

THE QUEST FOR THE “REAL” FRANZ BOAS: *A Review Essay*

WENDY WICKWIRE

*The Franz Boas Papers, Volume 1:
Franz Boas as Public Intellectual – Theory, Ethnography, Activism*

Regna Darnell, Michelle Hamilton, Robert L.A. Hancock,
and Joshua Smith, editors

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ANTHROPOLOGISTS HAVE struggled for over a century “to come to terms with the ongoing legacy of Franz Boas (1858–1942),” writes Regna Darnell in the preface to a recent addition to Boasian scholarship, *The Franz Boas Papers, Volume 1: Franz Boas as Public Intellectual – Theory, Ethnography, Activism*.¹ Should the “founder and dominant figure in the emergence of a professionalized academic discipline in North America” be “eulogized” for setting the discipline in a new direction or “reviled” for throwing it off course?² This is the question that Darnell and her co-editors, Michelle Hamilton, Robert Hancock and Joshua Smith pose in this book, and they waste no time in answering it. Boas has been a long-suffering victim of a “resolutely negative” and “jaundiced characterization,”³ Darnell asserts, the product of sloppy scholarship: “Too many of those who accept latter-day dismissals of Boas’s significance for contemporary anthropological practice rarely cite evidence, pursue archival research, or reassess the potential biases of inherited scholarship.”⁴

With contributions by herself and fourteen colleagues, Darnell casts her 380-page edited collection as a corrective to this mischaracterization.

¹ Regna Darnell, “Historiographic Conundra: The Boasian Elephant in the Middle of Anthropology’s Room,” in *The Franz Boas Papers, Vol. 1: Franz Boas as Public Intellectual – Theory, Ethnography, Activism*, eds. Regna Darnell, Michelle Hamilton, Robert L.A. Hancock, and Joshua Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), xi.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., xiv.

⁴ Ibid.

Her goal is to rejuvenate Boas as a leading public intellectual who broke new ground in the spheres of theory, ethnography and activism.⁵ His work was and continues to be “a model for the capacity of the public intellectual to call the attention of citizens to social injustice, environmental degradation, systematic discrimination, and other ills of modern society.”⁶ Part 1 of the volume (“Theory and Interdisciplinary Scope”) features six chapters on Boas’s theoretical contributions to anthropology and related disciplines, such as linguistics, literature, and ethnomusicology. Part 2 (“Ethnography”) consists of two chapters on the dynamics of Boas’s relations with his two primary field consultants, James Teit and George Hunt. Part 3 (“Activism”) presents five chapters on Boas as a public intellectual and political activist, and Part 4 (“The Archival Project”) features two chapters on the goals and aspirations of the Franz Boas Papers Documentary Project, noting its links to urban archives and Indigenous communities.

Although *The Franz Boas Papers, Volume 1* follows a long line of Boasian retrospectives, its editors do not situate the book in its historical context, so I will do so briefly here to provide context for my assessment. Paul Radin, one of Boas’s first graduate students, foreshadowed the current debate in 1914 in a letter to Edward Sapir, his friend and fellow Boasian (both would later become major figures in the field). To Sapir, he suggested that it was time to move away from “hero worship” towards honest appraisals of Boas.⁷ Boas, he wrote, deserved praise for his success in the 1880s and 90s in turning anthropology from an “adjunct of biology” into a mainstay of the social sciences. He opened up many new “vistas” of study and “achieved wonders in suggesting problems” for investigation. But he was now “done,” declared Radin, because he lacked the creativity and imagination – “the genius” – to move the discipline forward.⁸ Radin characterized his former supervisor as “an anatomist” rather than “a physiologist,” and a scholar with more interest in “bones and dust” than “real human science.” Boas was so preoccupied with truth-driven “analytical examinations” rooted in his belief in cultural “dissemination, convergent evolution, independent origin, etc.” that he often missed the larger questions embedded in such detail. Radin recalled that, in his lectures, he never once heard Boas express “the slightest desire” to

⁵ Ibid., xv.

⁶ Ibid., xii.

⁷ Letter, Paul Radin to Edward Sapir, 27 January 1914, Canadian Museum of History Archives, Hull, Quebec. Quoted in Richard Preston, “Reflections on Sapir’s Anthropology in Canada,” *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 17, 4 (1980): 369.

⁸ Ibid.

"see the wheels go round." Radin reminded Sapir that Boas had never encouraged them as students "to study the Indians as individuals."⁹

While Boas was alive, his students and colleagues kept such criticism largely among themselves, but it bubbled to the surface after Boas's death in 1942. Within a year, six of his former students collaborated on a special "Franz Boas" retrospective for their flagship journal, the *American Anthropologist*.¹⁰ The work was both laudatory and critical. Alfred Kroeber, one of Boas's first graduate students who later became a close friend, aired his criticisms in his introductory chapter, "Franz Boas: the Man."¹¹ Echoing Radin, he characterized Boas as an academic whose "unquenchable perseverance" and "infinite capacity for work" had uncovered countless "problems" and fostered "novel approaches" to anthropology, but whose scholarly legacy had fallen short of its potential. Like Radin, Kroeber felt that Boas lacked the creative impulse to think big. He had little of the "virtuosoship" or "flair for ... nuance" of a scholar such as Sapir. He was "a Prometheus rather than an Apollo or Hermes" – one who could be called "great" but not necessarily "a genius."¹²

He made no one great summing discovery; he had no one slant, no designable and therefore closed idea-system ... [N]o label fits him. The best he could find, in groping to make his anthropological attitudes clear to others, was the epithet, "dynamic"; which is true enough in a sense but also colorlessly inadequate. It was the man that was dynamic, and his ideas; not any ideology or methodology that he invented.¹³

"It must be remembered," wrote Kroeber, "that [Boas] was trained in mathematics and all his life thought like a physicist."¹⁴ He noted that if Boas "set limits to his conclusions that sometimes seemed narrow, it was because beyond them his intellectual conscience saw doubts and invalidities" and in the world of the scientist there should be no doubt.¹⁵ Kroeber had much to say about the influence of science on Boas. "All his writing," he wrote, "possesses an inner and very genuine form," but there is little "eloquent" or "aesthetic" about it; it is the product of the style

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ A.L. Kroeber, Ruth Benedict, Gladys Reichard, et al., "Franz Boas, 1858-1942," Memoir No. 61 of the American Anthropological Association, Special Supplement of the *American Anthropologist* 45, 3 (1943): 1-119.

