REFLECTIONS ON ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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HOMETOWN: SCHOOL AND WORK

I was born and grew up in Quesnel, a small town in the Cariboo, central BC. I attended both primary and high school in the same building, located on a school ground where there was an older log building in which my mother had attended school. One of her uncles was the janitor of our school, and other relatives lived in the Cariboo. Like most, they had been attracted by the lure of gold and its accompanying opportunity.

Some of my schoolmates also came from families with long histories in the area. Some had First Nations grandparents. There were children of long established Chinese families who had come during the gold rush. And a few were children of white and Carrier parents. However there were no status Indians attending our school, although there was a reserve, with adult and children residents within walking distance of town. Status Indian children were sent to the Roman Catholic residential school near Williams Lake.

Quesnel was a small rural town, and our pastimes of fishing, swimming, hiking, and skating were as much a part of our lives as school. All of us had chores at home, and we sought paid work. For a time I enjoyed working after school in a local printing establishment. However, my father was a federal fisheries officer and, at that time, in the 1940s, there was a serious attempt by Canada and the US to revitalize salmon runs on the Fraser River. There was new research conducted on the nature and quality of these runs. My father's work brought me into contact with fisheries biologists, and I soon found employment recording

* *BC Studies* has long been my favourite journal and, in recent years, the only one to which I subscribe. So when Richard Mackie suggested I write a reflection of my experience as an anthropologist at UBC, he was not to be ignored. Since anthropology has been part of my whole adult life, I must tell about my life and my family as well as the discipline.
We gratefully acknowledge the linguistic assistance of Pat Shaw and Jill Campbell.

daily river temperatures, counting salmon, and taking scale samples. Biology began to figure as a possibility, more attractive than printing or other occupations featured in the career brochures available at the high school.

When high school ended, I enjoyed summer outdoor work with the International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission, becoming familiar with most of the upper Fraser River salmon-bearing tributaries. In winter months, I found ready employment in a plywood mill.

UNIVERSITY: ADVICE AND OPPORTUNITY

In September 1950, with my parents' encouragement, I enrolled at the University of British Columbia (UBC). There I found an even greater mix of people than at home – and new ideas. There were students from the Caribbean, Africa, and India. There were also older students; many were war veterans – some had even served in the International Brigade in Spain. We shared tables with students in philosophy, theology, commerce, and engineering; heard of new scientific discoveries; argued over politics – differences and possibilities abounded.

One day an English major suggested that I should "listen to Professor Hawthorn's lectures about culture." It was the enthusiasm of my friend, not the subject, that led me to anthropology courses and, soon, to the Museum of Anthropology, then located in the basement of Main Library. Attending lectures in introductory anthropology and sitting as attendant during visiting hours in the museum took my attention away from biology and chemistry. I soon found myself among new friends and colleagues whom I would know for years to come.

Growing up in Quesnel had introduced me to a diversity of people. My schoolmates and friends included Chinese and mixed "White–Indians" and we played and grew up together. The diversity of people in Vancouver and among university students was no different. But anthropology helped me to understand more fully the nature and diversity of the people with whom I grew up. The core of the discipline, grounded in understanding the nature of cultural and biological evolution, and the differences between them, provided me with the intellectual core for understanding human diversity. In my opinion, those essential elements of anthropology ought to be built into our high school curricula. They would help young people of all social backgrounds to avoid the errors of racism.

Taking guidance from Harry Hawthorn I also enrolled in economics, statistics, and linguistics. We students delighted in Audrey Hawthorn's

primitive art course – "pots and baskets" – as we called it, presented in the museum. A young professor, Wayne Suttles, served extra duty to exercise us in the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet, writing words and phrases from his texts in Okinawan, Straits Salish; and Della Charles, a young woman from Musqueam who worked in the Library, also attended and added words in her language, hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓, for us to practise. Once in a while our fellow anthropology student, Gloria Cranmer, also gave us words in Kwak̓wala to practise. These were challenging, but companionship made light work of it.

Archaeology did not form a large part of the anthropology department's program, but, in alternate years, Professor Charles Borden, from the German department, offered courses in Old and New World archaeology. His own photographs of recently discovered cave paintings in France attracted students, and his enthusiasm induced some of us to take his fieldwork courses, which required one afternoon a week of excavating, with care and while taking frequent measurements, the damp, muddy shell middens near UBC. Borden gave us a realistic look at archaeology, filling out my view of anthropology and preparing me for what became a large part of my professional work – teaching introductory anthropology.

My life changed at this time. I finished my fourth year with a BA in anthropology, and Della Charles and I were married. Della was a member of the Musqueam Band, born in Vancouver. She had been sent to the Indian residential school run by the United Church of Canada in Port Alberni, British Columbia. She had worked in domestic service, in salmon canneries, and then in the Library at UBC, where she was employed for several years.

