¹³ These are included in the museum collections of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec, and the Field Museum, Chicago, Illinois.

¹⁴ Both Teit and Boas were critical of Hill-Tout, and in particular of his tendency to theorize on the basis of sparse data. As Teit noted in a letter to Boas about a paper which Hill-Tout had written on the "Oceanic Origin of the Kwakiutl-Nootka and Salish stocks and the Chinese origin of the Denes and Haida": "his comparisons of Salish and Oceanic words seems [*sic*] to me to be utter rot. I cannot see the slightest analogy between them. The whole papers are full of assertions without anything to back them up." Letter, Teit to Boas, 9 June, 1899, American Museum of Natural History, New York City.

¹⁵ "Notes on the N'tlaka'pamuq of British Columbia, A Branch of the Great Salish Stock of North America," (1899) Reprinted in Ralph Maud (ed.) *The Salish People*, Vol. 1 (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1978). For a comparison of the Ntlaka'pamux research of Teit and Hill-Tout, see, Wendy Wickwire, "Women in Ethnography: The Research of J. A. Teit," unpublished paper.

references to the Stein, in particular, to the pictograph sites, which were said to occur in places where “certain celebrated shamans underwent their fasts and training to gain their powers.”¹⁶ Hill-Tout also explained that some of the paintings (those which were twenty or thirty feet above the ground, of which there are a number along the Stein trail), were considered “to the Indian mind” to be particularly mysterious.¹⁷

iv) David Sanger

After Teit’s death in 1922, formal ethnographic and archaeological activity in the vicinity of the Stein ceased until 1961, when archaeologist David Sanger conducted a site survey on the west bank of the Fraser for the National Museum of Man, Ottawa. The work was part of a larger burial site study of south central British Columbia initiated by Charles Borden because of concern about the uncontrolled looting of burial sites in British Columbia’s southern Interior. The academic objective of the project was to add to the cultural history of the southern Interior.

While he was in the Lytton area, Sanger camped on the property of the Johnny family who lived adjacent to the Stein trail-head, and travelled on horseback along the west side of the Fraser with Andrew Johnny Jr.¹⁸ Like Smith, Sanger hiked up the Stein trail, and recorded pictograph sites, as well as the petroglyph site near the mouth. He was very impressed with the westside, and stressed in his final report that “several seasons could be spent conducting investigations in this area, which has a potential exceeding any area of the interior known to me.”¹⁹

The Stein as a Resource Issue: Popular Education/Recreation

During the 1960s, pictograph enthusiast John Corner, of Vernon, British Columbia, visited and sketched most of the Stein pictograph sites from the mouth upriver to Earl Creek. He later published this information in a book on the pictographs of south central British Columbia.²⁰ By bringing this little-known heritage subject into the popular domain, Corner’s book established rock painting as a “educational recreation resource” — heritage tourism in the offing.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Andrew Johnny Sr., personal communication, July 1988.

¹⁹ David Sanger, “A Burial Site Survey of the Shuswap, Thompson, and Lillooet Area of South Central British Columbia,” ms. prepared for the National Museum of Man, Ottawa, 1961.

²⁰ John Corner, *Pictographs of the Interior of British Columbia* (Vernon: Wayside Press, 1968).

In 1972, the Forest Service under a Social Credit government undertook a feasibility study as a prelude to logging the Stein. It was not until 1976, however, that it officially announced that logging in the Stein would proceed. The delay was due to a two-year moratorium on logging placed on the valley by a New Democratic government.

In response to the logging announcement, conservation groups organized their own unofficial public meetings in Vancouver and Lytton in 1976 and a year later formed the "Save the Stein Coalition." The Coalition was made up of seventeen non-governmental environmental and recreation organizations representing 45,000 members. As a result of its pressure on Forests minister Tom Waterland, the government announced in 1978 the creation of a Stein River Public Liaison Committee, on which members of the Stein Coalition were invited to participate.

Concerned about the lack of public awareness of the Stein valley, Roger Freeman and David Thompson, members of both the Stein Coalition and the Stein Public Liaison Committee, prepared a hiking guide to the area. Published in 1979, *Exploring the Stein River Valley*²¹ was the culmination of two years of research, and months of hiking through densely forested valleys and hillsides. As their main goal was to encourage more people to visit the valley, Thompson and Freeman focused mainly on trail descriptions. However, they also included historical and cultural detail, as well as a summary of the proposed logging plans. Because of this, the book became a significant catalyst for drawing the logging issue into the general public domain.

These publications by Corner and Thompson/Freeman marked the end of the utilization of archaeological and ethnographic information for strictly educational and recreational reasons. After 1979, with the logging agenda more clearly in view, cultural research became more political.

The Stein as a Resource Issue: Allocation and Mapping

In the 1970s, land resource allocation was becoming increasingly more important, entailing a new concern to map heritage sites throughout the province. This was the objective of the archaeological research team led by James Baker during the summer of 1973. Funded by the Heritage Conservation Branch, the team carried out an archaeological site survey along the westside of the Fraser, mapping a total of 122 sites, of which 49 were on the banks of the Stein River.²²

²¹ David Thompson and Roger Freeman, *Exploring the Stein River Valley* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1979).

²² James Baker, "Site Survey in the Lytton Region, B.C. 1973," Heritage Conservation Branch, Victoria, B.C.

Toward the late 1970s, a much larger heritage mapping study of the entire Lillooet-Fraser region was undertaken by a team of researchers. In their published report, *Lillooet-Fraser Heritage Resource Study*, the authors noted that in Lytton archaeology was a major heritage resource. Of 350 archaeological sites along a 150-mile stretch between Chilliwack and Texas Creek, just under half the sites found in the Lytton area were assessed to be the best preserved and the most important in the region. The report suggested that the sites at the Stein's mouth could provide a focus for the interpretation of Indian history.²³

Stein Heritage as a Resource Issue: Development Assessment

In 1979, while the Public Liaison Committee was meeting to discuss the logging plans for the Stein, the Heritage Conservation Branch initiated a "judgemental site" inventory along the main Stein Valley trail between Cottonwood Creek and the bridge near the mouth of the Stein.²⁴ Its goal was to assess the significance of sites and their sensitivity to land-altering agencies associated with logging activities, and to provide heritage resource management input into BCFP's plans.²⁵ Undertaken by archaeologists Mike Rousseau and Georgie Howe, the project consisted of a six-day survey along a 32-km. corridor during which eight new sites were discovered. Four of these were pictograph sites. Rousseau and Howe also re-recorded all but two of the pictograph sites which had been previously recorded by Smith and Sanger. This was the first study directly associated with the logging plans for the valley.

