Towards a New Ethnohistory:

Community-Engaged Indigenous History

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Preface

Naxaxalhts’i (Albert “Sonny” McHalsie)

It is amazing to see this collection completed, and even more amazing to think that people are going to be able to read the words of our Stó:lō elders, past and present, directly within the text of the various chapters. When the Ethnohistory fieldschool started in 1998 I was very pleased to see that the students were as interested in reading the old archival documents a Sq’ewlets co-nd listening to the tapes of oral histories recorded in the past as they were in conducting their own interviews with living Elders. Ethnohistory fieldschool students have now added dozens and dozens of new original oral history interviews to the Stó:lō Nation archives, helping to create a repository of traditional knowledge that will be consulted by Stó:lō and non-Stó:lō people alike well into the future. That, in itself, is a great achievement and contribution.

But these young ethnohistorians have done much more than simply record and document Stó:lō history. By working on research projects that have been identified by Stó:lō community members they have helped to find answers to historical questions that are priorities for Stó:lō people and families. And by bringing their academic training to these subjects they have provided us with interpretations that link Stó:lō history to broader Indigenous histories. As I understand it, they bring insights to their study of the Stó:lō past from their readings of scholarship pertaining to other Indigenous communities, and in turn their research into Stó:lō history can be used to help others who are seeking answers to similar question about other Indigenous communities’ history. That’s a great thing because it respects the distinctness of Stó:lō culture and history while revealing things about that past that are common to Indigenous people everywhere.

One thing that the authors of these essays have done that really shows the way scholarship has been changing since I first started doing heritage research with non-Natives in the mid-1980s is building longterm relationships with Elders and community members. There was a time when many students and professors would show up in our communities and do their summer fieldwork and then disappear. I remember Elders telling me how much they resented the researchers who came to interview them and then were never heard from again. When these students arrived here from Victoria and Saskatoon it would have been easy for them to simply walk away after the class was done and their projects completed. But the Ethnohistory fielschool emphasizes long-term relations. It is built upon older existing partnerships with the professors, Keith Carlson and John Lutz. They’ve been working with us since the early 1990s and the Elders know them and trust them. The way it works with the Ethnohistory Fieldshool is that we open the doors for the faculty and their students and we know we can rely on them to keep coming back in a respectful way. The former students who have contributed to this collection of essays have come back multiple times presenting their findings at our bi-annual “People of the River Conference,” for example, where they get feedback from community members and from our staff at our Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. Many of the students have been inspired to dig even deeper and in the end turned their original fieldschool papers into full graduate theses and publications.

One thing I always encourage the fieldschool students to think about is the fullness of our culture and history. Years ago Chief Lester Ned of Sumas told me and the other researchers in the old Abioriginal Rights and Title department at the Stó:lō Tribal Council “tell us what we need to hear,
not what we want to hear.” I’ve always remembered this, just like I’ve always remembered the way that Skwah Elder Rosaleen George explained that it’s important for us to share our knowledge with others – as she said, “If I don’t share what I know, how are my grandchildren going to learn.” Knowledge and wisdom are gifts that Elders have to share with others. Chawathil Elder Tilly Gutierrez said that it’s a sin if you don’t take care of things that belong to you – things like fishing sites that are passed down within families. Knowledge is like that too. It’s passed down within families and within communities, and the Elders want to share that knowledge. But sharing means that both sides get something. The Ethnohistory fieldschool shares back by hosting a real potlatch feast at the end of each class where they acknowledge the Elders with gifts. And they share back by coming to visit our Elders long after the fieldschool is over. And they share back by being careful in their research and in publishing things about our history that help other non-Natives come to learn about us and to respect and appreciate us. And they also help our community members come to better understand setter society and the history of colonialism, and that’s important. So those are ways to share back, and by doing good quality research that doesn’t just cherry coat our history they are respecting us. The essays in this collection do that.

The things in our culture that interests me the most are our sxwoxwiym. These are the stories about Xexá:ls – the three brothers and sister who were the children of Red Headed Woodpecker and Black Bear. They were the transformers and our Elders explain that they “made the world right.” I’m really pleased to see that several of the essays in this collection focus on sxwoxwiym stories. And I’m glad that these stories are being historicized. One of the other new projects that I’m currently working on with Keith Carlson is looking at how residential schools and colonialism have caused some of the old sxwoxwiym that were shared by Elders more than a century ago to sort of disappear. Some aren’t talked about or even remembered today. And sometimes today some people in our own communities have different ideas about our sxwoxwiym. Some of them sort of mix them up with Christian stories, and some of them sort of mix them up with pan-Indian stories. But the sxwoxwiym are grounded right here in S’ólh Téméxw (our land). And they explain who were are and why we are the way we are. I’m really glad to see that some of the essays in this collection discuss this subject.

Working with my fellow editors, Keith Carlson, John Lutz, and Dave Schaepe has been rewarding. We all learn from each other, and that sort of respect and sharing is what we’ve seen happen with the students of the Ethnohistory Fieldschool as well. They work together and they support each other. That’s what we all need to move forward in this country. I like the idea behind the recently completed Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Fieldschool is helping to reveal the truth, and bit by bit, Elder by Elder and student by student, the Fieldschool is helping to create the respectful relationships that will build genuine and meaningful reconciliation in Canada. We can see that things are changing, they are getting better. But there are are still hurdles to jump. Stó:lō women are among the missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada; Stó:lō lands continue to be alienated without our consent as we struggle to negotiate a treaty with the federal and provincial governments; Stó:lō salmon continue to return to our rivers in dangerously low and still diminishing numbers after running the gauntlet of industrial fisheries in the oceans; Stó:lō youth continue to struggle with addictions and with lower than acceptable education levels as well as with lower than acceptable employment levels; Stó:lō families continue to struggle with the legacies of residential schools and the Sixties Scoop.
But there are signs that things are changing for the better, and I am hopeful for the future. And I think the essays in this collection, and the respectful research relationships that they are built upon, are helping contribute to a better future with understanding and respect between Stó:lō and non-Indigenous people – a future where my grandchildren and my children’s children’s grandchildren will hopefully be able to exercise their right to fish at our family’s hereditary sites on the Fraser River, will speak our Halqeméylem language, will participate in the winter dance and other Stó:lō ceremonies, will have a university education, will have good jobs, will not suffer from racism, will have Xweltem (non-Indigenous) friends, and will eventually be able to say that they are not only proud to be Stó:lō, but also proud to be Canadian.
“From the Archives and the Field: The New Ethnohistory”

Keith Thor Carlson, John Lutz, and David Schaepe

“To know your history is to be smelah – that’s ‘worthy.’ If you don’t know your history (if you’ve lost it or forgotten it), well, then you are stexem – and that’s ‘worthless.’”