¹¹ Kroeber, "Boas: The Man," in "Franz Boas, 1858-1942," 1-26.

¹² Ibid., 24.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 22.

¹⁵ Ibid.

of “decision, economy, and elegance in a mathematical demonstration.” If asked about this, Kroeber noted, Boas would “undoubtedly have answered that [eloquence of] style belonged in literature and he was doing science.” It was, Kroeber added, the “ice in his enthusiasm.”¹⁶

A decade and a half later, another of Boas’s former students, Walter Goldschmidt, assembled a group of colleagues and former students of Boas – Margaret Mead, Leslie Spier, Clyde Kluckhohn, Helen Codere, and others – for a second retrospective, *The Anthropology of Franz Boas: Essays on the Centennial of His Birth*.¹⁷ In his review of the volume, anthropologist Melville Herskovits (also a former student of Boas) noted its parallels with the 1943 volume but also its links to the debates over Boas’s legacy that were now dividing the field. “There have been no neutrals in the controversy,” he wrote. “[F]or some, [Boas] is the great pioneer of anthropology ... Others, however, charge him with having blocked the development of theoretical speculation.”¹⁸ Goldschmidt, like Radin, had raised a contentious point in his book’s introduction about Boas’s approach to the individual: it is “curious,” he wrote, “that this quintessentially liberal man should have so little understanding of the individual. It is as if his belief that people were equal rendered them all the same.”¹⁹ Noting that two of the authors in the volume had taken the opposite position on this point, Herskovits suggested that it was time for a more sustained appraisal of “the various aspects” of Boas’s “theoretical and methodological position as they cut across the various anthropological sub-disciplines in which he worked, and with particular reference to the analyses of his point of view that have been made since his death.”²⁰ A new group of postwar cultural materialists and neo-evolutionists, led by Leslie White and Marvin Harris, characterizing Boas as an anti-theoretical chaser of empty facts, made Herskovits’s call for balance even more pressing.²¹

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁷ Walter Goldschmidt, ed., *The Anthropology of Franz Boas: Essays on the Centennial of His Birth*, Memoir No. 89 of the American Anthropological Association (San Francisco: Howard Chandler Publisher and the American Anthropological Association, 1959).

¹⁸ Melville Herskovits, Book review, *The Anthropology of Franz Boas*, in *American Anthropologist* 62, 6 (December 1960): 1063.

¹⁹ Goldschmidt, “Introduction,” *The Anthropology of Franz Boas*, 2.

²⁰ Melville Herskovits, Book review, *The Anthropology of Franz Boas*, 1063.

²¹ See Leslie White, *The Ethnography and Ethnology of Franz Boas*, Bulletin No. 6 (Austin: Texas Memorial Museum, 1963); and Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968). See also Murray Wax, “The Limitations of Boas’ Anthropology,” *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956): 63-74; and John Buettner-Janusch, “Boas and Mason: Particularism versus Generalization,” *American Anthropologist* 59 (1957): 318-24.

A new scholar on the scene, George W. Stocking, Jr., answered the call. Having completed a doctoral dissertation ("American Social Scientists and Race Theory, 1890-1915") at the University of Pennsylvania in 1960 under A. Irving Hallowell (another former student of Boas), he decided to pursue a more even-handed engagement with the Boasian legacy. Born in Germany but raised and educated in the United States, Stocking even shared a common history with Boas. Through a series of articles and book chapters, he suggested that although Boas may not have generated any grand theory of culture, "his critique of nineteenth century racial and cultural evolutionary assumptions, both in anthropology and popular thought, [had] ... cleared the way for a more meaningful 'anthropological' (i.e., pluralistic, holistic, non-hierarchical, relativistic, behaviorally determinist) concept of culture."²² Anthropologist Ronald Rohner added to this in 1969 with his English translations of Boas's journals and family letters from the Northwest Coast.²³ The latter were a revelation as they showed the Columbia University anthropologist covering an extensive geographical terrain but struggling in the field, sometimes to the point of nervous breakdown and depression. The material also revealed that Boas had relied on a single Indigenous "informant," George Hunt, for much of his research on the Kwakwaka'wakw. Given his insistence on full-community surveys, this methodology was surprising, although a possible explanation existed for it – his personal discomfort with fieldwork. The letters helped to explain Boas's retreat to his Columbia University armchair, where from 1900 on, he relied mainly on his two resident "assistants," George Hunt and James Teit, to do his Pacific Northwest fieldwork for him.²⁴

The 1960s and 70s work of Stocking and Rohner stimulated a revival of academic interest in the Boasian research paradigm. Some, such as Regna Darnell, Herbert Lewis, and Vernon Williams, Jr., extolled the

²² George W. Stocking, Jr., "The Basic Assumptions of Boasian Anthropology," in *A Franz Boas Reader: The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883-1917*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 5. See also *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1968) and George W. Stocking, Jr., ed., "Volksgeist" as Method and Ethic: Essays on Boasian Ethnography and the German Anthropological Tradition in *History of Anthropology, Volume 8* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996).

²³ Ronald P. Rohner, ed., *The Ethnography of Franz Boas: Letters and Diaries of Franz Boas Written on the Northwest Coast from 1886 to 1931* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

²⁴ Between 1886 and 1900, Boas made eight field trips to the Pacific Northwest. After a fourteen-year gap, he returned to British Columbia for three weeks in August, 1914, sixteen days in August, 1922, and a month in November-December, 1923. He made two final trips: one in 1927 for two months and one in 1930-31 for two and a half months. For details, see Ronald P. Rohner, "Franz Boas: Ethnographer on the Northwest Coast," in *Pioneers of American Anthropology: The Uses of Biography*, ed. June Helm (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 149-212.