By 1982 logging looked imminent. The Regional Manager of the Forest Service announced that timber from the Stein would be hauled out via the lower Stein Valley. As well, the owners of Earls court Farm were notified of the intention to expropriate a right-of-way across their farm for access to the Stein trail. With their year and a half long search for a less destructive access route ignored by what they viewed as a unilateral decision by the government, the members of the Stein Coalition withdrew from the Public Liaison Committee, following which the committee disintegrated.

In February 1985, the Minister of Forests made a formal announcement that road building would begin as soon as possible in preparation for logging. By this time, however, resistance to the logging proposal had begun to build among native and environmental groups and local residents.

²³ Lillooet-Fraser Heritage Resource Study, vol. 1 (Victoria, 1980), 114.

²⁴ Mike Rousseau, "Thompson-Okanagan Impact Assessment 1979: Final Report," Heritage Conservation Branch, Victoria, 69-75.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 69.

Within months, the local residents of Lytton and Lillooet had established a "Stein Action Committee," and a new group of Vancouver Stein supporters had formed a "Stein Wilderness Alliance." Meanwhile the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, the Vancouver-based environmental organization, launched an educational campaign on the Stein which included widespread newspaper coverage, public meetings and public debates. The boldest strategy of all, however, was a Labour Day Stein Voices for the Wilderness festival, hosted by native and non-native groups, which attracted 500 people. By October 1985, the contract for the road construction was awarded.

The Stein as a Resource Issue: Development Conflict

In November 1985, the Vancouver-based Institute for New Economics (INE), a non-profit research institute, released a report on the Stein. Supported by the two tribal councils (the Lillooet and the Ntlaka'pamux), and funded by the Donner Canadian Foundation, this study, unlike the economic studies which preceded it, examined the development proposal in light of the socio-political history of an area dominated by a boom-and-bust economy. It concluded that the environmentally disruptive, one-time character of the logging proposal was not appropriate to the emerging structural needs of the local communities, needs which emphasize greater economic diversification and resource sustainability.²⁶

The INE report included a brief ethnographic reconstruction (drawn mainly from the research of James Teit) of the Ntlaka'pamux pre-contact seasonal cycle and the religious life, showing the stability of the culture over time and its dependence on wilderness. It also drew attention to several key ethnographic features of the valley, such as the use of the Stein trail as a traditional travel and food-gathering route of the Lytton and Mt. Currie peoples. With its goal to counteract the logging agenda, this ethnographic study was the first undertaken explicitly in the context of development and conflict.

**PART III: DEVELOPMENT CONFLICT AND THE ROLE OF
ARCHAEOLOGY/ETHNOGRAPHY: 1985-1990**

From 1985 to 1988 a number of archaeological and ethnographic reports were released, all of which were undertaken in a context of development conflict.

²⁶ Michael M'Gonigle, "The Stein Valley: An Economic Report for the People of the Thompson-Lillooet Region" (Vancouver: Institute for New Economics, 1985).

1985: Industry's Assessment in the Context of Conflict

During the late summer and early fall of 1985, while plans for the road were being developed, BCFP hired Ian Wilson Consultants Ltd. to conduct its required preliminary heritage impact assessment study along the route of the proposed Stein haulroad. The report was released in October 1985, just as road construction crews were surveying the access road under the scrutiny of protesters and media.²⁷

In his thirteen days on the Stein trail studying the proposed right-of-way, Wilson recorded eight new heritage sites — three lithic scatters, one cache pit site, two pictograph sites, one culturally modified tree site, and one historic cabin.²⁸ He also re-examined the sites recorded by Rousseau in 1979.

Of the sites he examined, Wilson assessed four to be in danger of impact from road construction. Of these four, he noted that two would be totally destroyed, but, as both were assessed to be of low heritage significance, their loss did not pose a problem. He noted that two other sites, pictograph panels, due to their location on flats below talus slopes across which the proposed haulroad would be constructed, might be in danger of impact from falling rocks, but that such damage could be avoided by “care . . . exercised during construction including front loading of material from the slope.”²⁹

On the heritage value of the Stein trail, Wilson stated that the apparent lack of archaeological site density beyond the mouth of the river suggested to him that the area “was only sporadically utilized on a subsistence basis,

²⁷ Ian Wilson, “Stein River Haulroad Heritage Resources Inventory and Impact Assessment,” report prepared for British Columbia Forest Products Limited, Boston Bar, B.C., 1985.

²⁸ A “lithic scatter site” is an archaeological site without features visible on the surface (for example, a housepit) but with (chipped) stone present on the surface. There is no connection of size or function in the typology, though in some contexts (geographical/temporal/cultural) lithic scatters may normally represent a certain functional type (for example, small campsites). A campsite may also have bone materials on the surface, but the presence of bone does not make it a “lithic” scatter (by definition). “Lithic scatters” might also be present at the sites with evidence of semi-sedentary occupation (or permanent habitation), i.e., lithic scatters and other features are not mutually exclusive, though in some contexts they might be so. Cache pit sites are small circular or oval depressions in the ground. They are the remains of underground pits excavated for food storage. Pictograph sites consist of one or more images painted on rock faces. Culturally modified trees (CMTs) are trees with evidence of human use. Bark-stripped trees are the most common, but there are also trees with test-holes, stumps, trees that have had planks cut out from them, etc. Most (but not all) of the CMTs in British Columbia are cedars. Kitty Bernick, personal communication, January 1991.