Navigating the interdisciplinary sea of ethnohistory is no easy task, lying as it does between the Scylla (rock) of anthropology and the Charybdis (hard place) of history. Until recently, scholars seeking to negotiate these waters have tended to bring an intimate knowledge of the tides and reefs of one coast while too often borrowing the equivalent of dated charts from their sister discipline, to navigate the waters on the other side. Indeed, as Sebastian Felix Braun argues, it remains commonplace for too many anthropologists and historians to:

1 distrust the use of the other’s methodologies and, therefore, often appropriate it in such a way as to eliminate any potential threat. This leaves them comfortably grounded in disciplinary perspectives but also eliminates the valuable contributions to and critiques of these perspectives. It prevents an engagement of alternative narratives on their own terms.

Today a new generation of ethnohistorians, represented in part by the scholars profiled in this collection, have embraced the need for interdisciplinary fluencies that go beyond history and anthropology to include Indigenous studies, literary studies, settler colonial studies, law, and economics. Collectively they are redefining the field. Listening to Indigenous leaders who are giving fresh voice to the ancient principal of Nihil de nobis, sine nobis, (nothing about us without us) these ethnohistorians recognize the necessity of working with, rather than “on” or even “for” the people whose history and culture they study. This new ethnohistory appears in a variety of forms but each requires sustained conversations and the maintenance of respectful relationships

1 Homer’s The Odyssey describes Scylla and Charybdis, two sea monsters situated on opposite sides of the Strait of Messina between Sicily and Italy posing an inescapable threat to passing sailors. Scylla lived in a rock and ate sailors but avoiding her meant being sucked up in the whirlpool created by Charybdis and vice versa. The Stó:lō have their own version: in heading into the Fraser Canyon fishery they have to avoid S’ch’ē:il, wife of X̲éylxelemōs who manifests as a whirlpool and X̲éylxelemōs himself, a medicine man who was transformed into a giant rock, also known as Lady Franklin Rock.

between communities and scholars. The essays in this collection all are products of such a relationship—a remarkable partnership that is nearly two decades old as we write.

These essays are important contributions to the larger field of ethnohistory because they demonstrate many features of the new directions in the field, because of the fascinating history and culture of the Stó:lō themselves, and because the Stó:lō have experienced the ethnohistorical evolution of anthropology and history since Franz Boas first worked in their territory in 1884. The Northwest Coast of North America has been a particularly fertile ground for new ideas in anthropology, history, and ethnohistory and the Stó:lō have been both a part of that inspiration and at the forefront of the New Ethnohistory.

An Introduction to the Stó:lō

The Stó:lō, literally “River People,” are the Indigenous inhabitants of the lower Fraser River watershed located in what is now known as Southwest British Columbia (with territory that stretches into parts of Northwest Washington). Archaeological evidence shows continuous occupation for over 9,000 years while Stó:lō knowledge keepers explain that their ancestors have occupied the region since time immemorial. They share legendary stories (sxwōxwxwiyám) that describe the ancient arrival of sky-born heroes who along with others who were earth-born became the genealogical founders of the various Stó:lō tribes. In those early days, elders explain, the world was chaotic and dangerous. People and animals regularly transformed their shape, wicked or misguided Indian doctors played malevolent and sometimes harmful tricks on others, and food was not consistently available.

Into this world came Xexá:ls, the three sons and one daughter of Redheaded Woodpecker and Black Bear. They possessed remarkable transformative powers that became even greater after an epic journey to the sun. After riding with the sun to the sunset Xexá:ls traveled eastward back to the Fraser River and its tributaries, and as they passed through the various tribal territories they transformed the unpredictable and frightening landscape into the stable world we recognize today. Their transformative feats included changing certain Indian Doctors into stone, making a particularly generous man into the remarkably useful red cedar tree, arranging for the salmon runs to be consistent and predictable, and transforming a kindly mother into the highest mountain peak in the region so that she could always watch over the Stó:lō people and the salmon. (For more on the Xexá:ls stories see the essay by Adar Charlton in this volume).

There are no less than twenty-nine First Nations located along the Fraser River and its tributaries downriver of the rapids in the lower Fraser River canyon that demarcate the Stó:lō and their Coast Salish neighbors from Interior Salish territories. Formerly there were many more settlements, but introduced diseases (such as smallpox, tuberculosis, and alcoholism), coupled with nineteenth century colonial government policies that sought to transform fishers and hunters into European-style farmers, caused many villages to be abandoned. While all share a common language and culture, some of these communities (especially those on the eastern and northern territorial extremities such Musqueam, Tsawwassen, Semiahmoo, Coquitlem, Katzie, Yale and Union Bar) are inclined to emphasize their local tribal identity over their Stó:lō.