virtues of Boas's work,²⁵ while others (James Clifford, David Murray, Charles Briggs, Richard Bauman, Judith Berman and Michael Harkin) developed the now dominant critical assessment.²⁶ The crisis of modernist representation emerging in the humanities and social sciences informed the latter group. For example, University of California (Santa Cruz) theorist, James Clifford, argued for a "new space" for anthropology that acknowledged "ethnographic truths" as "complex, often ambivalent, [and] potentially hegemonic" due to their location in "a world of enduring and changing power inequalities."²⁷

In his 1991 monograph, *Forked Tongues: Speech Writing and Representation in North American Indian Texts*, literary theorist, David Murray concluded that Boas's attachment to a modernist scientism compromised the Indigenous stories of the Pacific Northwest by converting them into freeze-dried print-texts suitable for scientific analysis. In this process, for example, Boas stripped them of their tellers and communities-of-origin. This was a classic illustration of the hegemonic power dynamic embedded in Boas's ethnographic enterprise, an arrangement by which "[t]he writing subject [i.e., Boas] creates himself implicitly in his writing as an objective 'man of science,' by constituting his object of study (the people and their ways) stripped of the subjective and personal engagement and dialogue by which he gained what is now presented as knowledge."²⁸

²⁵ Regna Darnell, *And Along Came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in Americanist Anthropology* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1998); and Darnell, *Invisible Genealogies: A History of Americanist Anthropology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001); Herbert Lewis, "The Misrepresentation of Anthropology and Its Consequences," *American Anthropologist* 103, 2 (1998): 716-31; Lewis, "Boas, Darwin, Science, and Anthropology," *Current Anthropology* 42, 3 (2001): 381-406; and Vernon J. Williams, Jr., *Rethinking Race: Franz Boas and his Contemporaries* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996).

²⁶ David Murray, *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing & Representation in North American Indian Texts* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1991); Charles Briggs and Richard Bauman, "The Foundation of All Future Researches': Franz Boas, George Hunt, Native American Texts, and the Construction of Modernity," *American Quarterly* 51, 3 (1999): 479-528; Judith Berman, "George Hunt and the Kwak'wala Texts," *Anthropological Linguistics*, 36,4 (1994): 483-514; Berman, "The Culture as it Appears to the Indian Himself: Boas, George Hunt, and the Methods of Ethnography," in *Volksgeist as Method and Ethic: Essays on Boasian Ethnography and the German Anthropological Tradition*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 215-56; Michael Harkin, "(Dis)pleasures of the Text: Boasian Ethnology on the Central Northwest Coast," in *Gateways: Exploring the Legacy of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, 1897-1902*, eds. Igor Krupnik and William W. Fitzhugh (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2001), 93-105. Note that this is a snapshot of some of the critical literature. A full list is beyond the scope of this review essay.

²⁷ James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, eds. James Clifford and George E. Marcus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 4; 7; 9.

²⁸ Murray, 132.

With the rise of postmodernism in the 1970s, what had been an inchoate source of conflict between the critics and the defenders of Boas became clear and explicit. In short, for such critics, any "scientific" mission for anthropology that sought to distill other cultures to rules – to "truths" – imposed by a dominant (usually Western) institution was both futile and destructive. Boas was such a modernist; it was in his bones, his soul. Advocates of modernist anthropology (and this volume is such a work of advocacy) cannot engage seriously with the new critical insights and still retain their modernist faith. It is one thing to deconstruct the modernist ideology and point out its dangers; it is another to carve out a practical new path for the discipline. That demands a fundamentally new way of thinking and acting – a paradigm change – that entails a level of personal responsibility and self-criticism that is more easily avoided in a world awash in the false truths and irresponsibilities of a still-colonizing modernism.

In my own work on the activist ethnographer James Teit (1864-1922) (who, despite his long association with Boas, has been almost totally ignored in the Boasian Pantheon), I repeatedly encountered such problems – Boas's urge to decontextualize and depersonalize the data by absencing its sources, his scientific treatment of that data, his inattention to the long line of individuals involved in his work, his manipulation of the data to insulate its pre-contact purity from present-day contaminants, his lack of active intervention against the colonial process, and so on.²⁹

Anthropologist Judith Berman reinforced the critique of the Boasian "truths" with a series of articles in the 1990s that revealed a major crack in the foundational edifice of his Northwest Coast ethnography: that George Hunt, his so-called Kwakiutl (Kwakwaka'wakw in today's terms) source for the Kwakwaka'wakw was "not himself Kwakwaka'wakw." He was Tlingit through his high-ranking Tlingit mother, Mary Ebbets of Tongass, Alaska. There was another hitch to Hunt's background: his father, Robert Hunt, was an Englishman from Dorsetshire, England, who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Rupert. Because of this, George spent much of his childhood in that community on northern Vancouver Island. Mary, however, ensured that George absorbed her Tlingit culture by immersing him in her Tlingit language and family traditions and keeping him in close touch with her Tongass relatives.

²⁹ Wickwire, "They Wanted Me To Help Them': James A. Teit and the Challenge of Ethnography in the Boasian Era," in *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian & Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada*, eds. Celia Haig-Brown & David Nock (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 297-320. See also Wickwire, "Stories from the Margins: Toward a More Inclusive British Columbia Historiography," *Journal of American Folklore* 118, 470 (Fall 2005): 453-474.

Although young George gained exposure to the Kwakwaka'wakw who frequented the post, it was not until his marriage in 1872 at age eighteen to a high-ranking Kwakwaka'wakw woman that he gained official entry into that community. Even then, Berman notes, he did not attain full membership, because the Kwakwaka'wakw "never considered him to be one of them."³⁰ In their eyes, he was "a *real man* . . . that is, an Indian," but a "foreign Indian, a Tlingit."³¹ Hunt in turn never considered himself a Kwakwaka'wakw.³² Boas had concealed this in his published work.³³

A linguistic and archival sleuth, Berman combed through Hunt's Kwakwaka'wakw texts looking for traces of Hunt's Tlingit language and background and she emerged with a new perspective. She detected "mistakes, chiefly in transcription, [and] to a lesser extent in grammar, and occasionally in lexicon" that she attributed to Hunt's work in a language – Kwak'wala – that was "not completely [his own] vernacular language."³⁴ She also discovered that Hunt's texts represented a small sample of the community as he "did not canvass the Kwakwaka'wakw universally or evenly" but instead relied mainly on himself and "his friends and in-laws."³⁵ In his own publications, Boas had omitted these crucial details. Such methodological "concealment," writes Berman, was incompatible with Boas's firm stand on "provenience." It unhinged Boas's claims that Hunt's texts were *pure* "manifestations" of the "mental life" of the Kwakwaka'wakw.³⁶