Along with anthropology students, Della also participated in fieldwork commissioned in 1954 by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration and conducted by UBC professors Harry B. Hawthorn, Cyril Belshaw, and Stuart Jamieson, which resulted in *Indians of British Columbia: A Study of Contemporary Social Adjustment.* This was an example of how Hawthorn used substantial research grants to train and employ students. Although several of my fellow students, such as Michael Ames participated, I returned to biology fieldwork.

Then, the year Della and I were married, I set off with new responsibilities to run a patrol boat on Babine Lake and count salmon for the Department of Fisheries. My part in the study of "BC Indians" was limited to sharing information on the Babine food fishery and giving Professor Belshaw a ride to Fort Babine. Della continued her work in

Figure 1. Christine Charles (Della's Mmother) gathering cattails at Musqueam, for mat making. Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by author.

the reserve section of the library. Her parents lived at Musqueam, close to UBC. Their support and warm acceptance of our decision to marry were gifts beyond measure.[1] My parents were surprised but welcomed us, and we soon joined in holiday visits to the family log cabin at Bowron Lake.

GRADUATE STUDIES: MUSEUMS AND TOTEM POLES

I returned to Vancouver in the fall to begin graduate work under Hawthorn's direction: it was a year of serious reading in cross-cultural studies. At the conclusion of that first year of graduate study, Hawthorn asked me to undertake an unusual museum task: the collection of a series of Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw totem poles that had been previously selected by a group of anthropologists and Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw owners who had assessed the condition of poles remaining in traditional locations. Purchase of the selected items had been arranged; my contribution was merely to apply my experience with small boats and outdoor work.

[1] Andrew Charles (swelemthet) also gave me a traditional wedding gift – a cedar house board. It was an old, 40-foot, scoop-shaped roof board from his family long house. Later, I removed the board and donated it to MOA.

Figure 2. Owikeno house-entry pole, awaiting removal. Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by the author.

Funding and assistance had been secured for this project, which included cooperation and aid from managers and vessel operators in the salmon fishery. I packed a bag and caught a Union Steamship for Alert Bay. The fishing season had begun, and small-boat traffic provided rides. Arriving at Rivers Inlet I met Gordon Grant, my wife's cousin, who was operating a fish collector for a canning company, and he kindly delivered me to the head of the inlet. I rented an old dugout river canoe, with an outboard motor, from Dave Bernard, an Owikeno band member living at the cannery. I travelled up the Owikeno River to see the first pole to be removed. It was the wonderful Owikeno [Wuikinuxv] house entry pole, which I first saw peering querulously over salmonberry bushes. These bushes cushioned it as I lowered and crated it with lumber to protect its fragile sides. Then I towed it down the river and along to the old cannery dock. I delivered it in a crate to the dock at Rivers Inlet where it was to be picked up later by a fish packer and taken to Vancouver to greet visitors to the Museum of Anthropology.

Next I went to an unoccupied village on Xwamdasbe' (Hope Island), where David Martin, son of Mungo Martin, joined me. David had

been a fisher and a logger, and he also knew the village and its former occupants. His assistance and companionship made a challenging job enjoyable. Lumber was delivered to the site by a salmon seiner. Then we lowered and crated the standing house posts and beams of two old houses. These were left ready to be removed later by a fish packer and brought to Vancouver, eventually also to be part of the display at MOA.

I also visited 'Mi'mkwa̲mlis (Village Island) where two house posts had been selected for removal; however the owner wished to do this removal himself. After this satisfying summer, with much relief and Hawthorn's agreement I returned to Vancouver.

Deciding to put graduate study aside I accepted a position as assistant curator of anthropology at the Royal BC Museum. In the fall of 1956, Della and I, with our infant son, moved to Victoria, where I began employment and further instruction as assistant to Wilson Duff, curator of anthropology. At this time, the provincial museum occupied the east wing of the Parliament Buildings, where I joined other colleagues: Cliff Carl, director; Charles Gigot, curator of zoology; and Adam Schewinsky, botany. Our spacious office was on the second floor surrounded by displays of BC birds and mammals. The anthropology display occupied two large rooms in the basement, and our storage space was scattered throughout a dark, basement side room; a cavernous vault, reached through a series of underground passages connecting the Parliament Buildings to other government buildings; and, finally, many of the smaller items were in an unventilated upper chamber under the copper dome of the East block. It took a while to find one's way about, but staff members were congenial and helpful.

Another part of anthropology's domain was Totem Park, which is situated a block east of the provincial museum. It included a display of standing totem poles, an open shed where cedar logs could be worked, and a closed shed, the domain of Mungo Martin, resident artist. Martin was assisted by his son-in-law Henry Hunt, soon also to be recognized as an outstanding Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw artist. For years, these two artists were the mainstay of restoration work on monumental sculpture conducted under the aegis of the provincial museum. They were also invaluable consultants whenever we encountered problems relating to identification and care of coastal material in the museum's collection.