²⁹ Wilson, 68.

probably only for short periods of time.”³⁰ He surmised, on the basis of few archaeological finds west of Earl Creek, that the Stein trail as a route from Lytton to Mount Currie was not “a major travel corridor” but rather “only occasionally used,” and was “more commonly used to gain access to specific resources.”³¹

An ethnographic research report by consultants Randy Bouchard and Dorothy Kennedy was appended to Wilson’s archaeological report. Entitled “Indian Land Use and Indian History of the Stein River Valley,”³² this was not an impact assessment but rather a descriptive historical summary and an inventory of native place-names and food-gathering areas in the valley.³³ Although not well integrated with Wilson’s report, the ethnographic appendix did make conclusions which reinforced the archaeological findings. For one, Bouchard and Kennedy concluded that the Stein trail was probably not used as a general travel route, but rather, only sporadically as a battle-route.³⁴ Secondly, they concluded from their field interviews that the Stein was not used during this century for spiritual purposes, and they did not consider the issue further.³⁵

1985: Environmentalist Response

In the fall of 1985, the Stein Action Committee and the Institute for New Economics obtained funds from both the McLean Foundation and the British Columbia Heritage Trust to undertake an independent archaeological survey of the Cottonwood Creek area. The object was to study the archaeological potential of the Cottonwood Creek area from its headwaters in the alpine down to its confluence with the Stein. Archaeologist Mike Rousseau led the survey, and noted in his final report (“An Impact Assessment and Inventory of Heritage Resources Within the Upper Stein River Drainage Basin, Southwestern British Columbia”) that there was very

³⁰ Ibid., 63.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Appendix One of Ian Wilson, “Stein River Haulroad Heritage Resources, Inventory and Impact Assessment,” 1985.

³³ Technically, such an ethnography is not expected to be part of the archaeological impact assessment. It is the responsibility of the Archaeology Branch to manage archaeological sites/resources, but not ethnographic sites/resources. In practice, however, the Branch encourages archaeological consultants to include an ethnographic section, mainly as background for locating and assessing the archaeological sites, and to provide a context for the archaeology. (R. A. Kenny, personal communication, 31 May 1990; Kitty Bernick, personal communication, January 1991).

³⁴ Ibid., 133.

³⁵ Ibid., 93.

little tangible evidence of significant cultural activity in the areas surveyed.³⁶

Some months later, in January 1986, the Lytton and Mt. Currie bands released their response to the BCFP Stein heritage impact assessment in the form of a formal report entitled, "Stein River Heritage: Summary and Evaluation."³⁷ Dana Lepofsky, the archaeological consultant for this report, offered the following criticisms of Wilson's report. First, she drew attention to two large and well-known lower valley pictograph sites which had been recorded by Smith and Sanger but not re-visited by Wilson. Secondly, she assessed the sites for impact and concluded that four, not two, sites were in danger of impact from falling boulders. Finally, she challenged the assumption that a pictograph was a physical artifact only, suggesting instead that the definition be expanded to include the images *within* their environmental context.³⁸ According to this definition, the Stein pictographs were clearly subject to new levels of impact. Indeed, Lepofsky suggested that with an appropriate contextual definition of a pictograph, the entire valley might be seen as a complete site insofar as the pictographs were themselves directly related to the valley — for example, as guides to good hunting areas or places of special spiritual power. Viewed as a totality, they formed a complete network of geographical and spiritual meaning. This approach implied a very different analytical perspective than that utilized by BCFP.³⁹

The present author reviewed the ethnographic component of the BCFP report. She cited additional ethnographic evidence showing that the Stein trail was used more than just sporadically for battles.⁴⁰ Teit had noticed in his monograph, *The Lillooet Indians*, that the Mount Currie and Lytton people were once on friendly terms and travelled back and forth to visit one another.⁴¹ Such evidence provided broader cultural meaning to the environment surrounding the trail and, therefore, to the site of the proposed road. Citing John Corner's *Pictographs of the Interior of British Columbia*, she also drew attention to the fact that pictographs along trails

³⁶ Report Prepared for the Stein Heritage Committee, the Institute for New Economics and the B.C. Heritage Trust, 30 October 1985.

³⁷ Wendy C. Wickwire and Dana S. Lepofsky, "A Report Prepared for the Lytton and Mt. Currie Indian Bands," February 1986.

³⁸ In making such a statement, Lepofsky was in fact also challenging the legal definition of a pictograph site provided by the Heritage Conservation Branch Guidelines.

³⁹ "Stein River Heritage: Summary and Evaluation, Part Two: Archaeological Summary," 1986, 59-61.

⁴⁰ "Stein River Heritage: Summary and Evaluation: Part One: Ethnographic Summary," 1986, 9-12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

are often indicative of well-travelled trails and migration routes.⁴² The Stein battles were reassessed in light of the evidence that they were possibly brief post-contact occurrences.⁴³ Finally, she criticized the BCFP ethnography for its lack of attention to the spiritual character of the valley for native cultural life.

1986/87: The Issues Become Public and Political

The heritage debate became public in January 1986, shortly after the provincial government appointed an eight-member Wilderness Advisory Committee to address the Stein and other issues. Archaeology and ethnography figured prominently at the Wilderness Advisory Hearings. At the Vancouver sessions, Dana Lepofsky, archaeological consultant for the Lytton and Mt. Currie Indian bands, argued that a road would seriously impact pictograph sites, while Ian Wilson, consultant for BCFP, stated that logging posed little threat to the sites.⁴⁴

The committee evaluated both sides of the cultural argument and concluded that logging should take place to save jobs. It recommended, however, that the archaeological sites of the lower canyon "be treated carefully and with consultation with the native groups whose heritage is at stake," and that the road not be constructed without a formal agreement between the Lytton band and the provincial government.⁴⁵

While the government evaluated the results of the Wilderness Advisory Committee, the native bands moved ahead on their own agenda for the valley. Drawing on the example of a native wilderness camp on the Queen Charlottes, the bands extended an already operating wilderness programme in the Stein and established a Rediscovery programme with its base in the heart of the valley — ironically, at the site of the first block of timber later slated to be cut. They also worked jointly with the Vancouver-based Western Canada Wilderness Committee to clear a so-called heritage trail through the valley, approximately along the traditional route. As in the previous year, they hosted their annual Stein Valley Voices for the Wilderness Festival, drawing larger numbers. Both the Rediscovery programme and the Stein Festival provided outlets for the native people of Lytton and

⁴² *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁴⁴ Glenn Bohn, "Cave Art Peril Cited: Researchers Fear for Stein Heritage," *Vancouver Sun*, 30 January 1986.