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affiliation. Some tribes consist of a single First Nation (such as Chehalis on the Harrison River, and Matsqui in the Abbotsford region). Other tribes (such as the Chilliwack, and the Pilalt) are made up of multiple First Nations. In total there are roughly sixteen different Stó:lō tribal communities each with varying degrees of formal and informal political and economic association. Eight First Nations have come together to form the Stó:lō Tribal Council (Shxw’ow’hamel, Seabird, Cheam, Chawathil, KwawKwawApilt, Scowlitz, Soowahlie and Kwantlen). Similarly, eleven First Nations make up the Stó:lō Nation (Aitchelitz, Leq’á:mel, Matsqui, Skawhlook, Skowkale, Shxwha:y, Squiala, Sumas, Tzeachten, Yakweakwioose).

Membership in each of these larger groups is somewhat fluid, and indeed, each member First Nations receives slightly different services and programs from the central tribal agencies. Over the past forty years the Stó:lō Tribal Council and the Stó:lō Nation have twice merged and twice divided, and indeed, despite certain differences in political objectives and leadership style, cooperation between the two remains the norm.

When Simon Fraser, the first European to set foot on Stó:lō lands, traveled down the River that now bears his name in 1808 he encountered a culture that just twenty-six years earlier had been devastated by a smallpox epidemic. Stó:lō society in the early nineteenth century was primarily built upon complex extended family kinship networks. Wealth was equated with food resources, access to which fluctuated with seasons and according to micro climactic niches that ranged from saltwater estuaries, through riverine, meadows, and temperate rainforests to subalpine mountains. Stó:lō society was divided between a relatively small hereditary elite, a large group of commoners, and a small but significant slave class. The most valuable forms of property and wealth were the Fraser Canyon fishing sites that were typically regulated by elite males who inherited them through either their mother’s or father’s line. After smallpox, the next significant external challenge to Stó:lō society came with the arrival of Hudson’s Bay Company traders at Fort Langley in 1827. Profound contestation over the land and resources and governance did not occur, however, until the sudden influx of over 30,000, mostly American, gold miners who arrived along the Fraser River corridor in the spring of 1858 – still the largest single influx of immigrants in BC history. At this point, Stó:lō people were no longer encountering sporadic events of colonial contestation. Rather, to borrow from Patrick Wolfe, they were confronted by the sustained structures of settler colonialism – a particular expression of colonialism characterized by the arrival of permanent settlers who sought to displace Indigenous people from their lands in order to exploit Indigenous resources. In the immediate wake of the miners came settler colonial land speculators and a host of government regulatory schemes including the Indian reserve system, residential schools, and the banning of the potlatch and the sacred winterdance – both central to Stó:lō culture.

The Stó:lō and the Evolution of the “Old Ethnohistory”

Below we describe the elements of the New Ethnohistory but it is import to know what sets it apart from what went before. Ethnohistory as a field of intellectual enquiry has a long pedigree. Ethnohistory’s formal origins are often associated with the advent of the journal Ethnohistory in 1954 – which in turn was an academic response to the pragmatic challenge posed

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to US-based scholars by the American Indian Claims Commission.\(^5\) The practice of ethnohistory, however, predates the Commission’s work. Felix Braun identifies anthropologists as the first to reach out across disciplinary lines, and Franz Boas as among the initial leaders in this regard. Significantly, some of Boas’ earliest fieldwork was conducted among the Stó:lō (in 1884), and then, as has been well documented, Boas went on to inspire and train an entire cadre of scholars whose works collectively distinguished North American anthropology not only from what went before, but from what was being taught and practiced in Britain and elsewhere.

What is less well known is that Boas’ early work among the Coast Salish launched an intellectual pathway within anthropology that significantly shaped the development of ethnohistorical enquiry. Moreover, some of the most significant works of twentieth century ethnohistory have been conducted by scholars either trained directly by Boas at Columbia University, or subsequently by one of his students. Many of these works have been, in some way, connected to the Stó:lō and their neighbours.

Central to Boas’ approach was the notion that the particulars of local history shaped culture. However, while Boas’ ‘historical particularism’ alerted him to the importance of tracking historical change, his desire to recover and understand cultures in their “pure” forms (i.e. before they were affected by colonial cultures) blinded him to paying serious attention to the importance of changes brought about by Indigenous people’s engagement with settler colonialism and modernity.\(^6\) It would be another two academic generations before anthropologists working in the Pacific Northwest began seriously contemplating the significance of externally inspired and directed cultural change.

The first and arguably the most intellectually influential of this new generation was Helen Codere, a doctoral student of one of Boas’ students, Ruth Benedict, of Columbia University.\(^7\) The Winnipeg-born Codere was interested in assessing the dynamic way Indigenous cultures changed in the face of colonialism. Fresh from a summer of fieldwork among the Stó:lō under the direction of anthropologist Marian Smith in 1945,\(^8\) Codere moved northward with her doctoral research to examine the combined impact of increased wealth (associated with the fur trade) with Britain’s willingness to use gunboats to curtail inter-community Indigenous violence on the Kwakwaka’wakw potlatch. In light of these developments, she argued, certain west coast Indigenous people began “fighting with property” rather than with weapons.\(^9\)


\(^7\) Benedict studied under Boas at Columbia, graduating with a PhD in 1923.

\(^8\) Smith had likewise been a graduate student of Benedict’s at Columbia, recieving her PhD in 1938. She went on to become president of the American Ethnological Society.

Joyce Wike, a fellow Columbia University doctoral student from the department of political science, conducted ethnohistorical research that complemented Codere’s work. Her remarkable 1951 PhD dissertation “The Effect of the Maritime Fur Trade on Northwest Coast Indian Society”10 was the first clear articulation of what came to be known as the “enrichment thesis.” Wike recognized that Northwest Coast Indigenous people had remarkable political acumen and economic agency, and therefore took advantage of opportunities presented by the introduction of new technologies (such as iron knives, guns, powder, and shot). These adaptations, she noted, worked to enrich and enhance previous cultural forms causing among other things, a surge in the carving of what we now call totem poles.