The first task I was assigned was to refurbish our main museum display. It turned out to be a long-term project involving changing the objects on display and revising texts – tasks that filled in time between more pressing jobs. It also brought me into contact with Frank Beebe, an

artist and illustrator, self-taught, experienced, always open with advice and practical help.

Once I had learned where our storage locations were, Wilson Duff assigned me another long-term task: finding every numbered item entered in the old, handwritten catalogue and then checking it, its attached number, and its location. This was a continuous museum task, perhaps unnecessary in the new Royal British Columbia Museum. Nevertheless, it had to be done and it taught me much about the material side of Indigenous cultures in British Columbia. I knew things largely from reading. This task brought me into contact with every object: baskets of all kinds, gambling sticks and tallies I'd never heard of, wondrous masks, rattles, whistles, spoons, and so on. Museums still have much to offer when it comes to understanding other cultures, and museum workers have much to learn about how best to use what they have. UBC's MOA, with its emphasis on visible storage, comes close to enabling the greatest possible familiarity with material culture.

Another totem pole salvage project developed from Wilson Duff's interest in art and his friendship with Haida artist Bill Reid. One of the known locations of a large array of standing poles was the relatively inaccessible village of Nang Sdins [Ninstints] on Anthony Island [S<u>G</u>ang Gwaay] , near the southern end of the archipelago of the Queen Charlotte Islands, now known as Haida Gwaii. A visit to this site and an examination of the condition of its poles was beyond the museum's budget, but Wilson obtained the interest of friends and, between severe gales in November, crewmen of a Canadian navy minesweeper put a group of us ashore at Nang Sdins. It was a magical experience for those of us who knew these monuments only from old photographs: now we could walk among them, see details, note their condition, and make plans to remove them.

The Nang Sdins people had been almost extinguished by smallpox in the nineteenth century and had abandoned their village. Over months of discussions with the Skidegate band council and the few known descendants of the Nang Sdins people, Wilson Duff secured permission for the removal of selected pieces. Funding was secured, and the next summer a group of us boarded a chartered seiner at Skidegate.[2] The boat was owned and operated by Roy Jones of Skidegate, who, with his two brothers as crewmen, added essential expertise to our project. We were able to land and establish a camp at Nang Sdins and, over ten

[2] This group consisted of Bill Reid, Wilson Duff, Harry Hawthorn, Wayne Suttles, Michael Kew, John Smyly, and two CBC reporters.

days, select and crate for transport the selected items. These were towed to a safe location and were later loaded aboard a naval transport vessel and delivered to Vancouver.

It was an emotional experience to visit this site: to look into the empty, moss-covered interiors of houses, see the tumbled remains of mortuary poles, ease sculptured monuments to the ground, and lift them carefully to be crated. Did we consider the enormity of what we were doing? I believe we did. We were removing personal monuments that living people had left for their beloved relatives. Removing grave posts meant erasing those human actions as well as disturbing human remains. Should we remove these things or leave them alone to decay as their makers intended? This question did not interrupt our labours. We had prepared ourselves to come to this place and to do what we were doing. But I think all of us were conscious of our efforts as invasive of some other privacy.

Should we have removed these things or left them as their makers intended? This question has been asked repeatedly. We knew vandals had visited and destroyed or removed objects before us and that, inevitably, more harmful visitors would come. So there was reason to remove and save them. At times I give in to sentiment and think how right it would have been to have left them as their makers made and left them, and let soft decay continue; at other times I remember how Bill Reid cherished contact with these old monuments, even when they were standing in the museum, and how he wanted others to share the same delight and wonder that he experienced.

The question still stands and deserves attention.

Anthropology at the provincial museum was not limited to working with totem poles. We answered queries from curious visitors and examined "curiosities" found in local gardens. Residents of a Gulf Island had been donating small soapstone objects found along beaches, and Wilson Duff had been given permission by a cottage owner to excavate. He and I excavated a test pit on the site at Pender Island canal, which yielded evidence of lengthy occupation as well as several soapstone objects that Wilson dubbed "whatzits." The following year I completed a second excavation with the help of a student named John Sendy. As Wilson saw it, the point of this exercise was to keep archaeology alive at the provincial museum, and so it did as an archaeologist was appointed and a system of recording sites instituted. Our exercise also provided the first documented report of this site, which was later fully excavated under the direction of Simon Fraser University's Professor Roy Carlson.

One of Wilson Duff's other important contributions was his report on the social structure of the Salish villages in the vicinity of Victoria. This work involved examining Hudson's Bay Company and colonial records as well as interviewing older reserve residents. Through Wilson, Della and I met these people and, like him, continued to assist older people to attend ceremonial activities like spirit dancing. We also met members of the Indian Shaker Church and had the opportunity to attend church conventions, which brought to West Saanich, delegates and members from California, Oregon, and Washington State. (I would return to the subject of Salish village inter-visiting, spirit dancing, and the Shaker Church later, when I wrote my dissertation at the University of Washington.)