⁴⁵ *A Wilderness Mosaic*. Report of the Wilderness Advisory Committee (Victoria: The Queen's Printer, 1986), 42-43.

Mt. Currie to make public their cultural and spiritual bond with the Stein valley and their opposition to logging.

In late 1986, the provincial government announced that, after considering the Wilderness Advisory Committee's report, it would proceed with logging. In this decision, they ignored the recommendation that no road be built without the formal agreement of the Lytton band, stating that Chief Ruby Dunstan of the Lytton band had refused to negotiate. Chief Dunstan immediately responded that the Forests Minister had made no attempt at all to contact her. Confrontation loomed again, especially when the government signed a letter approving the BCFP logging plan.

With logging controversies on Meares Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands, the Stein became the forest industry's symbolic stand against what it perceived to be the erosion of its land base. With a \$200,000 grant from the British Columbia Council of Forest Industries, BCFP, and the Cariboo Lumber Manufacturers' Association, the industry launched its own "Share-the-Stein" public relations campaign. Establishing store-front offices in Boston Bar, Lytton, and Lillooet, the campaign promoted the benefits of a so-called "multiple-use" strategy for the valley. There was little sympathy within this movement for native land claims.⁴⁶

In response to the Share the Stein campaign, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee organized its own series of public meetings and slide presentations in the local communities of Boston Bar, Lytton, and Lillooet. In contrast to the Share the Stein campaign, the representatives of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee endorsed the native spiritual and physical connection to the land. This triggered strong opposition from the many Share the Stein supporters and loggers present, especially at the Lillooet meeting. University of British Columbia forestry professor, Les Reed, addressed the differences head on at this meeting, when he questioned the role of cultural considerations in resource development.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Reporter Ben Parfitt covered the issues of the Share Movement in an article, "Both Sides Dig In As Verbal War Intensifies in Stein Valley," *The Vancouver Sun*, 19 May 1988, F1. One of the key players in the "Share the Stein" movement, Patrick Armstrong, voiced his perspective on native claims in this article, "If you ask my personal opinion, this land belongs to all the people of B.C. I philosophically cannot accept that the land belongs to some other group collectively. I personally don't accept land-claims."

⁴⁷ "Tempers Flare At Stein Meeting," *Bridge River-Lillooet News*, 28 October 1987, 1. Reed stated at the Lillooet meeting that he wished "to dispel . . . the myths that have grown up about the Stein," in particular, that the Stein was the ancestral home of the Lytton and Mt. Currie people. In Reed's view, the ancestors of the Lillooet and Mt. Currie peoples were a "mobile people chasing mobile resources. . . . This is our land and does not belong to any one group. If we want to reinvent history, let's be open about it. Let's not invent history to suit wilderness." Reed took his "myths about the Stein" to the *Vancouver Sun*, advocating that "if you can't get the Indians to

1987/1989: *Impact Assessment vs. Cultural Initiative*

In October 1987, the Lytton and Mt. Currie bands organized a ceremonial signing of a strongly-worded "Stein Declaration" in which they stressed that it was *their* prerogative to decide on the valley's future:

As the direct descendants of the aboriginal peoples who have inhabited, shared and sustained, and been sustained by the Stein valley for tens of thousands of years down to the present, our authority in this watershed is inescapable. . . . We ourselves have never dismissed this obligation: we have never entered an agreement with any nation or government which would abrogate our authority and responsibility in the Stein watershed.⁴⁸

As an assertion of *living* cultural claim upon the valley by peoples articulating their own *continuing* relationship to the area, this statement stood in sharp contrast to the static, site-specific approach of industry consultants.

In February 1988, Ian Wilson released a revised edition of his 1985 "Heritage Resources Inventory and Impact Assessment."⁴⁹ Among his revisions was his recording of the two lower valley pictograph sites which he had omitted from his original report. This new data, however, did not alter his original conclusions. Wilson noted that because the paintings at these sites were on a protected rock face, he anticipated no damage from falling rock. He advised, however, that care be exercised during road construction in the vicinity, for example, by the use of a front loader to ensure their safety.⁵⁰

Like Wilson, Bouchard and Kennedy also revised the ethnographic appendix, but with no alteration to their earlier conclusions.

Just a month after the release of Wilson's revised impact assessment, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee made its entry into the Stein heritage debate with the publication of its own impact assessment study of

sit down and talk, then you go ahead and build the road." Glenn Bohn, "Lawyer Raps Statements on Stein Logging," *Vancouver Sun*, 24 December 1987, A15. In making such a statement, Reed had broken the agreement of the Wilderness Advisory Committee, of which he was a member, not to make public statements about the report. Bryan Williams, chairperson of the committee, rebuked Reed for his statement: "It isn't a question of aboriginal rights. It's a question of a group of people who live there, who have spiritual concerns and values, who have fished and hunted there. . . . You have to understand that it's a canyon. When you build a road in a canyon, it's almost impossible to give any kind of assurance, from what we were told, that you wouldn't destroy those values." *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ "Lytton and Mt. Currie Indian Bands Stein Declaration," signed in October 1987. Copy in author's files.

⁴⁹ Ian Wilson, "Stein River Haulroad Heritage Resources Inventory and Impact Assessment," report prepared for British Columbia Forest Products Ltd., Boston Bar, revised edition, 1988.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 94.

culturally modified trees in the lower and middle canyons of the valley.⁵¹ Undertaken by a dendrochronologist, the study applied a similar argument to trees as had already been applied to pictographs, that is, that certain trees were historical and cultural entities which would be destroyed by the logging activity. Marion Parker surveyed portions of the proposed logging road as well as some of the proposed logging blocks. Using an increment core sampling method, he determined the ages of certain trees. He also recorded six culturally modified tree (CMT) sites, many of which he estimated were in use between 1839 and 1936. Parker concluded that no logging or road-building should occur without a thorough investigation of the dendrochronology of the area.