Wike’s thesis was embraced by Wilson Duff, the creative young curator at what is now the Royal British Columbia Museum who carried an MA in anthropology from the University of Washington where he had studied under Erna Gunther, another of Boas’ students.11 Significantly, Duff’s formative graduate ethnographic fieldwork work had been conducted among the Stó:lō over the summers of 1949 and 1950.12 The archival research that Duff used to compliment his ethnographic study of the Stó:lō inspired him to dig more deeply and simultaneously to cast his net more broadly to better appreciate the expressions of colonial-induced cultural change in the nineteenth century. A few years later, he published his still influential study of the effects of settler colonialism on the Indigenous people of BC, The Indian History of British Columbia: The Impact of the Whiteman. Not only was this the first book-length publication on western Canadian Indigenous history to apply ethnohistorical methods, but it broke additional new ground in issuing a challenge to other anthropologists to redirect their scholarship towards helping advance the political and social goals of Indigenous people – an aspect of ethnohistorical scholarship that remains strong to this day.13

Working among the Coast Salish in a similar vein to Duff was another of Erna Gunther’s University of Washington graduate students, Wayne Suttles. Suttles’ intellectually robust (and still underappreciated) 1950 essay “The Early Diffusion of the Potato Among the Coast Salish” drove home the argument that cultural innovation and change was best regarded within the context of cultural continuity. He understood that continuity and change need not be regarded as exclusive of one another, and that even seemingly innocuous post-contact innovations (in this case the introduction of a source of food starch) could play transformative roles in Indigenous shift but the Kwakwaka’wakw had also competed with each other through the potlatch before the arrival of Europeans.

11 Gunther received her MA in anthropology from Columbia University in 1920, having been mentored by Franz Boas.
12 Duff’s MA thesis was subsequently published as Wilson Duff, The Upper Stalo Indians of the Fraser Valley, B.C. Anthropology in British Columbia. Memoir, No. 1.
history without making that history a merely colonial tale. What was most insightful about Suttles work was that he recognized that cultural change was not necessarily a unidirectional process; that externally induced innovation was always tempered by the forces of internally valued and deeply imbedded cultural continuity. Four years later, in 1954, Suttles followed up with a seminal study examining the more complex factors that had led to “Post-contact Change Among the Lummi Indians.”

During the same decade, University of Oregon-based professor of anthropology, Homer Barnet, produced his remarkable book-length ethnohistorical study of spiritual and cultural syncretism within Coast Salish history, the Indian Shakers in Puget Sound. This work made explicit the extent to which Coast Salish societies could change and adapt while remaining fundamentally and distinctly Coast Salish. Suttles and Barnett’s efforts to dismantle the change vs. continuity binary anticipated by more than thirty years Marshall Sahlin’s more fully developed thesis of the “structure of the conjuncture” in which he advanced a fulsome theoretical interpretation of cultural change that accounted for both change within continuity and for continuity within change. Aletta Biersack subsequently characterized the real world implications of this approach within ironic terms – that is, contrary to popular perceptions and many scholarly expectations, the outcome of globalization had not been a world in which the Indigenous other had disappeared, but rather a world in which Indigenous people have found new ways to be different.

Nevertheless, if anthropologists were at the forefront in early Northwest Coast ethnohistory, it would be unfair to suggest that historians were not also contributing in important ways. Certainly, it was historian Robin Fisher’s 1977 monograph Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia that did the archival heavy lifting to put historical flesh on the ethnographic bones of Wike’s and Duff’s enrichment thesis. But long before this, F.W. Howay, who first became acquainted with Coast Salish people in the 1880s, had developed a passion for maritime fur trade history and the history of colonial British Columbia. Howay’s intellectual curiosity evolved into a desire to understand the way Indigenous people negotiated modernity within the context of settler colonialism. Struck by the demise of Coast Salish weaving in his own lifetime, for instance, Howay published “The Dog’s Hair Blankets of the Coast Salish” (1918), and then, intrigued by the ongoing contestations between Native people and settler society, he penned “Indian Attacks Upon Maritime Traders of the North-west Coast, 1785-1805” (1925), and finally a study that opened the door to investigations into the significance of cultural

19 While working as a school teacher and living adjacent to the Tsawwassen and Semiahmoo communities near the mouth of the Fraser River)
change triggered by the introduction of western technologies in his essay “The First Use of Sail by the Indians of the Northwest Coast,” (1941).20

And Howay was not alone. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Great War veteran and Vancouver City Archivist, Major James S. Matthews, conducted numerous lengthy interviews with Coast Salish people from within the vicinity of Vancouver British Columbia to document not merely their traditional lifeways, but also the history of the impact of non-Native urbanization and industrialization of their homelands. Matthew’s interview notes remain accessible (and oft consulted) in manuscript form to this day.21

These path-breaking anthropologists and historians laid a foundation upon which today’s ethnohistorians working in the Coast Salish world build their analysis.

The Stó:lō Role in the New Ethnohistory

From the late 1960s to today, the Stó:lō have taken the lead in both doing their own ethnohistories and in hiring or in other ways partnering with others to work with them on projects they have selected and directed themselves. The closure of the federal run Indian Hospital (and former tuberculosis sanatorium) on the former grounds of the Coqualeetza Indian Residential School in 1969 coincided with growing movement among Stó:lō leaders to take control of the education system for First Nations children and a recognition that fluent speakers of their language would be lost in a generation. In 1969 nine of the Stó:lō bands joined together in the Coqualeetza Education Society with the goal of turning the buildings and lands into a cultural education centre.

Initially frustrated in their efforts to acquire the lands of the Hospital, the group pushed ahead and in 1971 were among the first Indigenous groups in Canada to receive multi-year funding to start oral history and language projects. The Skulkayn Heritage Project hired Stó:lō community researchers such as Steven Point, Bob Hall, Matilda “Tilly” Gutierrez and Mark Point to collect oral history and language lessons from fluent elders. The project transformed into the Stalo Heritage Project and eventually into the Coqualeetza Education Training Center (see the essay by Ella Bedard, this volume.)