CHANGING SOCIETY: APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

For both Della and myself, the time in Victoria, attending spirit dances and Shaker Church gatherings in winter and canoe races in summer, allowed us to renew and extend connections with her kinfolk, near and wide. Work in the provincial museum and the enhancement of our association with Della's kinfolk made life in Victoria instructive and pleasurable. However, this was a time when study and services within my chosen field were growing. The possibility of working on issues affecting living Indigenous people rather than objects from the past, as well as the need to support a growing family, urged yet another change.

Although the possibility of employment with the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources, Northern Affairs Region, would mean a big change for all of us, we made the move. The Department of Natural Resources had initiated a community development program and established a residence at Cumberland House, where I was to take up work that had already begun. First I met with the director and regional manager, and then I returned to Cumberland House. My father, who admired the work of the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] government, quietly supported my move. But it meant a great change for us, especially for Della. We landed in a small aircraft at Cumberland House, on the Saskatchewan River, where we were to spend the next year. I was to undertake a community study of one of the oldest fur trading posts in western Canada.

We met two men who were most helpful to me and welcoming to Della: Jim Brady, a Métis born in Lac La Biche, Alberta, who was a war veteran and who had worked for the Saskatchewan government in

Figure 3. Fish Co-op Member Cleaning Whitefish, Cumberland lake, 1961. Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by author.

Cumberland House, and Malcolm Norris, also an Alberta Métis, who was employed by the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources and had organized successful prospector training programs for northerners. These experienced men, committed to the well-being of their people, gave us helpful advice throughout our stay at Cumberland House.

The change from Victoria to Cumberland House was substantial, especially for Della, who had never experienced cold winter weather. But we were comfortably housed, and the Cree-speaking Métis and status Cree residents were friendly. Cumberland House was the Hudson's Bay Company's first inland post. Since its establishment in 1774 at the confluence of the rivers linking the Arctic watershed with the Saskatchewan River and its eastern and southern connections, the post had been an important hub for traffic in the fur trade. Like other northern Saskatchewan towns, it had a mixed population of Métis, treaty Indian, and a few whites. Among the last were storekeepers, resident Anglican and Roman Catholic priests, and police officers and provincial government agents. Trapping, commercial fishing, and a little tourism provided earned incomes. Mining at Uranium City near the northern border of the province offered virtually no employment for First Nation people at this time. Small incomes from trapping and fishing were supplemented by welfare and various forms of transfer payments. Among these were pensions and veterans' allowances as Cumberland House men

Figure 4. Katie Fosseneuve making Manitoba-maple syrup, Metis spring trapping camp, Saskatchewan River, Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by author.

had volunteered for service in both world wars. They had a distinguished war record, supported a branch of the Canadian Legion, and a locally built hospital. However, despite this record, their earned incomes were low and they were highly dependent on government services. This was reasonably representative of other northern Saskatchewan communities.

At this time the Saskatchewan government also engaged the services of the Centre for Community Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, entering an agreement with the centre to conduct a research, development, and training program in northern Saskatchewan. My initial employment was with the Department of Natural Resources; but, when its contract with the centre came into effect, I was employed by the Centre. Then my direct supervisor was Dr. Arthur Davis, a sociologist, later joined by British anthropologist Peter Worsley and economist Helen Buckley.

I completed my community study of Cumberland House while living there and then moved with my family to Saskatoon.

With the Centre for Community Studies staff I participated in research and in training northern staff. This included visiting many of the mainly Indigenous communities in the northern Saskatchewan region and providing reports on various features of the North. With fellow centre members, I produced a summary report for the Saskatchewan government.[3]

Recommendations comprised half of the report. The problem facing the government was the inadequacy of incomes for Métis and First Nations people. Their traditional employment in trapping and commercial fishing was heavily supplemented by welfare and transfer payments of various kinds, but this still left them with incomes that were far below acceptable standards. Populations of First Nations and Métis were rapidly increasing, outstripping their available resources. Our recommendations for improved educational programs, including high schools, aimed at preparing students for employment outside the traditional resource industries and to move from the North. But it did not include a recommendation to encourage movement south.

Saskatchewan, under the direction of the CCF government, had introduced changes that were aimed at improving the incomes of the northern population and reducing some of the social imbalances characterizing northern Canada. These included the introduction of fur and fish marketing boards, and the creation of government trading stores to compete with established businesses. Later, assistance was provided to establish cooperative stores. Nevertheless, management of commercial business, mining development, and most other sectors in northern Saskatchewan, like those in most of northern Canada, were still in what we were beginning to call the condition of an "internal colony."