One of the CMTs featured in Parker's report had pictographs etched in charcoal on the open face of its scar. This very unusual archaeological discovery caught the attention of a *Vancouver Sun* reporter who wrote about it in an article entitled, "Native Art Lives on Stein Trees."⁵²

In response to the public attention given to the Western Canada Wilderness Committee report, BCFP contracted Ian Wilson Consultants Ltd. to review it. Accordingly, Wilson, assisted by archaeologist, Morley Eldridge, revisited the CMT sites, and subsequently published a critique of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee's study. Wilson and Eldridge concluded that Parker had over-estimated the impact of the road on CMTs.⁵³ They also noted that only in a few places would the road affect culturally modified trees.⁵⁴ Wilson and Eldridge criticized Parker's increment core methodology (where information is obtained without harming the tree), for its lack of "utility for CMT research." They argued that "from the standpoint of scientific value, more information can be gained from these trees by cutting them down and obtaining stem-round samples than from avoiding them, even if non-destructive increment cores were to be obtained."⁵⁵ Wilson and Eldridge also stated that the trees are better felled in any event, as "scientific information, particularly regarding the oldest CMTs, would in fact be lost if the trees are not cut because the trees rot and die with age."⁵⁶

⁵¹ Marion L. Parker, "Preliminary Dendrochronological Investigations in the Stein River Valley: Tree Age, Size and Modification by Aboriginal Use," Contract Report to the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Vancouver, B.C., March 1988.

⁵² Mark Hume, *Vancouver Sun*, 5 April 1988, B1.

⁵³ Ian Wilson and Morley Eldridge, "Report On A Brief Field Trip, Stein River Valley," report prepared for B.C. Forest Products, Boston Bar, B.C., 1988, 8.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

In the same study, Wilson made an official record for the Resources Management Branch charcoal pictograph described in Parker's report, noting that he had some doubts, however, concerning both its age and authenticity. Regarding impact from road construction, he noted that because of its location .5 kilometres east of the proposed haulroad, "no adverse impacts will occur as a result of the proposed road."⁵⁷

Wilson also made an official record of a pictograph cave in the valley which he located by helicopter high above the trail on the north side of the river several kilometres above the cable crossing. His conclusion about this site was that no impacts would occur, as it was "well removed from the proposed logging road and does not appear to be even in sight of the nearest proposed logging block."⁵⁸ Wilson explained that he had used a newspaper photo and report (*Province*, 29 Feb. 1987) to find the cave.⁵⁹

In early May 1988, the Stein Task Force, headed by Patrick Armstrong, distributed an eight-page tabloid entitled "Share the Stein" to 150,000 households (including provincial and federal politicians) in Vancouver and elsewhere. The paper, which favoured a multi-use strategy for the valley, also featured highlights from interviews with BCFP's archaeological and ethnographic consultants, Ian Wilson and Dorothy Kennedy. In an article entitled "Forest Companies Protect Native Culture," it was stated that the BCFP impact assessment study was "the most extensive archaeological and ethnographic . . . study ever conducted for a proposed logging road."⁶⁰ Wilson claimed that "the whole road was designed and engineered around the archaeological sites," and he praised BCFP "for taking such an interest in native heritage."⁶¹ Kennedy similarly praised the company, adding that "BCFP have gone beyond the call of duty in their efforts to locate and protect cultural heritage."⁶²

In the late spring of 1988, Lytton and Mt. Currie Chiefs Ruby Dunstan and Leonard Andrew, in meetings with Forests minister Dave Parker, argued that they needed time to conduct their own studies on the tourism, economic, and heritage values in the valley. They informed Parker that the

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Wilson, 1988, 2. In fact, this site was discovered in January 1986 by photographer Robert Semeniuk and the author. It was highly publicized at the time by Glenn Bohn of the *Vancouver Sun*. See "Cave Art Peril Cited: Researchers Fear for Stein Heritage," 30 January 1986.

⁶⁰ Forest Companies Protect Native Culture," in *Share the Stein*, Spring 1988.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

NI'akapxm Nation Development Corporation had received funds from the Native Economic Development Fund for a Stein study. Both chiefs stressed to the Forests ministry that no development of the Stein should occur until their study had been completed. After bitter negotiations, Dave Parker finally agreed to this request and allowed the native people the summer to compile their reports.

Although the main thrust of this native project was economic (focusing on tourism), some of the funds were allotted to ethnographic and archaeological study because these values were now central to a different form of economic development than had hitherto been contemplated. In conjunction with the heritage study and impact assessment already undertaken by the native bands, the proposal for a Stein Cultural Interpretive Centre for the valley turned the whole issue of impact assessment on its head.

The native heritage study focused on two areas — the significance of the valley's pictographs and an oral history of the Stein community. For the pictograph study, the bands imported archaeologist Brian Molyneux from England. He examined the sites and publicly reported that they were "absolutely astounding. . . . In the 15 to 20 years that I've spent studying rock art, when I say this site is world-class, I'm not kidding."⁶³ Such a statement from an outside expert stood in sharp contrast to the earlier statements made to the press by local archaeologist Mike Rousseau that the Stein archaeological sites were "not particularly unique"⁶⁴ and by Ian Wilson that a road through the valley would not have an impact on the sites.⁶⁵ The band reports were completed in October 1988 and presented to Forests minister Dave Parker.⁶⁶ To date, there has been no response from the Forests ministry.

While the NI'akapxm project was in progress during the summer of 1988, BCFP initiated another heritage impact assessment study of the valley along the proposed right-of-way to the west of the cable crossing. For this work, archaeologists Ian Wilson and Morley Eldridge were contracted to re-survey the final right-of-way alignment to ensure that known sites were avoided and also to identify and evaluate any additional sites

⁶³ "Stein Pictograph Art Absolutely Astounding," *Times-Colonist*, 30 July 1988, A3.