Ralph Maud of Simon Fraser University unearthed more inconsistencies in his 1993 study of Boas's 1916 monograph, *Tsimshian Mythology*. Comparing the stories collected and submitted by Boas's Tsimshian employee, Henry Tate, to those that Boas included in the 1916 monograph, Maud concluded that Tate did not fully understand Boas's instructions (they never met but communicated by mail). For example, instead of recording stories from community members in situ as Boas had instructed, Tate listened casually to stories in their settings and then headed home to write them out in English and then translate them line by line back into Tsimshian. Tate even composed his own stories and included them in the mix! He also plagiarized stories from a Nuxalk collection that Boas

³⁰ Berman, "George Hunt and the Kwak'wala Texts," 484.

³¹ Berman, "The Culture as it Appears," 228.

³² Berman, "George Hunt and the Kwak'wala Texts," 484.

³³ Berman, "George Hunt and the Kwak'wala Texts." See also Berman, "The Culture as it Appears," 215-56.

³⁴ Berman, "George Hunt and the Kwak'wala Texts," 510; 484.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 509-10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 510; 484.

had sent him to guide his work on the Tsimshian. When he published the stories, Boas did not explain these methodological points.³⁷

University of Wyoming anthropologist Michael Harkin expanded on this in an article, "The Displeasures of the Text: Boasian Ethnology on the Central Northwest Coast."³⁸ Like so many critics before him, Harkin highlighted the impact of Boas's scientific compulsion to develop a generalized "over-arching, static, ideal type of culture, detached from its pragmatic and socially positioned moorings among real people ... [and] living communit[ies] in transition."³⁹ His work dovetailed with the work of Charles Briggs, an anthropologist at the University of California (Berkeley), and Richard Bauman, a folklorist at the University of Indiana, who argued that the Boasian legacy was even dangerous, because of its connection to the problematic modernist paradigm. Drawing on the renowned French theorist Pierre Bourdieu, they suggested that what Boas achieved in the production of Kwakwaka'wakw texts must be seen through:

a political-economic analysis of access to capital, symbolic and otherwise, that enables some participants to more forcefully shape the rules that guide both how discourse can legitimately be produced, circulated and received, and who gets to perform these roles and in what manner.⁴⁰

In a more recent iteration of their argument, Briggs and Bauman analyzed Boas's approach to language and tradition as an illustration of his "cosmopolitan charter for anthropology." Boas, they wrote, deserves praise for his progressive approach to racism, anti-nationalism and other forms of inequality. His scholarly agenda, however, needs rethinking because it promoted a concept of culture and tradition that positioned anthropologists as the all-knowing cultural seers and their subjects-of-study as unconscious bearers of cultural distortions (or "secondary rationalizations," as Boas called them). Boas "did not ... celebrate culture;" he saw it as a "largely negative ... obstacle to the achievement of a more rational and cosmopolitan world."⁴¹ Bauman and Briggs concluded with a warning:

³⁷ Ralph Maud, *The Porcupine Hunter and Other Stories: The Original Tsimshian Texts of Henry Tate* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1993).

³⁸ Harkin, 93-105.

³⁹ Harkin, 94.

⁴⁰ Briggs and Bauman, "The Foundation of All Future Researches," *American Quarterly*, 521.

⁴¹ Bauman and Briggs, "The Foundation of All Future Researches: Franz Boas's Cosmopolitan Charter for Anthropology," in *Voices of Modernity: Language Ideologies and the Politics of Inequality*, Bauman and Briggs, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 257.

We suggest ... that some of the lingering problems with anthropological conceptions of culture, which have caused tremendous debate within the discipline and beyond in recent years, are tied to the problematic constructions of language and tradition he embedded in culture and this negative relationship between culture and cosmopolitanism.⁴²

A recent voice on the scene, University of Montreal sociologist Michel Verdon, explicitly opposes the campaign to reinvigorate Boas's work on grounds that his vision of history and his approach to the individual have no place in today's world. Verdon charges that Boas's preoccupation with trait distributions randomly moving through space and individuals devoid of agency leads to "an anthropology of floating cultural fragments."⁴³

If globalization is worth studying, it calls for more than cultural hazards "theoretically" patterned by some ethereal "principle," or refashioned by already existing cultures; it calls for a radically non-Boasian *episteme*. In a word, contemporary anthropology is better off without Boas.⁴⁴

The Boasian legacy has not only survived this criticism; ironically, it has been kept alive by it. Since 1998, Boas has been the subject of three book-length biographies and numerous monographs.⁴⁵ He has also been

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Michel Verdon, "Boas and Holism: A Textual Analysis," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 36, 3 (2006): 276, 299. See also Verdon, "Franz Boas: Cultural History for the Present, or Obsolete Natural History?" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13 (2007): 433-51.

⁴⁴ Verdon, "Boas and Holism," 299.

⁴⁵ For biographies, see Marshall Hyatt, *Franz Boas, Social Activist: The Dynamics of Ethnicity* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Douglas Cole, *Franz Boas: The Early Years, 1858-1906* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1999); and Norman Boas, *Franz Boas, 1858-1942: An Illustrated Biography* (Mystic, CT: Seaport Autographs Press, 2004). For analytical studies of Boas's research programme, see Darnell, 1998 and 2001; Herbert Lewis, *Defense of Anthropology: An Investigation of the Critique of Anthropology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press, 2014); Aldona Jonaitis, ed., *A Wealth of Thought: Franz Boas on Native American Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015); Armand Colin, *Franz Boas: Le Travail du regard* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2013); Ludger Müller-Wille, *The Franz Boas Enigma: Inuit, Arctic and the Sciences* (Montreal: Baraka Books, 2014); Aaron Glass and Judith Berman, "The Distributed Text: An Annotated Digital Edition of Franz Boas's Pioneering Ethnography," *Culture* 6, 1 (2012): 18; Ira Jacknis, *The Storage Box of Tradition: Kwakiutl Art, Anthropologists, and Museums, 1881-1981* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002); and William Adams, *The Boasians: Founding Fathers and Mothers of Anthropology* (New York: Hamilton Books, 2016). See also Igor Krupnik and William W. Fitzhugh, eds., *Gateways: Exploring the Legacy of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, 1897-1902* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2001); Ralph Maud, *The Porcupine Hunter and Other Stories*; and Laurel Kendall and Igor Krupnik, eds., *Constructing Cultures Then and Now: Celebrating Franz Boas and the Jesup North Pacific Expedition* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2003). A new book, *Indigenous Visions:*