At this time we did not suggest that colonization should be reversed by changing ownership of land and resources. This, of course, was proposed or promised by treaties and demanded later by Indigenous political developments. One of our recommendations in the direction of decolonization came under the heading of government services. We recommended that "measures be devised to open the door to Indians

[3] J.E.M Kew, *Cumberland House in 1960: Economic and Social Survey of Northern Saskatchewan* (Saskatoon: Centre for Community Studies, University of Saskatchewan, 1962); H. Buckley, J.E.M. Kew, and John Hawley, *The Indians and Métis of Northern Saskatchewan: A Report on Economic and Social Development* (Saskatoon: Centre for Community Studies, University of Saskatchewan, 1963).

and Metis for all government jobs in the North."[4] This change, had it been accepted, would have been the beginning of decolonization, but the root of that process had to be in changing ownership and control of resources – especially minerals and water. Our recommendation to begin reversing internal colonization did not go far enough. The tragic deaths of young people at La Louche, Saskatchewan, and in suicides in other northern communities in recent years has demonstrated the need for changing the socio-economic structure of northern areas in order to include Indigenous people in the opportunity and promises of northern wealth.

(As I was writing this, news came that three Métis girls, twelve to fourteen years of age, committed suicide at Stanley Mission. And a day later came news of a similar suicide at nearby Deschambault Lake. Stanley Mission sits on the beautiful Churchill River and has an old Anglican church with stained-glass windows. It's a canoer's paradise.)

What did our study say? It really had nothing to offer for the future of young Indigenous people … no alternative to suicide. This is the tragedy, or weakness facing social scientists: we may complete social surveys in part to respond to social problems perceived by clients, even well intentioned ones, but surveys come to nothing buried on a shelf.

My experience tells me that we need no more surveys to tell us why Indigenous people in parts of Canada have lower incomes than average. Nor do we need more surveys to tell us why Indigenous women are murdered more frequently than other Canadians. But we do need to study, teach about, and combat misogyny and racism.

BACK TO SCHOOL

With encouragement from colleagues, a wish to return to the west coast, and a grant from the Canada Council, I was accepted into a graduate studies program at the University of Washington, Seattle, in 1963. However, in the summer of 1964, before beginning graduate studies, I once again went to work on another of Professor Hawthorn's government-sponsored projects. He and his colleagues were directing a major study of the "Indians" of Canada for the federal government. This meant another change of scene for me as I was sent to interview chiefs and councillors of Ojibwa bands [Anishinaabeg] in southern Ontario.

With our return to British Columbia and residence in Seattle, we were able to resume associations with Della's family and other Salish friends.

[4] Buckley, Kew, and Hawley, *Indians and Métis*, 58.

My graduate supervisor was Professor Simon Ottenberg, whose special interest was in West African societies, but there were other faculty members whose expertise was in Northwest Coast studies.

In 1966, after discussions with my supervisor, I obtained the formal permission of the Musqueam Band to undertake the necessary research for my dissertation. With assistance from the Canada Council, I was able to attend spirit dances at Musqueam and nearby villages throughout the winter, keeping a record of activities over the ensuing summer when inter-village canoe racing linked xʷməθkʷəy̓əm [Musqueam] with other Salish groups. This provided material for my dissertation, "Coast Salish Ceremonial Life: Status and Identity in a Modern Village" (the field notes for this work are in the archives of the Musqueam Band).

This research entailed many hours of attending dances at Musqueam and other villages. Della often accompanied me as she had an interest in the therapeutic effects of dancing and the ideology underlying Salish spiritual and medical practice. We often worked together, discussing events and ideas. She was a continuing and substantial helper, although we only formally exercised this association in the writing of one article.[5] I completed my studies at the University of Washington and my degree was granted in 1970.[6] In the autumn of 1965, I began teaching at UBC as an instructor of anthropology.

I think of my study of contemporary Coast Salish communities as an ethnographic work. It is a description of a living cultural system, with a past and a future. However, it leaves much of the variety, richness, and warmth of that system out of the picture. This may be a fault of most formal or academic ethnographies. Perhaps a more accurate and better account of cultural systems remains to be recorded in a different form by the participants themselves. As an example of what might be an improvement on ethnographic work I would cite *Monkey Beach* by Haisla writer Eden Robinson. But this opens another subject of interest: the place of Indigenous writers and "fiction" in anthropology. Our understanding of First Nations worlds will be immensely improved as plays by people like Thomson Highway and books by people like Eden Robinson are written.

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[5] Michael Kew and Della Kew, "'People Need Friends, It Makes Their Minds Strong': A Coast Salish Curing Rite," in *The World Is as Sharp as a Knife: An Anthology in Honour of Wilson Duff*, ed. Donald Abbott, 29-35, (Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1981).