Accordingly, the Coqualeetza Education Training Centre’s (CETC) archival collection became one of the best and most extensive community-controlled Indigenous cultural heritage resources in Canada. Years before Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s groundbreaking book on Indigenous


21 All of the notes from Major Matthews’ interviews have now been transcribed and made available as digital files on the City of Vancouver Archives website: http://former.vancouver.ca/cycler/archives/digitized/EarlyVan/index.htm. See also Daphne Sleigh, The Man Who Saved Vancouver: Major James Skitt Matthews, (Vancouver: Heritage House, 2008).
Research methodologies and its suggestion of the importance of community control of research, by the mid-1980s the CETC was hiring academic staff to assist them in undertaking research directed towards language documentation and revitalization as well as elementary school cultural-awareness curriculum. Among the researchers were linguist Brent Galloway and archivist/historian Ruben Ware. Galloway’s classified word list, transcriptions of legendary stories, and Hali’eméylem dictionary have proven invaluable cultural and historical resources to a host of subsequent researchers. Publications that emerged from Coqualeetza, such as Ware’s 1983 book *Five Issues, Five Battlegrounds: An Introduction to the History of Indian Fishing in British Columbia 1850-1930*, were models of what could be achieved when ethnohistorical methods were applied by community intellectuals and academically-trained scholars working cooperatively on research projects.22

By the 1990s the research activity at cultural centres like Coqualeetza was being complemented by research facilitated through more overtly political Coast Salish organizations such as the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Canada – both of which were situated on the former Methodist Residential school / Indian hospital grounds in Chilliwack. Here staff anthropologists and historians worked on projects designed by tribal leadership that were explicitly linked to the more than two dozen Stó:lō First Nation communities’ social, economic, educational, and political aspirations. These inherently collaborative research projects were being deeply informed by Coast Salish ways of knowing. By 1996, Chief Clarence Pennier of the Scowlitz First Nation in his capacity as Director of the Aboriginal Rights and Title Department oversaw the activities of staff working in the fields of cultural anthropology, archaeology, environmental management, and ethnohistory. Where in 1990 Pennier had a staff of just two, by 1996 he had 26 employees. Parallel growth was likewise happening within both the Stó:lō Nation’s departments of Education and Community Development under the leadership of Chief Joe Hall from Tzeachten. By 1997, the Stó:lō Nation had more than 220 people on their payroll, and each department was involved in multiple partnerships with a variety of different academic institutions as well as with various federal and provincial government agencies.

The Stó:lō again took a leadership role in writing and presenting their history with the 1997 publication of a collection of essays titled *You Are Asked to Witness: The Stó:lō in Canada’s Pacific Coast History*.23 The book was edited by staff historian Keith Carlson and authored by Stó:lō Nation’s staff with support from allied faculty from several universities. This work took inspiration from a new stream of scholarship, led in the Canadian context by Julie Cruikshank, Paul Tennant, and R. Cole Harris. They coupled these scholar’s methods and insights with Stó:lō specific new oral history and archival research. Along with its accompanying teacher’s guide, *You are Asked to Witness* was formally approved by the provincial ministry of education and then immediately adopted into high schools throughout the BC lower mainland. The following year, Keith Carlson and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie followed up with the publication of “I am Stó:lō!”: *Katherine Explores Her Heritage*, an illustrated book introducing grade-four students to the ongoing relevance of historical traditions among contemporary Stó:lō families, and the personal struggles and successes that individual Stó:lō families face in transferring cultural traditions

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across generations. Recently, in 2015, scholars from Linyi University in China worked with Carlson and the Stó:lō to produce a Chinese language translation of selections from *You Are Asked to Witness* along with the entirety of *I am Stó:lō*, constituting the first book-length ethnohistorical examination of Canadian Indigenous people available in the Chinese language.

By the time the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Canada united to collectively enter into the new BC treaty process in 1994, carefully conducted research to advance political goals, inspired by curriculum and public education opportunities and informed by the post-colonial turn in scholarship, had become the norm at the Stó:lō offices. Efforts to document Stó:lō historical land use and traditional knowledge, for example, could be more effectively and holistically done by acknowledging and documenting the impacts that settler colonialism had on Stó:lō resources and the way those resources were accessed and managed over time. Together staff archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, archivists, ethnobotanists, environmental scientists and others working with Stó:lō knowledge keepers and cultural leaders were producing a vast body of “grey literature” – technical reports composed for specific purposes that, unfortunately, receive limited exposure. To give these records a wider audience, staff suggested to the leadership that much of the research would be well-suited to being compiled and edited into a coherent historical atlas.

The result was the 2001 publication of the multi-award winning *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas* – a work of ethnohistory and historical geography built from the ground up that sought to provide Stó:lō community members with a history and a geography that reflected their ways of knowing, and that could assist in resource management. It also served as a cross-cultural communication tool that would help the several million non-Indigenous people living in Stó:lō territory better appreciate Stó:lō culture, history, and their relationship to the land and water resources of their territory. The atlas (which sat atop the British Columbia best sellers list for months on end) aspired to unsettle Canadian settlers by challenging them to recognize that both the geography they thought they understood and the history they thought they had created, were in fact contested. The *Stó:lō Atlas* inspired other Indigenous communities across North America to undertake work on similar projects. A decade after its publication Ned Blackhawk, Shoshone scholar and Yale University history professor, described the *Stó:lō Atlas* as “a monumental cartographic survey.... that unlike any other cartographic study... illustrates the

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25 Keith Thor Carlson, Sonny McHalsie, and Frank Malloway, *Canadian Pacific Coast First Nations History and Culture*, translation by Xing Chihong and Zhang Haixia, (Saskatoon: Confucius Institute, University of Saskatchewan; Chilliwack: Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2015).

26 No treaties had been finalized in Stó:lō territory nor in much of BC. In 1992 British Columbia and federal governments created the BC Treaty Commission to facilitate the creation of modern treaties.

myriad ties that bind Native and non-Native peoples together in the increasingly tactile mosaic of British Columbia history.”