the focus of prominent academic conferences.⁴⁶ In 2010, Darnell hosted a large conference at Western University in London, Ontario aimed at launching a proposal for her Franz Boas Papers project. The proposal was funded in 2013 by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to the tune of 2.5 million. In 2011, two academic conferences – one hosted by Yale University and the other by Columbia University – marked the centenary of the publication of Boas's *The Mind of Primitive Man*. Aaron Glass of the Bard Graduate Center, New York City, recently secured support from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a project (co-directed with Judith Berman of the University of Victoria, British Columbia) entitled, "The Distributed Text: An Annotated Digital Edition of Franz Boas's Pioneering Ethnography."

Such is the pedigree of *The Franz Boas Papers, Volume 1* and the explanation for its explicit goal of "evening the score." Imagine this project as a tennis match. On the one side is an exemplary, if largely critical team, with many of its members long dead. On the other side, Darnell and her three co-editors have assembled their own team to do battle. However, rather than putting players at both ends of the court, Darnell summoned players only to her side of the net. With one exception – David Dinwoodie – the other side is empty. Political opponents are dead, or alive but in the stands. As a result, the book is all serves and no returns.

Despite the century-long criticisms, Darnell asserts in her preface ("Historiographic Conundra: The Boasian Elephant in the Middle of Anthropology's Room")⁴⁷ and her opening chapter ("Mind, Body, and the Native Point of View: Boasian Theory at the Centennial of *The Mind of Primitive Man*") that Boas was a model public intellectual and an activist who broke new ground in the spheres of social injustice, racial discrimination, environmental loss, and other issues.⁴⁸ His seminal 1911 text, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, reveals him to be a leading theorist, she writes, who developed a "theory of mind" that was well ahead of its

Rediscovering the World of Franz Boas, by editors Isaiah Wilner and N. Blackhawk, is due to be released by Yale University Press this year.

⁴⁶ In the fall of 1997, the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, DC hosted a large conference to commemorate the centenary of Boas's 1897 Jesup North Pacific Expedition. Boas has also been the focus of numerous sessions at the American Anthropological Association annual meetings. The papers of some of the sessions, such as the one that took place in Chicago in 1999, appeared in a special Franz Boas issue of the *American Anthropologist*. For an overview of the issue, see Ira Bashkow, Matti Bunzl, Richard Handler, Andrew Orta and Daniel Rosenblatt, "A New Boasian Anthropology: Theory for the 21st Century," in *American Anthropologist* 106, 3 (2004): 433–94.

⁴⁷ Darnell, "Historiographical Conundra," xi–xxvi.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, xii.

time. Moreover, his “text-based approach to cultural knowledge through the recorded words of members of culture, and the inextricability of language, thought, and reality (i.e., the external world)” was a “robust standpoint-based epistemology that underwrote later culture and personality, ethnoscience, social interactionist, and interpretivist approaches constructed on Boasian foundations.”⁴⁹

In his chapter, “The Individual and Individuality in Franz Boas’s Anthropology and Philosophy,” Herbert Lewis, professor emeritus of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, builds on Darnell’s praise.⁵⁰ In contrast to the argument that Boas ignored the individual, Lewis argues that a survey of his written work demonstrates that Boas was “deeply concerned about individuals and individuality.” Indeed, “his whole way of thinking gave precedence to individuals, individuality, and variability.”⁵¹ At the same time, Lewis acknowledges that although Boas recognized this in theory, he failed to act on it in practice. “[B]eyond programmatic statements,” there is little “evidence” of any named individuals in his work.⁵² Despite this contradiction, Lewis exonerates Boas on grounds that he acted on his commitment to the individual theoretically through his writings, and practically through his students and collaborators whom he encouraged to focus on individuals in society (a point that Radin himself denied in 1914).⁵³

From Darnell and Lewis on, the volume covers diverse and complicated terrain with few interconnecting threads. The lack of an introductory overview makes it hard-going in places. As Joseph Weiss noted in his recent review of the book, the “inaccessibility” and “eclectic” character of this volume, along with its lack of “general overviews of [Boas’s] career or basic theoretical positions outside of the specific foci of individual chapters,” will put some readers off. Those “without some familiarity with Boas’ major writings or the substantive details of his ethnographic work in Canada,” he writes, may find themselves “unable to gain purchase on the often highly compelling interpretations made within the book’s individual chapters.”⁵⁴ Edward Chamberlin’s chapter, “Franz Boas and

⁴⁹ Darnell, “Mind, Body, and the Native Point of View: Boasian Theory at the Centennial of *The Mind of Primitive Man*,” in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 5.

⁵⁰ Lewis, “The Individual and Individuality in Franz Boas’s Anthropology and Philosophy,” in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 20.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, 30.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Joseph Weiss, “Engaging with the Expansive and Eclectic Work and Legacy of Franz Boas,” *Anthropology Book Forum*, 2016, in <http://www.anthropology-news.org/?book-review=engaging-with-the-expansive-and-eclectic-work-and-legacy-of-franz-boas>.

the Conditions of Literature," is a good case in point.⁵⁵ It examines the "literary principles of New Criticism and the phenomenological practices of the natural and physical sciences" in vogue at Columbia University during Boas's time, and their links to Boas's embrace of modernism and "his belief in the determinisms of language."⁵⁶ Chamberlin's informative but dense chapter would have benefited from more context such as the development of Boas's literary interests inside and outside of the university. Given that some of Boas's talented graduate students self-identified as humanists – even poets – and attended Columbia during its New Criticism phase, they could also have pushed Boas in this direction. Sean O'Neill's chapter, "The Boasian Legacy in Ethnomusicology" – a chronicle of Boas's pursuit of the musical component of ethnographic research and the role he played in laying the groundwork for the contemporary discipline of ethnomusicology – could also have used more context as well as more analytical, theoretical substance.⁵⁷