[6] J.E.M. Kew, "Coast Salish Ceremonial Life: Status and Identity in a Modern Village" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1970).

TEACHING ABOUT A CHANGING WORLD IN A CHANGING WORLD

From the beginning of my appointment in UBC's Department of Anthropology and Sociology I felt at home. Although sociology had changed since Professor Naegele introduced me to the subject, its research and interests were familiar and not at all alien to those in anthropology. It was a pleasure to be asked to give an occasional lecture to a sociology class. At this time, introductory classes in our twin disciplines, "Anth. and Soc.," were combined, and huge classes were taught in the auditorium by a group of lecturers and assistants who were drawn from both disciplines. The association and meeting of minds involved in these exercises were memorable, and they were among my most satisfying and productive teaching experiences. One of my lectures was found sufficiently interesting to be reprinted, and it still bears reading.[7]

Indigenous peoples of Canada had been the focus of attention within anthropology from its beginning at UBC, and since my interest and experience within anthropology had focused upon Canadian Indigenous peoples, my teaching assignments were in this field. It was about this time that popular interest in our subject, especially among Indigenous students themselves, brought about a series of changes in course titles. What, for years, had been "Indians of BC" became "First Nations of BC" – and so on as academia tried to keep pace with its world. These courses were popular among students, and it was a memorable experience to be assigned to teach in large lecture sections with smaller study groups. Several times I did this with Wilson Duff (who had also joined the department) and Gloria Cranmer-Webster (of the Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw First Nations) who was then a graduate student.

Along with changes in course names, there came changes in content. Where descriptions of the nature of Indigenous cultures had depended upon earlier ethnographic accounts, new political events and developments associated with Canadian and provincial government policies and Indigenous political associations forced attention upon current affairs. At the same time as the subject of the discipline was changing so, too, were its students – Salish, Shuswap, Dene, and students of other groups were now present in classes. This sharpened the attention we paid to what we were teaching. It was a challenge to answer the question asked by an Indigenous student: "How do you know what my great-grandparents were doing?"

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[7] Michael Kew, "Making Indians," in *Workers, Capital, and the State in British Columbia, Selected Papers*, ed. Rennie Warburton and David Coburn, 24-34 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988).

The answer could rarely be given from first-hand observation. We were rightly driven to defend the ethnographic writing of our own disciplinary forebears. In the case of BC Indigenous studies, we were fortunate to be able to draw upon a rich resource of dependable accounts. However, challenges by Indigenous students offered excellent tests of the truth of ethnographic writing. As the courts began to formally inquire into the facts of hunting and land use as the question of the existence of Aboriginal rights and titles came to the fore, it was not only students who asked the key question, it was lawyers and judges in courts of law.

One of my more rewarding experiences in this field came when lawyers asked me to give a statement in court, in what became known as the *Guerin* case (1984), about the people and place called Musqueam. This was to verify that they were the Indigenous occupants and owners of their Indian reserve. (Oh, how transparent was the power of an academic degree, when my words were accepted by the court while there were living Musqueam, born on the land in question, able to say the same thing!)

Nevertheless, it was a great satisfaction, indeed a reward for asking questions and reading ethnographies over the years, to be able to give evidence in courts about various hunting and fishing practices. On another occasion, when a coroner's inquiry was held into the tragic death of a young Stó:lō man who died while undergoing a traditional religious initiation, I, as a friend of the court, was able to provide an explanation of the cultural rituals so often misunderstood or misinterpreted, especially by the media.

While these modes of putting conventional ethnography to work, of doing *applied anthropology*, were always gratifying, a graduate seminar moved me to return to a subject introduced to me by Professor Wayne Suttles: the examination of the close relationship between people and the natural resources upon which they depend. This led me to revisit some of my youthful experience assisting fisheries biologists and the relationship between salmon and people. Since the agreement between the United States and Canada, and the establishment of the International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission in 1939, records of Fraser River salmon runs had been closely recorded. These, along with earlier Canadian records and historical/ethnographic accounts, provided a wealth of information for the many Fraser River salmon runs, enabling me to write "Salmon Availability, Technology, and Cultural Adaptation in the Fraser River Watershed." This paper was well received, widely circulated in photocopied form, and, later, published in a collection.[8]

[8] Michael Kew, "Salmon Availability, Technology, and Cultural Adaptation in the Fraser River Watershed," in *A Complex Culture of the British Columbia Plateau: Traditional Stl'atl'imx*

Figure 5. Nasko Village, 1977. Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by author.

At the same time as my early interest in salmon returned I also began making acquaintance with Nazko and Kluskus [Lhoosk'uz Dene] people west of Quesnel. These included people my own age who were born and had grown up in Quesnel but who had been required to attend a residential school in Williams Lake. This experience was once again a reminder of how forceful the Indian Act and residential schools were in segregating and separating Indigenous people and whites. It was one thing to know, in an academic sense, that this was the main source of racism in Canada, but it was something else to learn it from newly found friends from whom I had been separated by this most Canadian form of racism.