The Stó:lō have also taken a lead in representing themselves and their history to a wider public. In 1994 Stó:lō Education Director Gwen Point and Teresa Carlsson opened the Shxwt’a:selhawtxw (The House of Long Ago and Today) -- essentially the Stó:lō people’s own history and culture museum, on the Coqualeetza grounds to complement a longhouse built in 1983 by the CETC for public educational purposes. The Stó:lō also collaborated in the running of a cultural centre focused on a group of chiefs that the transformers Xexá:lts had turned to rock at Xá:ytem, formerly called Hatzic Rock, after their staff archaeologist, Gordon Mohs, led a campaign to prevent its destruction by developers. In 2011, Stó:lō Nation and the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre opened an exhibit at the Reach Gallery Museum in Abbotsford showcasing the history of another person transformed by Xexá:lts, and in 2012 published the book about it, Man Turned to Stone: T’xwelátse. Many community members also participated in 2005 in the creation of a documentary film based on the true story of a lynch of a Stó:lō boy in Canada by an American mob, researched by Keith Carlson, The Lynching of Louis Sam. In 2007, Bruce G. Miller edited a collection of essays that contained several chapters on Stó:lō topics, including one by Sonny McHalsie which included a phrase that ultimately became the title of the entire volume, “Be of Good Mind”: Essays on the Coast Salish. The Stó:lō likewise collaborated with the SFU Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography on the Virtual Museum of Canada exhibit, A Journey into Time Immemorial, 2009. This in turn was part of the inspiration for theSq’éwlets First Nation and Dave Schaepe when they and the team at the Research and Resource Management Centre collaborated in the production of Sq’éwlets: A Stó:lo-Coast Salish community in the Fraser River Valley, 2017. A complimentary physical exhibit of the same name was hosted by the Reach Gallery. The Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre is also a key founding partner in a collaborative digital holdings venture of 27 BC and international museums known as the Reciprocal Research Network, started in 2010.

It was in the 1980s and 1990s milieu of creative, applied, community-engaged scholarship that several universities began collaborating with the Stó:lō to offer archaeology and anthropology fieldschools. Unlike the social science fieldschools of an earlier generation, the research questions that drove these courses were primarily identified by the Stó:lō communities themselves, or at a minimum were approved and authorized by the Stó:lō after extensive consultation. With endorsement from the Stó:lō political leadership, staff archaeologist Gordon Mohs and then David Schaepe invited faculty from SFU, UBC, and UCLA, among other universities, to come to Stó:lō territory to conduct research that would answer questions the Stó:lō deemed important and that would help advance their political agendas. Asking elders and

other Stó:lō knowledge keepers to identify research projects and to set research priorities for the archaeology and anthropology students participating in the fieldschools provided not only a powerful Indigenous focus to the work, but also helped the students come to appreciate just how meaningful their research could be for Indigenous people. Certainly, this was the case for the anthropology MA students from UBC who, under the faculty mentorship of Bruce Miller, arrived annually for over a decade to live in Frank Malloway’s longhouse for a month while working on individual projects that not infrequently expanded to become master’s theses and even published articles. To the extent that these collaborations also often resulted in participating faculty and graduate students producing peer-reviewed scholarly publications that could stand up in court if need be, the Stó:lō doubly benefited from the partnerships.33

Stó:lō Ethnohistory Field School

In 1997, Keith Carlson, the staff historian at the Stó:lō Nation office, approached Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier and asked if he would be willing to authorize an experiment – invite historians and history graduate students to come to live in, and conduct community-led research among, the Stó:lō on topics members of the Stó:lō community had identified as important. Similar to an anthropology fieldschool, but on topics that were historical in nature, this research would highlight the assessment of change over time and enrich archival analysis with oral history methods and post-colonial theoretical insights. Pennier approved.

Other Stó:lō staff at that time, including the cultural adviser Sonny McHalsie, archaeologist David Schaepe and archivist David Smith talked with community members to generate a list of more than twenty potential ethnohistorical topics that would be beneficial to the community and to the ongoing research within the Rights and Title Department. Drawing on an existing trust relationship, John Lutz, at the University of Victoria’s History Department, was invited to be the faculty supervisor, and he in turn ultimately arranged for half a dozen students to embark on Canada’s first Ethnohistory Graduate Fieldschool. UVic additionally provided funding to the Stó:lō Nation to release Carlson from some of his regular duties so he could serve as co-instructor for the course.

Over the two decades that the ethnohistory fieldschool has been operating the model has been tweaked to enhance the student experience and the benefits to the Stó:lō community. But throughout the framework has remained essentially the same. The course operates within a long-term history of trust and reciprocity. The class is offered roughly every second year. Students spend four weeks in the field. The first week they attend daily seminars where they read and discuss an array of ethnohistorical scholarship. During this week, they are orientating themselves to their surroundings, acquiring methodological skills and theoretical perspectives, and working to define the parameters of their individual research projects. They spend their evenings and nights during the first week billeted with Stó:lō families in the various communities and in this way acquire first hand understandings of Stó:lō social life while building relationships that will facilitate their research. At the end of the first week students move to the Coqualeetza site in Chilliwack – the former residential school and tuberculosis hospital site and now administrative headquarters of the Stó:lō Nation – where they live communally, sharing meals and sleeping on wooden benches around open-pit fires inside a dirt-floor cedar longhouse. Thanks to the enormous generosity of the Stó:lō communities, throughout the remainder of the month the students are frequently invited to attend, and as appropriate sometimes participate in, First Salmon feasts, ancestral burning ceremonies, spiritual cleansing ceremonies, naming potlatches, and other cultural activities.