⁶⁴ Glenn Bohn, "Stein's Historic Sites Sought Before Logging Work Begins," *Vancouver Sun*, 14 September 1985, A13.

⁶⁵ *Share the Stein*.

⁶⁶ The author undertook the ethnographic component of the project. It was a month-long field study of the Stein community leading to a report for the NI'akapxm Nation Development Corporation entitled, "The Stein: Its People Speak" (September 1988).

within the right-of-way.⁶⁷ The overall conclusions and recommendations of this new report remained essentially the same as those of the earlier BCFP studies even after a more expanded study of the CMTs in the valley. Of 217 CMTs which Wilson and Eldridge identified, they noted that the building of the proposed haulroad would have a minimal effect on the CMTs, as only thirty-four of these (or 15 per cent of the total) would actually be felled.⁶⁸ They reiterated their position that the scientific significance of these trees could be mitigated by taking stem round samples from each.⁶⁹

In September 1988, the New Zealand-based multinational corporation, Fletcher-Challenge, officially took over British Columbia Forest Products. Soon after, it announced that there would be a one-year-long moratorium on any development in the Stein. The moratorium ended in 1990, and, as yet, no decisions have been made on future plans for the valley.

PART IV: ETHNOGRAPHY/ARCHAEOLOGY AS IDEOLOGY

This paper has examined the heritage research undertaken in the context of one environmental controversy. It is not an isolated case, however. With the scale of mega-developments in the province (logging, highway construction, dam construction, mining, etc.) during the last two decades, heritage impact assessment has become a significant research area. For many archaeologists, this form of contract work has become the major source of employment. Although they are generally regarded as independent and neutral, this is not so.

In the case of the Stein, the BCFP consultants examined the archaeological sites along the proposed haulroad and concluded that few were in danger of impact, and that where there was potential impact, this could be successfully mitigated. Meanwhile, the consultants for the native bands examined the same sites and concluded that some sites, especially pictographs, would be affected. The BCFP researchers studied the Stein trail and concluded that it was used only sporadically for battling, while the band consultants examined the trail and concluded that it was a well-used trail for a variety of peaceful cultural purposes. The Western Canada Wilderness Committee examined the heritage and culturally modified trees along the haulroad and concluded that many were in danger of damage

⁶⁷ Ian Wilson and Morley Eldridge, "Stein River Haulroad Route Refinements, Heritage Resources Inventory and Impact Assessment," report prepared for British Columbia Forest Products, Boston Bar, 1.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

from road-building. The BCFP archaeologists looked at the same trees and concluded that many trees should actually be cut down for scientific purposes. Although arguably objective, in fact the conclusions reached by both sides support the interests of those sides.

Context as Content: The Limits of Artifactual Archaeology

Archaeological impact assessment studies are initiated in response to proposed development projects which will disturb or alter the landscape, potentially endangering archaeological sites. Formerly required by the Heritage Conservation Branch (HCB), and now required by the Archaeology Branch (AB) under the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry Responsible for Culture, such studies are paid for by the company proposing the development. On completion, they are evaluated by the AB. It was this requirement which led to the BCFP heritage site inventory and evaluation along the thirty-four kilometre Stein corridor, the area proposed for the haulroad.

There are serious problems with this heritage review process, however. First, it defines the landscape narrowly as “an inventory of sites” within a development zone. Such an approach not only separates individual sites from their larger context but also it further reduces these to the physical remains which were left at specific places sometime in the past.

The handling of pictographs and CMTs illustrates the problem well. Following the guidelines of the HCB, the industry archaeologist concluded that damage due to road construction would be minimal. In contrast, the native bands’ consultant defined a pictograph more broadly and concluded that the impact of a road would be serious.

In the case of pictographs, ethnographic interpretation can be utilized effectively in the archaeological review process. For example, ethnographic interpretation of the religious life and ritual associated with these pictograph sites supports the view that everything is connected. The aural quality of the place, the special rock formations, the bend in the river at a particular point, the mythology of the place — all these come together to make the place suitable for painting.⁷⁰ Thus in assessing the impact of

⁷⁰ On the subject of pictography, the work of James Teit is valuable, for he focused on the native understanding of the paintings at a time when few others did. See, for example, “Notes on Rock Paintings in General” (unpublished paper; copy obtained from the Provincial Archives of British Columbia). See also “A Rock Painting of the Thompson River Indians, British Columbia,” *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. 8, 1896: 227-30. Teit included further information on the religious significance of painting and its associated colours in his monograph, *Tattooing and Face and Body Painting of the Thompson Indians, British Columbia*, extract from the Bureau of American Ethnology Annual Report #45, 1927-28, 399-439.

logging on rock art, ethnography has a very important, practical function in archaeological interpretation.

Unfortunately, however, ethnography's potential to inform archaeology is rarely realized due to the restrictions placed on it by the AB. This branch is charged with "managing" *archaeological* (not ethnographic) sites and "resources." Consequently, it excludes ethnographic interpretation as a factor in the impact assessment except as an aid to locating archaeological sites or as providing a "setting" for the archaeological data.⁷¹

The limits of this narrowly defined function of ethnography in archaeological impact assessment study are evident in the BCFP Stein heritage studies. On the one hand, the archaeologist recorded the "sites" and assessed the impact on these from road-building and logging, while, on the other, the ethnographers undertook a separate and unrelated inventory of native place names and food-gathering areas, with no reference whatsoever to the impact on these from logging. Other than to provide a loose "setting" for the archaeological inventory, there is no apparent reason for including an ethnographic component in this report.

The approach to CMTs in the Stein is similarly limited. One group rationalized the cutting of CMTs in the name of science,⁷² while another rationalized their preservation on the basis of their place in the larger forest ecosystem, from which they might derive some heritage value.

In the name of neutrality and fact-finding, one treats culture as past, its remains as dead and isolated artifacts; the other treats culture, though changed, as present and ongoing, its meaning still evident in many sites in their living context.