I travelled throughout southern Carrier territory, visiting dispersed homesteads and meeting people. For Carrier leaders I wrote an account of their social and economic life that was used to argue for changes in forest cutting practices – unfortunately, with little success. More successful than my written summary of social conditions were the actions of protest and impromptu political acts – such as parking a car in front of a bulldozer about to begin logging road construction, and the fury of women digging a ditch across the gravelled public highway through their reserve in order to diminish dust and danger from speeding trucks. Although my report to the band outlining the consequences of continued unmitigated forest harvest in their tribal territory was well received and circulated, logging continued.

Resource Use, ed. Brian Hayden, 176-221 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992).

Figure 6. Community members discussing logging outside community hall, Nazko. Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by author.

Establishing friendships with Carrier people who had grown up around my hometown but who had not been socially integrated into it was gratifying. It did not make me over into a Carrier, although, along with other supporters of the Carrier, one contributor to the local press gave us the new identity of "n***** lovers." This experience gave me a stronger moral foundation when facing political issues associated with Indigenous rights. Over my years in anthropology I have participated in producing catalogues of social conditions, surveys of living conditions, and characteristics of administration. Such information may be useful, and I have been paid for providing it. But, in the end, what counts is putting it to work, and for appropriate ends. There is a constant challenge and a call for political action.

Returning from visits to the Nazko and Kluskus hinterlands to UBC to lecture in the new Museum of Anthropology brought the return of museological interests. I remembered, among early material collected for the provincial museum, beautiful mountain sheep horn rattles, with fringes of loosely spun mountain goat wool. They were what Della called sxelməxʷcəs – ceremonial rattles – and we had seen them used in naming events in Vancouver Island villages. Della also owned one that had been given to her by her mother.

There were fine examples of Salish art in the provincial museum, and we knew of others, but Salish art generally had received less attention

from collectors than had other Northwest Coast art, with the result that Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Kwakwaka'wakw art was much better represented in collections and was more familiar to the public. Della's personal association with an object of art, and my own knowledge of Salish material, led me to think of examining Salish material in major museum collections. With a research grant I was able to visit and examine collections, to photograph material, and to select items to borrow for an exhibition at our Museum of Anthropology. With items borrowed from the Royal BC Museum in Victoria; the National Museum in Ottawa; the Museum of the American Indian, and the American Museum of Natural History in New York; we were able to bring home to Salish territory an abundance of Salish material, sufficient to mount the major exhibit entitled *Visions of Power, Symbols of Wealth: Central Coast Salish Sculpture and Engraving, 1980–81.*

This exhibit brought together for the first time material that was seldom seen. There were large and small sculptured grave posts, coffins, small sculptured implements for creasing rush mats, engraved spindle whorls, and engraved mountain goat horn bracelets. There were also ritual sχʷayχʷəy masks and horn rattles, including those owned by Della. With this material at hand, I prepared a summary account of the central Coast Salish style of art, which was published in 1980 as Museum Note No. 9, "Sculpture and Engraving of the Coast Salish Indians."

Bill Mclellan, a talented designer and photographer at MOA, made a full visual record of the exhibit, and I also had a photographic record of the Salish material examined during the search for items to be displayed in it. Almost immediately after the exhibit there were requests for pictures. Perhaps the museum note, with the photographs, should have been a book – it would have met a ready demand.

But, with Della, I had misgivings about publishing and displaying more widely these objects and ideas, which had had little previous public exposure. Della especially had very mixed feelings about her sxelməxʷcəs being displayed. She was proud of it as a family possession and as an exquisite example of engraved horn, a fine design, exactly executed. It was a striking functional rattle. At the same time it went against her understanding. The rattle had come as a private spiritual gift to an ancestor. A strong sense of privacy remained attached to it. I believe that other Salish visitors to the exhibit had similar misgivings about such displays. It was very nice to see the old material, but was this a proper place for it to be seen?

The photographic record made before the exhibit was a valuable resource, especially for artists. My record, in the form of colour slides, was housed in MOA and made available for study and research. It was especially helpful for artists (a number of whom used them to build and refine their own work), and several Salish bands made copies of the slides for their own libraries.

While preparation for the exhibit was under way we experienced excitement at seeing old, rare objects anew. We had also planned and prepared part of the exhibit, which showed that traditional religious practices are still part of contemporary Coast Salish life. When the exhibit opened, however, we were soon made aware of the mixed feelings held by some Coast Salish about displaying their ceremonial objects. Among these were objects illustrating contemporary spirit (syəwən) dancing practices: a long wool headdress (worn by initiate dancers) and a carved wooden staff with deer hoof rattles (used by some fully initiated spirit dancers). These were objects that had been recently purchased and documented by museum staff. But a small, polite delegation of spirit dancers visited the museum and objected to their display on the grounds that this was improper. We removed the objects and inserted a notice indicating that they had been removed at the request of representatives of Salish spirit dancers. This, of course, made the point – at least for those visitors who read labels – that Indigenous Salish religious systems are still extant.