Striving to make the entire ethnohistorical research and learning process as reflective of Stó:lō ways of knowing as possible, the fieldschool adopts Stó:lō protocols and integrates them into the pedagogical procedures. Early on Stó:lō knowledge keepers such as Ray Silver (Sumas) and Alan Gutierrez (Chawathil) had suggested to the faculty that they avoid paying honoraria and instead host a formal potlatch feast at the end of the fieldschool. There a trained Stó:lō “speaker” could “call witnesses” and gifts could be distributed to elders and others who had assisted the students in their research.

The generosity shown towards, and the faith expressed in, the faculty and students by the elders who encourage them to host a potlatch might be thought of as the Stó:lō community reaching out to help build not only cross-cultural competencies but also a degree of Indigenous cultural capacity within the academic community. In hosting a potlatch feast, calling witnesses, and giving gifts, the university representatives are not simply replacing one form of paying honoraria with another. Rather, to use a phrase that is increasingly common in academic circles but not always well defined, they are taking steps to indigenize the way academic research and analysis is conducted, constructed, and communicated.

Such capacity building and cross-cultural enrichment is a two way street. At the very first Ethnohistory fieldschool in 1998 Stó:lō Grand Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier told the students that in addition to whatever else they might be, they were first and foremost ambassadors of the academic world. As such they had a responsibility to represent and model all that was best about academic traditions and scholarly approaches so as to help inspire Stó:lō youth to become post-secondary students and researchers themselves. Chief Pennier regarded the fieldschool as holding the potential to help contribute to building a future where the Stó:lō would have the capacity to lead and conduct their own research in all areas of interest to them. And indeed today, there is a new generation of Stó:lō researchers working for their community in a wide range of fields.
The ethnohistory fieldschool has always embraced opportunities to engage with the Stó:lô community. Increasingly youth and other community members accompany fieldschool students on visits with Stó:lô elders and cultural experts to visit storied sites and to learn the teachings associated with such places; Stó:lô youth and fieldschool students and faculty together embrace the opportunities that emerge from being invited to participate in camp life at hereditary Stó:lô salmon and sturgeon fishing sites; and youth from the families who billet the students in their homes during the first week of the fieldschool regularly invite the students to attend and participate in sport and cultural activities in the evenings and weekends. Each of these represents an opportunity for non-Stó:lô fieldschool students to learn about Indigenous history with Indigenous people, just as it presents an opportunity for Stó:lô youth and community members to learn about academic research methods and motivations from outside university students. To leverage these opportunities even further, at a recent Ethnohistory fieldschool potlatch the Provosts of the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Victoria both committed to further enriching and nurturing the relationship with the Stó:lô by providing funding for student scholarships and other initiatives that would build capacity within the Stó:lô community.

Change and adaptation are necessarily a part of the fieldschool. Over the years political and administrative changes at the Stó:lô office saw the Rights and Title office that originally hosted the fieldschool transformed into the Stó:lô Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC). David Schaepe now serves as Director, and Sonny McHalsie holds the position of Historian and Cultural Adviser. Together McHalsie and Schaepe work with archivist Tia Halstad (who replaced David Smith) and the various Stó:lô communities to generate student topics and to facilitate the infrastructure needs of the fieldschool while providing important daily cultural guidance and logistical direction. Each student’s fieldschool term paper eventually finds its way to the Stó:lô archives, along with digital copies of any oral history interviews. These reports and associated digitized oral evidence contribute to the Stó:lô Nation’s growing archival resources and help build capacity as the Stó:lô engage in ongoing negotiations with federal and provincial authorities over the management and governance of the people and resources of their traditional territory.

Students say that they work harder in the fieldschool than in any other course. Individual students have described their fieldschool experience as “life-altering,” and “the best academic experience I’ve ever had.” Certainly, their term papers stand out among graduate essays for their innovativeness, methodological sophistication, and depth of intellectual insight. Since its inception in 1998 field school students have created more than 70 field reports for the Stó:lô and more than a dozen Ph.D. or M.A. theses have been generated from the field school work (see www.ethnohist.ca ). At this date, five fieldschool alumni have gone on to secure professorial positions of their own where the methodologies and insights derived from their fieldschool experience shape theirs, and their own students’, research and pedagogies.34 In 2016, the Field School won a special award from the Society for Applied Anthropology for its pioneering partnership work, its advancement of applied anthropology and its longevity.

34 Liam Haggarty is on faculty at Mount Royal University, Andrée Boisselle at York University, Jon Clapperton at Memorial University, Sarah Nichols at the University of Saskatchewan, and Anastasia Tataryn at University of Liverpool. In addition, Lissa Wadewitz, a post-doctoral fellow with the field school is faculty at Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon.
Other Stó:lō Contributions

In addition to being pioneers in undertaking community based historical research, in hiring non-Indigenous professionals like historians, archeologists and archivists, to work on Stó:lō research agendas, in publishing innovative books, and in hosting field schools, Stó:lō scholars themselves have made a contribution to the New Ethnohistory.

Dr. Jo-ann Archibald from the Soowhalie community has been a long-time Associate Dean for Indigenous Education at the University of British Columbia and has directly contributed to the field through her writings about story work as a methodology. In her book and articles she has emphasized attentiveness to Indigenous pedagogy and in particular to the cultural practices around story telling as a key to understanding Stó:lō and other indigenous worldviews.35

Dr. Albert (Sonny) Mchalsie, from the Shxw’owhamel First Nation, had also joined the scholarly conversation. In addition to his contributions to the Stó:lō Atlas and the book “I am Stó:lō: Katherine Explores Her Heritage”, he has published an essay which describes the holism of Stó:lō ways of knowing and engaging the world, a characterization of a Stó:lō epistemology that treats spiritual knowledge obtained through teachings and personal revelations as important as the knowledge gained through observation, personal experience and scholarly research.36 Sonny has been the Cultural Advisor and staff Historian with the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre since its inception and worked previously with Stó:lō Nation.

The New Ethnohistory

There is no single approach which encompasses the “New Ethnohistory” but rather there are a series of complementary approaches that together can be said to make a break with the past and a foundation for new directions in the field. In turn, these approaches draw on related developments including a growing literature on Indigenous ways of knowing and research methods, a new post-colonial literature on settler-colonialism and the growing importance of community-based research and community-university partnerships.