Linguist Michael Silverstein compensates for some of the missing context in his informative and highly readable chapter, "From Baffin Island to Boasian Induction," by situating Boas's seminal, "text-anchored ethnography" against the backdrop of his early exposure to comparative philology and inductive science.⁵⁸ In possibly the best chapter in the book, Julia Liss of Scripps College, California, builds on this with her rich study of how Boas responded to two world wars and how these crises shaped his anthropology and honed his reputation – positive and negative – as an activist ("Franz Boas on War and Empire: The Making of a Public Intellectual").⁵⁹ The First World War gave Boas a chance to go public with his critical positions on eugenics, nationalisms, immigration, and race. During the interwar years he addressed the growing reactionary postwar populism. As a German-born Jew, some of his public stands, especially on eugenics, fuelled the nationalisms that he attacked. As Liss notes, it may even have provoked "the revived Ku Klux Klan's racialist nationalism and 100% Americanism" that was rampant at the time.⁶⁰ At one point, he became a target of FBI suspicion because of his views.

⁵⁵ Chamberlin, "Franz Boas and the Conditions of Literature," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 65–81.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁵⁷ Sean O'Neill, "The Boasian Legacy in Ethnomusicology: Cultural Relativism, Narrative Texts, Linguistic Structures, and the Role of Comparison," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 129–60.

⁵⁸ Michael Silverstein, "From Baffin Island to Boasian Introduction: How Anthropology and Linguistics Got into Their Interlinear Groove," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 117.

⁵⁹ Julia E. Liss, "Franz Boas on War and Empire: The Making of a Public Intellectual," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 293–328.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 302.

Liss is one of the few authors in the book who contributes directly to the volume's central theme: to interrogate Boas's role as a public intellectual and activist.⁶¹ Jürgen Langenkämper's "Franz Boas's Correspondence with German Friends and Colleagues in the Early 1930s" complements Liss by analyzing Boas's correspondence with friends, colleagues, and family members for his views on "the deteriorating climate for science and for Jewish intellectuals" as Hitler gained power in the 1930s.⁶²

Boas's ardent activism on behalf of African-Americans (who can be assimilated as individuals into the American melting pot) is one thing. His limited and often self-interested "activism" on behalf of Indigenous peoples (whose collective cultures he saw as doomed to extinction) was something else again. Joshua Smith's chapter, "Cultural Persistence in the Age of Hopelessness: Phinney, Boas and U.S. Indian Policy," offers a glimpse of Boas acting outside of the academy in the early 1930s to influence the Bureau of Indian Affairs in its selection of a new commissioner for the Bureau.⁶³ The Bureau favoured John Collier, a well-known writer and social reformer widely respected for his progressive work in depressed, immigrant neighbourhoods. Boas, however, thought his Nez Perce graduate student, Archie Phinney, was a better fit for the job. If not Phinney, he had lined up two other students, Ruth Bunzel and Alexander Lesser whom he considered more qualified for the job than Collier.⁶⁴ Through letters to top politicians, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, and others such as Roger Baldwin, founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, Boas actually characterized Collier as an "evil" man who was too "emotional and quick in judgment" for the job. He also dismissed Collier as an administrator who would bring a "cookie-cutter approach to Indian administration."⁶⁵

In the end, Boas lost this "activist" campaign aimed at placing his own student(s) in a position of prominence. John Collier was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933 and held the position until 1945. As Smith writes, Boas's criticisms of Collier were "unbalanced and lacking nuance" because Collier was a political "progressive" with a "radically socialist slant" that served the Indigenous peoples of the United States well while he served as commissioner. Not only did he

⁶¹ Ibid., 293-328.

⁶² Jürgen Langenkämper, "Franz Boas's Correspondence with German Friends and Colleagues in the Early 1930s," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 277-92.

⁶³ Joshua Smith, "Cultural Persistence in the Age of 'Hopelessness': Phinney, Boas and US Policy," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 263-76.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 273.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 273.

resist the status quo, he did what Boas said he wouldn't do by focusing "on each particular community's self-determination for self-government as the basis of U.S. Indian policy."⁶⁶ Collier recalled later in life that back in 1922 he had invited Boas to a meeting in Berkeley, California, aimed at establishing a plan to help Indigenous communities work toward a "restored tribal authority" and other issues. He noted that Boas had approved the proposal in principle but that he took until 1938 to "lend a helping hand."⁶⁷

Continuing on the topic of Boas's avowed political activism, Andrea Laforet, retired head of the Ethnology Division of the Canadian Museum of History, addresses a subject with the potential to extend Joshua Smith's case study of Boas's efforts to influence the American government, to examining his efforts to influence Canadian government policy ("The Ethnographic Legacy of Franz Boas and James Teit").⁶⁸ From 1908 to 1922, James Teit juggled his paid ethnographic work for Boas in British Columbia with unpaid activist work for Indigenous chiefs across the province in their battle to resolve their contentious land-title problem. Instead of interrogating or supporting this side of Teit as a manifestation of Boas's activism (or not), Laforet focuses largely on Teit's 1900 ethnographic monograph, *The Thompson Indians of British Columbia*. Widely praised, it was released just six years into Teit's almost thirty-year long relationship with Boas. Because Boas laid out the table of contents for the project, edited Teit's drafts, and appended chapters of his own, the final work bore the cold, distancing imprint of Boas's "neutral" scientism over Teit's more engaged and personalized methodology. *The Thompson Indians* also predated Teit's activism by eight years. Although in his obituary of Teit, Boas acknowledged Teit's hard work and dedication to the Indigenous political campaign, he made no mention of it in his extensive correspondence with Teit, even during its most intense and difficult moments.⁶⁹

David Dinwoodie's "Anthropological Activism and Boas's Pacific Northwest Ethnology" is the one chapter that serves from the opposite side of the court.⁷⁰ In contrast to the book's central thesis, Dinwoodie argues that Boas's historical legacy is distinctly non-activist and deficient

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁶⁸ Laforet, "The Ethnographic Legacy of Franz Boas and James Teit: The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 215-35.