In subsequent years, MOA staff have received similar requests from Coast Salish visitors to restrict the display of Salish masks and rattles whose strong spiritual significance renders their public display offensive. MOA staff have agreed to remove some objects from public display altogether. They have also, on occasion, arranged private viewings. These requests for special treatment of some ritual objects mark a change in attitude on the part of some Coast Salish people. I remember, in the 1950s, the museum purchased a series of old sχʷayχʷəy masks from one Musqueam man and two more newly made, unused masks from another: all of these were displayed with no objections. I have no doubt that the recent well-publicized and well-attended exhibit brought a new level of attention to Salish art and ritual activity. Fortunately, it also inspired a renewal of interest and activity among Salish artists, who produced prints and sculptures in distinctive Coast Salish styles.

All this was particularly gratifying to Della, who had a quiet interest in discovering the richness of her people's art, which had been hidden away in museum exhibits and storerooms, being uncovered and brought

Figure 7. Della Charles Kew (xwatstenaht). Time out from a meeting, 1976. Museum of Anthropology Archive. Photo by author.

to awareness. Among the first successful young artists to appear was Susan Point, one of Della's nieces. She surprised us for we knew her as a child, then as a secretary in an inter-tribal business office, and suddenly as an accomplished artist who achieved outstanding awards.

Della had suffered ill health for several years and had borne most of the trials of bringing our two sons through childhood. We lived in Point Grey, fortunately near Musqueam and many supportive kinfolk. Both our sons were given hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ names at a gathering at Musqueam: Nathan, the eldest, was given the name swəlamθət; James was given the name qʷəsqʷestən. Both names had been previously held by Della's

father, and Della had been given his mother's name – xʷactəna:t. All these names came from Della's father's mother's family, of q̓ʷəməyeqən (Komiaken) village, Cowichan Band. Personal names and their histories provide important bonds between people and communities.

In 1977, Della and I bought a small sailboat and began cruising on the "Salish Sea." We named the boat *Mexwthi* after the grass [məθkʷəy̓] that gave its name to Musqueam. We were able to visit villages and places familiar to Della from her family history, and I began to learn about the tides and currents that provide easy canoe connections throughout the area.

Family history and hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ names were important to Della, as was her Indian status under the Indian Act. In her last few years she was an active member and supporter of the BC Association of Non-Status Indians, seeking to change the unjust law that removed a woman's Indian status upon marriage to a non-Indian. These unsuccessful struggles were brought to an end with her death in 1982. Della, xʷactəna:t found a final resting place beside her mother, siblings, and other relatives in a cemetery where old-style grave houses used to be, located near her family's house site in the old village.

Both our sons had attended Musqueam ceremonial activities with us over the years. And when the Indian Act was revised in 1983, allowing Indian bands to accept women and their children who had lost status by marriage, our sons became Musqueam Band members.

Nathan and a cousin, Henry Charles, had been instructed in and performed a ritual dance, wəɬwəɬenəm, in which spirit dance initiates are given their first food. After Della died, her brother, Andrew Charles Jr., a long-standing sχʷayχʷəy dancer (like his father before him), instructed our son Jim in that complex ritual. A mask and costume were acquired, and he (qʷəsqʷestən) was soon asked to dance. He has continued to assist in maintaining this ceremonial and the gift exchanges that characterize and connect the wider hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ community. These ritual activities have been a continuing connection with Musqueam.

REMARRIAGE AND RETIREMENT

After losing Della, I took up old hobbies and bought a boat hull to be finished in the backyard. Teaching also continued, as did assisting with evidence before the courts when issues of land disagreements arose, or questions of traditional resource use practices came before the court. Being able to introduce students to the study of First Nations while

walking through the halls of MOA – passing house posts that I could say were "old friends" and illustrating a lecture by referring to exhibits – was one of the rewards for my years at the museum. In 1984, Barbara Williamson and I were married. She was teaching sociology in UBC's Department of Anthropology and Sociology and had a background in nursing. In addition to academic experience we shared political interests. Many of our colleagues have left the scene, although we meet some of them for an occasional lunch at which we voice our regret that the disciplines of anthropology and sociology have split apart. We prepared for retirement by pooling our resources, refreshing our homesteading knowledge, and building a home and garden in the forests of Gabriola Island.

I took retirement in 1997, returning occasionally to note changes in MOA but also to keep abreast of news at Musqueam and in the changing world of First Nations politics in Canada – a world in which, over the years, UBC's Department of Anthropology has been an important player.