Context as Content: The Potential of Ethnography

A major weakness of the inventory approach to heritage assessment is its reliance upon tangible physical remains, to the exclusion of all else. In areas where there are habitation sites and burial sites, there will naturally be tangible remains to be assessed. In a valley like the Stein, however, which was utilized over a wide territory for hunting, fishing, spiritual, and travel purposes, tangible remains may be few and often difficult to uncover. Low archaeological visibility does not necessarily mean low archaeological significance. Because major decisions are being made on the basis of low

⁷¹ R. A. Kenny, Senior Program Co-ordinator, Archaeology and Outdoor Recreation Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, personal communication, 31 May 1990.

⁷² As the AB does not recognize CMTs as archaeological sites, Wilson was not actually required to include these in his study. The fact that he did study these in some depth suggests that archaeological consultants are not necessarily bound strictly to the specifications of the AB guidelines.

site-density and therefore low heritage value, the criteria for defining significance need rethinking.

The BCFP archaeological assessment of the Stein trail from Lytton to Mt. Currie illustrates this point well. It concluded that, due to sparse archaeological finds along the trail beyond the lower valley, there was probably only sporadic use of the area. However, such a conclusion was drawn from the presence of *tangible* remains to the exclusion of all else. Ethnographic analysis, for example, might yield a very different assessment of the heritage value of the area.

The ethnographic record (both archival and present-day) of the Nlaka'pamux people, which is unusually full, explains why there are few tangible remains in the Stein valley. It also provides a rationale for the valley's heritage significance, regardless of the number of artifacts listed in a government inventory.

According to the early record, most of which was compiled by Teit, the large village sites such as those at the Stein's mouth and along the westside functioned as semi-permanent bases which, during the salmon season and coldest winter months, were occupied by most of the people. During the rest of the year, however, most of the young and able were in distant areas hunting and gathering, often for many months at a time. With its close proximity to large winter village sites, the Stein provided easy trails and access to deer, goat, bear, and other animals, fish, mushrooms, and other edible plants. The relationship of the contemporary communities to the valley corroborates this. All of the native families on the westside of the Fraser have hunted, fished, and gathered in the Stein.⁷³ Many pinpoint the Cottonwood Creek area in the central valley as a favoured hunting and fishing area. Many of the westside men trapped along the side creeks of the Stein.

This corroborates commonsense understanding. Prior to contact, native peoples travelled long distances on foot with great speed. Their gear — knives, containers, clothing, etc. — was important to them, so they would rarely have left it behind for later archaeologists to pick up. Even the more recent Stein trappers left little tangible evidence of their activities of just forty years ago.

According to several battle stories recorded by Teit, the Lytton and Mount Currie people travelled "along the usual route up Styne Creek" in about two and a half days.⁷⁴ Among those who have hiked along difficult

⁷³ Wickwire, "The Stein: Its People Speak."

⁷⁴ James Teit, unpublished fieldnotes. Copy courtesy of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

trails, the Stein traverse to Mt. Currie is considered an easy route. Prior to the construction of the Cariboo Road along the Fraser River, the Stein trail would clearly have offered an easier alternative to the coast than the Fraser Canyon, where scaffolding was required to manoeuvre along certain places.

Ethnographic study of the religious life of the Nlaka'pamux also explains both the significance of places like the Stein for spiritual training, and why there would be few artifacts deposited at these sites. As James Teit's detailed accounts show, traditional Nlaka'pamux religion was one without a lot of paraphernalia. Painted images of their religious experiences are among the few tangible remains which have survived in situ. Notes made by Teit, Smith, and Hill-Tout about these painting sites reveal that they were used for spiritual purposes. Artifactual evidence, therefore, is a small piece in the puzzle. Archaeologist David Sanger, who conducted research at the Stein in 1961, noted the spiritual quality of the valley:

Clearly to my Thompson friends the Stein was more than a beautiful valley, a place for roots and berries, a place to hunt deer and mountain goat. It was sacred. It embodied a religion far older than Christianity, one that preached the oneness of humans and the spirits that surround us. . . .⁷⁵

For these reasons, it is inappropriate to assess the heritage value of the Stein and places like it according to criteria which do not apply — the presence of artifactual remains where there would have been few in the first place. That burial and habitation sites are found at the mouth but not at the headwaters does not necessarily mean that the mouth was utilized while the headwaters were not. Both may have been well utilized, but in different ways.

Finally, the most obvious problem with relying upon the presence of physical artifacts alone to assess heritage value is that, of those few objects which were at one time deposited along the trail for religious or other purposes, many have since been removed by collectors. Extensive artifact collection by professionals, local natives, hikers, and pot hunters has taken place in the Stein and elsewhere in the Lytton area for over a century. Such collecting was one of the main activities of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century anthropologists and archaeologists.⁷⁶ Indeed, many of the surface remains in the area were removed and placed in museums

⁷⁵ Dr. David Sanger, University of Maine, in a letter to the author, June 1988. The letter was later published in *Stein: The Way of the River*, 179.

⁷⁶ For a full account of the history of early artifact collection in British Columbia, see Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985).

as early as 1897 by Harlan Smith and James Teit. Countless others have been lost to private collectors and pot hunters. Consequently, a survey of the Stein trail prior to the era of "collecting" would probably have yielded significantly more tangible evidence of occupation than the surveys of 1979 or 1985.⁷⁷ Today mainly pictographs on large rock-faces and boulders remain in place, probably because they are too large to remove. Some paintings which were made on smaller stones in the Stein were collected, and at least one of these survives today at the Kamloops Museum.⁷⁸

To evaluate the heritage value of an area, therefore, on the basis of tangible remains, when most of those tangible remains have been removed, is simply self-defeating. In light of such collecting, the intangible rather than the tangible remains are again the more reliable indicators of heritage value.

CONCLUSION: TOWARD A RELEVANT ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

An ideological choice clearly underlies the positions taken by the two parties involved in this work. For the one, protection of a living culture was key. Although changed, culture was viewed as something present and ongoing, its meaning still evident in the many sites in their living context. For the other, making an inventory of the remnants of a dead and dying culture was all that was necessary to fulfil the objectives of the formal guidelines of the Heritage Conservation Branch. As the industry ethnographer (who interviewed only the most elderly members of the Stein community) explained: "If it weren't for the proposed development of the valley much of this priceless information would have been lost forever. It would have died with the passing of the last generation of tradition-bearers."⁷⁹ Such a static viewpoint is rooted in the so-called salvage ethnography typical of the late nineteenth-century anthropology of Franz Boas.