⁶⁹ This side of the Teit-Boas relationship will be covered in more depth in my book, *Farewell Coyote, Hello Jack: James A. Teit and the Making of a First People's History*, forthcoming, 2018.

⁷⁰ David Dinwoodie, "Anthropological Activism and Boas's Pacific Northwest Ethnology," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 215-35.

in the context of the Pacific Northwest because of its failure to engage with the colonial tenor of its time. Boas, he notes, made no “attempt [in his anthropology] to systematically address the historical circumstances and institutional factors widely recognized to contribute to them, whether colonial territorialization, missionization, literacy, print capitalism, public education, [or] changes in way of life.”⁷¹ Dinwoodie explicitly positions himself on the side of Kroeber, Paul Radin, and others on the limits of Boas’s approach to history. “Boas pointed to the potential of a historical approach,” he writes, but he “failed to develop it himself.” For this reason, he concludes, Boas’s work is not “well-equipped for the study of the distinct cultural-political history of the Pacific Northwest.”⁷² (Dinwoodie wrote from experience as he served as an expert witness in the prominent Tsilhqot’in land claims case that made use of Boas’s work.)

Christopher Bracken, author of the book’s third chapter (“The Police Dance: Dissemination in Boas’s Field Notes and Diaries, 1886, 1894”) looks initially like a player defecting to Dinwoodie’s end of the court but, by the middle of his piece, he crosses over to Darnell’s team.⁷³ A literary theorist at the University of Alberta, Bracken highlights a side of Boas that rarely surfaces in his published work: his candid reflections from the field as he navigated his way through the complex social and political dynamics of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century reserve life – often with little success or satisfaction. His search for the remnants of the old ways often took him into new spheres of culture that were hard to explain. Boas used his journals and family letters as outlets to air his frustration.

To understand this inner conflict, Bracken studied those field journals and letters. He emerged with telling examples, for example, Boas’s reaction to the scene at Nahwitti on northern Vancouver Island during his first visit to British Columbia in 1886. To quell fears among the Kwakwaka’wakw that he might be a missionary or a government agent, Boas introduced himself as a “chief” from a “distant land” who was there to find out about their ways. He then asked if they would dance for him in return for his hosting a feast. They agreed but the “indescribably wild picture” of the performance they gave him was far from what he expected. It was led by a “Mr. Cheap ... (a corruption of ‘chief’)” wearing a police uniform and proudly carrying a British flag said to have been given to

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 216.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Christopher Bracken, “The Police Dance: Dissemination in Boas’s Field Notes and Diaries, 1886-1894,” in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 43-64.

him by the king. A second man followed with another flag.⁷⁴ It was the ultimate in contradiction, Bracken notes, as the dance:

includes what it is supposed to exclude just as it permits what it is supposed to forbid. The chief dresses in the authority of the law in order to lend his authority to a breach of the law, "especially" the law banning "large festivals" like the one [Cheap] is leading.⁷⁵

As Boas learned more about Cheap, he reacted against him. "I should advise future explorers not to trust the man, 'Cheap,'" he wrote, "as he is the 'greatest liar' on the whole coast."⁷⁶ He is a man who "says one thing but means another."⁷⁷

It turned out that Mr. Cheap had obtained his police uniform from the resident Indian agent in return for whitewashing a *sisiutl* (a powerful traditional crest) painted on the front of his house and replacing it with English signage advertising his establishment as a place where "white man can get information."⁷⁸ With the uniform, the agent also made Cheap a "constable" charged with preventing community dances and feasts. Cheap ignored his new role, however, and instead featured his new costume in the local ceremonies. By covering up the *sisiutl*, writes Bracken, Cheap "cheated Boas of a view of the *sisiutl*" and thereby denied him the "scientific" opportunity he was seeking. Bracken assesses Boas's comment with a critical eye: "But doesn't Boas do the same?" he asks. "Isn't he cheating a little when he calls Cheap 'the greatest liar' on the coast?" Was Boas perhaps also "holding something back" about the full story of Cheap, he asks. Maybe, he writes, "the irony in Boas's indictment is that the 'greatest liar' is telling the greatest Boasian truth ... that societies grow by contact with their neighbours in accidental ways." Maybe Cheap, he adds, "personifi[es]" the change that this Northwest Indigenous culture was experiencing "through adaptation to the historical conditions of [their] lives."⁷⁹ Bracken noted that Boas witnessed another police dance at Fort Rupert in 1894 that featured four men dressed as police officers. One of the officers carried a book and played the part of a judge.

As a postcolonial theorist, Bracken interprets the police dance as a clever offering in which "the foreign is neither excluded nor shunned"

⁷⁴ Ibid., 45.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 49.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 50.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 47.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 50-51.

but rather “brought inside and tamed.” Midway through the chapter, however, Bracken draws a link between Boas’s vision of “tradition” and Jacques Derrida’s philosophy of the text, where “there is no pretext that is not already a text” because “a text is an organism that has ‘no proper, unified present origin.’”⁸⁰ Bracken even argues that Boas anticipated Derrida’s idea of “the structural nonbelonging of a text to its context,” thus acknowledging the difficulty of deciding “what properly belongs at the centre of a culture and what belongs to its margins.”⁸¹ This looks like a win for the Boasian team. However, it is not supported by the facts because there is never a single text representative of general Indigenous thought-patterns. Even if there were, whose text would it be and who would have the authority to even answer this question? As is well documented, Boas, in editing and analyzing stories, repeatedly emphasized his intent to establish the “centre” of culture in relation to its “margins” (as a way of determining innovators and borrowers) even as he removed the “context” from his texts. At times, he tampered with the stories’ contents at the publication stage – for example, removing a gun from a so-called myth to ensure its place in his vision of a group’s foundational heritage.⁸²

For those familiar with Judith Berman’s rich scholarship on the intricate dynamics of the Boas-Hunt relationship, the chapter by Isaiah Wilner, “Friends in this World: The Relationship of George Hunt and Franz Boas,” comes out of right field (yes, in his work Wilner plays a very different game than the rest of the team).⁸³ A trade writer with a new Yale doctoral dissertation (“Raven Cried for Me: Narratives of Transformation on the Northwest Coast of America”), Wilner characterizes Boas as he has never been characterized before: as a “master of our times” and, straining credibility, as an activist along the lines of Karl Marx! Continuing in his over-the-top assertions, Wilner states that Boas is to be venerated for his pioneering efforts to facilitate Kwakwaka’wakw kinship in the global family.⁸⁴ Wilner frames his case around Boas’s relationship with George Hunt. In order to make his argument, however, he ignores a vast and established scholarship on the complicated, often manipulative, top-down relationship between Boas and Hunt. Instead, with his “discovery,” Wilner stakes out new ground that will (undoubtedly) become

⁸⁰ Ibid., 57.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Wickwire, “Stories from the Margins.”

⁸³ Isaiah Lorado Wilner, “Friends in this World: The Relationship of George Hunt and Franz Boas,” in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 163–89.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 164.

grist for another mass market potboiler in the vein of his *New York Times* bestseller, *The Man Time Forgot*.⁸⁵ In a similar spirit, he presents Boas's so-called informant, Hunt, as the resident Indigenous "thinker and teacher" that anthropology forgot.⁸⁶ Hunt, he asserts, was delegated by his Kwakwaka'wakw community to channel ideas on their behalf to Boas. It was, he writes, a rare case of a professional anthropologist forging a new "against-the-grain anthropology" grounded in a bond of friendship. "Ever since the Kwakwaka'wakw bound them together," writes Wilner, "Hunt had stood behind Boas, speaking through him. Boas's books were Hunt's speaking post."⁸⁷ On these unsupported grounds, Wilner argues, it is time to celebrate Boasian anthropology as "provid[ing] colonized people [with] an opportunity to speak back to their colonizers."⁸⁸ Wilner's bold, new thesis may well excite an uninitiated trade publisher on the lookout for some good news from the colonial legacy. But it has neither the critical scholarship (Murray, Berman, Briggs, Bauman, et al.) nor the primary sources (the long correspondence between Boas and Hunt) to support it. Alas, the Victoria-based Judith Berman was not part of the Darnell match. If she had been, she would have played on the other side of the net where her returns of serve would have demolished Wilner's game.

In his chapter, "Franz Boas, Wilson Duff, and the Image of Anthropology in British Columbia," Robert Hancock develops Darnell's disavowal of the critics.⁸⁹ Drawing on the legacies of Boas and Wilson Duff (an anthropologist who worked in British Columbia from the 1950s to 70s and who pioneered a new role for anthropology in the courts), Hancock questions how two such "profound models of engaged anthropological scholarship" can be so badly "misunderstood both within and beyond the discipline."⁹⁰ It points, he writes, to the "acute failure of the current historiography" and begs a more "theoretically engaged and textually and archivally rich analysis of the histories of anthropology in their contemporary and present contexts, both intellectual and political."⁹¹ Despite this appeal, Hancock's chapter eschews a consideration of the long and complicated history of the debates and critiques surrounding Boas to focus on a few recent critics, including myself, Harkin, Briggs

⁸⁵ Isaiah Wilner, *The Man Time Forgot: A Tale of Genius, Betrayal and the Creation of "Time" Magazine* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁸⁹ Robert Hancock, "Franz Boas, Wilson Duff, and the Image of Anthropology in British Columbia," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 237-61.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 254.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

and Bauman.⁹² He concludes by endorsing Darnell's characterization of Boas.

Hancock's chapter is a micro manifestation of the macro problem with *The Franz Boas Papers, Volume 1*: he makes a number of *ad hominem* charges against the critics – muddled representations, mischaracterizations, shallow research, biased agendas – but does not present a rich and engaged consideration of the substance of those charges. Hancock takes issue, for example, with the critics' lack of recognition of Boas's "activist" role in opposing the potlatch ban (for which he cites a one-line assertion by Darnell in another publication). Boas certainly protested the ban on the potlatch – as part of Edward Sapir's 1915 petition of letters from anthropologists submitted to the Canadian Government, and through several articles to Victoria newspapers and a public lecture. Overall, however, the extent of any activism was constrained by his larger commitment to his salvage project for cultures that he accepted as "heading for their extinction." As he argued publicly in 1889 (four years after the ban came into effect), "[t]he sooner these aborigines [the Kwakiutl] adapt themselves to the changed conditions the better it will be for them in their competition with the whiteman."⁹³

The volume's final two chapters have minimal connection to its main themes. The first, by Tim Powell ("Anthropology of Revitalization: Digitizing the American Philosophical Society's Native American Collection"), covers the history of the APS holdings for Boas and other collectors of Indigenous materials; and the second – the volume's concluding chapter by Michelle Hamilton ("An Expansive Archive ... not a diminished one': The Franz Boas Papers Documentary Edition Project") – evokes a research grant proposal rather than an analytical, academic contribution.⁹⁴

According to "The Franz Boas Papers" website, *Volume 1* is the first in a proposed series of twenty-five volumes. This is one ambitious undertaking! One can only hope that for future volumes, the research team sets up a full and fair match about the "real" Franz Boas with representation that will provide for an exciting and timely contest with a diversity of

⁹² It is unfortunate that Hancock excluded the 2003 seminal study of Boas by Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs because it offers a more up-to-date and refined articulation of their position on Boas. See Bauman and Briggs, "The Foundation of All Future Researches," 255–335.

⁹³ Herr Dr. F. Boas, "Über seine Reisen in Britisch-Columbien," *Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin, Verhandlungen* 16 (1889): 257–68, quoted in Rohner, *The Ethnography of Franz Boas*, 13.

⁹⁴ Timothy B. Powell, "Anthropology of Revitalization: Digitizing the American Philosophical Society's Native American Collections," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 331–34; Michelle Hamilton, "An expansive archive ... not a diminished one': The Franz Boas Papers Documentary Edition Project," in *The Franz Boas Papers*, 345–61.

shots and angles from both sides of the net. If they truly want to resolve the conundra over the status of the Boasian legacy, they must be willing to face the volleys and groundstrokes of real living opponents while also replaying both the wins and errors of sophisticated players who, like Radin, "pre-date the Open era." Future volumes must also make room for players from the Indigenous communities.