While the BCFP ethnographic field study was being done in Lytton during the fall of 1985 and later in 1988, the native community was actively asserting its sovereignty over the valley in the form of an official land

⁷⁷ Smith's collection at the American Museum of Natural History contains numerous Stein items. The objective of these early researchers was to obtain whatever they could. For example, when their babies had outgrown their cradles, the Nlaka'pamux women hung them in trees in the mountains. Smith noted in his notes that after a day's excursion in the mountains, he returned with a number of such cradles. Unpublished field notes, Archives of the Archaeological Survey, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec.

⁷⁸ Personal communication, Ron Purvis, Lillooet, B.C.

⁷⁹ Dorothy Kennedy in "Forest Companies Protect Native Culture."

claim, Stein festivals, and public declarations. And yet, the BCFP ethnographic reports produced during this period declined to consider this living, vital community voice in its "use and occupation" study. This approach, which focuses on a static past to the point of failing to recognize the present in the field situation, is simply unacceptable in contemporary anthropology.⁸⁰

In their book *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (1986),⁸¹ George Marcus and Michael Fischer see anthropology as changing primarily because the "kind of field sites anthropologists have traditionally sought can no longer be found, or even imagined without dissonance."⁸² They argue for "expanded relevance" in anthropology so that its practitioners "recognize the full historical and political implications of its projects."⁸³ Some argue that the discipline can never be neutral and detached and must therefore redefine itself as "the struggle for the creation of culture against collective and dehumanizing forces."⁸⁴

This paper has identified some of the problems associated with archaeological and ethnographic research which is undertaken in the context of an environmental/cultural preservation conflict. Because the conclusions and recommendations of such research are often used to determine a community's future, it is important that these problems are well understood.

A major problem, as outlined above, lies with the AB's site-specific/inventory approach. What is clearly needed is a move away from a piecemeal listing of "sites" to a focus on the larger historical context, that is, on *meaning*, as opposed to inventories. Such an approach would incorporate ethnography as an integral part of the archaeological impact assessment study and also as a methodology for assessing the cultural impact of the proposed development on the communities which will be affected by it.

In addition to the problems inherent in the inventory/artifactual approach of the AB is the structure of the funding process. Currently, the company proposing the development independently selects and finances a qualified consultant. Some of the archaeological and ethnographic consultants who do such work are well known in the larger industrial and government community, having worked for these companies for a number of years. This financial bond between the consultant and the company

⁸⁰ See Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

⁸¹ George Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 36.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 185.

leads to problems, however, as those who depend upon such work become influenced by the goals of their "clients." A review of the contracts awarded over the past decade reveals a pattern of company favouritism. Some companies select the same consultant repeatedly to do their work for them, because they know he or she will provide them with what they want.

The AB defends this structure on the basis of its evaluation process,⁸⁵ which requires that all contracts be submitted to it for final review, and, if assessed as unsatisfactory, turned back for further work. However, rarely does the branch request additional work from a consultant. It has limited influence with large industrial companies, many of which have strong political allies within provincial government. Indeed, many of its "clients" are government agencies themselves. Moreover, were the AB to use legal means to enforce a company to do further work, it could only push so far, and then, in the end, it would probably lose legally, as meeting the specific standards under the present law.

Ultimately, however, we need to go much further if we are to leave behind the mode of archaeology/anthropology as colonial facilitator. We need to take native equality and self-determination for more than mere slogans. When we do, the entire (colonizing) process AB facilitates would give way to a larger scale political settlement, allowing native bands throughout the province to have a legitimate voice in determining the future of areas such as the Stein Valley. Until this occurs, anthropologists have a responsibility to identify and to criticize ideological and Eurocentric social scientific research, whether presented in the form of an impact assessment or in court as expert testimony.⁸⁶

In the meantime, as an interim arrangement only, efforts must be made to remove both the consultants and the AB from their industrial clients. One way to do this is to create an independent body, perhaps a committee,

⁸⁵ R. A. Kenny, Archaeology and Recreation Branch, personal communication, 31 May 1990.

⁸⁶ At the Canadian Anthropology Society Annual Conference held in London, Ontario, in May of 1991, a number of lawyers presented papers urging anthropologists to challenge the Eurocentric and often racist positions dominating the courtroom in cases involving native land issues.

At these same meetings, anthropologist Paula Pryce, in a paper entitled, "The Manipulation of History: A Critique of Two Expert Witnesses," compared the very different approaches (one "legalistic" and the other "academic") of two anthropologists who acted as witnesses in a case involving the Heiltsuk Band Council's rights to herring roe fishery. The Crown won the case against the natives, but, according to Pryce, it was able to do so through its "legalistic" approach: "In this case and others, the Crown . . . seems to take an active part in . . . cultural imperialism. By hiring legalistic scholars rather than academic ones, the state channels its arguments specifically to refute the claims of the plaintiffs." As Pryce concludes, "scholarship of this kind has become an effective tool in upholding the status quo."

comprising a carefully balanced number of individuals representing as many of the interests involved as possible. For the Stein, such a committee might include natives, environmentalists, representatives from Fletcher Challenge, archaeologists (those who work independently of contract archaeology), and anthropologists (again, who are removed from the contract impact assessment process.) This committee would be responsible for deciding on the scope of heritage study required and for determining the amount of funding necessary to cover it. The party proposing the development would disburse funds directly to the AB, which would be responsible for administering them.

Such an arrangement would help to liberate the contract archaeologist both to consider a broader range of perspectives and to make more independent conclusions and recommendations, without jeopardizing his or her future contracts. It could also help to transform the function of the AB to act not just as a mediator between the developer and the "archaeological resource" but as a "protector" of cultural resources.

Such incremental, let alone more fundamental, changes are still, it seems, some time away. In the meantime, until the native community is given its rightful position and voice in such forums, social scientists still have a crucial — but critical — role to play.