The origins of the new ethnohistory are as diverse as are the set of practices that characterize this hybrid offspring of social scientific anthropological investigation and humanistic historical enquiry. And to the extent that the new ethnohistory aspires not simply to mix disciplinary methods and approaches, but rather to transcend them in order to create something new that is more than the sum of its parts, the new ethnohistory is explicitly seeking to be trans-disciplinary in ways that are similar to those that Winona Wheeler, president of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Society in 2015, has described as central to the allied field of

36 Nahahalthts’i Albert (Sonny) Mchalsie, “We have to Take Care of Everything That Belongs to Us,” in Bruce Granville Miller, Be of Good Mind: Essays on the Coast Salish, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007) 82-130.

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The past decades have also seen ethnohistory adapting and correcting its course in response to critiques from Indigenous scholars who recognized the multiple ways in which western scholarship has contributed to the colonization of Indigenous lands, resources, bodies, and minds. Vine Deloria’s *Custer Died for Your Sins* was among the earliest Indigenous-authored works to garner such attention from academics but there were other, more reflective, works such as George Sioui’s *For an Amerindian Autohistory* and Donald Fixico’s and Angela Cavender Wilson’s (Waziyatawin) chapters in *Rethinking American Indian History*. In the end, no scholar in the field could escape the heat of the critical evaluations of history and anthropology that came from Indigenous thinkers such as Howard Adams, Taiaiake Alfred, Harold Cardinal, Philip Deloria, Donald Fixico, George Erasmus, George Manuel, Leroy Little Bear, Maria Campbell, Tompson Highway, Sean Wilson, Jo-ann Archibald, and Winona Wheeler. Non-Indigenous academics were put on notice that the audience for ethnohistory was no longer merely other scholars and the courts, but the communities about whom they were writing.

Indigenous participation, creation, permission and direction in research on Indigenous communities is one of the main manifestations of the New Ethnohistory and the Stó:lō, as described above, have been international leaders in this area since the 1970s. The Stó:lō have also been highlighting and understanding the narrative and cognitive structures of stories from Indigenous perspectives – what Raymond Fogelson has referred to as “ethno-ethnohistory” for decades. Fogelson has invited ethnohistorians, with their partners and collaborators, to step into a world that does not necessarily “make sense” to them and do their best to see how it is ordered according to the rules of others. Raymond Demaillie, another leader in this field, strives to understand Indigenous cultures and histories from within their own languages and worldview. One way the new ethnohistory accomplishes this is by embracing what Dennis

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37 Winona Wheeler argued that it is important to conceive of Indigenous Studies as being transdisciplinary (rather than interdisciplinary as it was often described by the previous generation of Native Studies scholars). She made this statement during her participation in the “Historical Scholarship and Teaching in Canada After the TRC” round table discussion at annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association in Calgary, June, 2016.


Tedlock and Dell Hymes have termed the ethno-poetics of Indigenous stories. Thus, the new ethnohistory seeks not only to depict the sounds of Indigenous poetic voices, but to view Indigenous society and history through Indigenous ways of organizing knowledge and memory including poetry, voice, song, ritual, and dance.

The acknowledgement that there are completely coherent parallel historiographies in different cultures that have different origins, different cultural roles, prioritize time differently, and have sometimes incommensurable means of verification may be thought of as deconstructive cultural relativism. As Marshall Sahlins noted, “relativism is the simple prescription that, in order to be intelligible, other peoples’ practices and ideals must be placed in their own context, thus understood as positional values in a field of their own cultural relationships, rather than appropriated in the intellectual judgement of our own categories.”

From this starting point, the role of ethnohistory is finding and interpreting (rather than assuming) what is relevant for the culture under consideration.

Getting to a point where Indigenous ways of knowing can inform academic ways of understanding, however, is not easy. The New Ethnohistory learned much from heated exchanges between Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere, for example, when they argued over how Hawaiian people of the late eighteenth century understood British explorer James Cook. The central issue of their debate ostensibly was whether or not western scholars could genuinely understand Indigenous cultures and epistemologies, but with the passing of time the larger lesson seems to have been just how intellectually and ethically misguided it is for anyone to try to represent Indigenous cultural perspectives and historical experiences until those community members meaningfully contribute to the analysis.

The New Ethnohistory can be thought of as incorporating the study of Indigenous historical consciousness – that is to say, how Indigenous people in the past thought about and understood their history, and how such understandings have, or have not, changed over time as each new generation acquired information and insights that could be used to compliment (or sometimes challenge) the understandings of their ancestors. The study of historical consciousness owes it primary debt of gratitude to Peter Seixas and Sam Wineburg, whose work, when read in concert with Mark Salber’s and Gordon Schochet’s revisionist scholarship on “tradition” have invigorated ethnohistory. In combination their work allows ethnohistory to break free of the conundrum created by Haubsbaum and Ranger that led many to dismiss all traditions as “invented” and therefore illegitimate, inauthentic, and unworthy of serious study.

Keith Carlson’s long relationship with the Stó:lō has enabled him to make some of the most innovative contributions in the study of Indigenous historiography. In his article on the 1906 visit of a Coast Salish delegation to meet the King of England, Carlson posits an understanding of Stó:lō/Coast Salish historiography that explains the delegation’s subsequent account of meeting with the King which is at odds with earlier academic accounts. In his article on early contact stories among the Stó:lō Carlson describes how the Stó:lō differentiate good from bad history and how history revealed through dreams can be accepted as a highly credible account of the past.45

A fundamental contribution to the rebalancing of ethnohistory offered by the new scholarship is that it does not ask that we treat Indigenous and folk (or other non-scholarly stories) as factual, but rather that we recognize that Western historic sources (both primary and secondary) are themselves stories and need to be treated as such. In other words, as Lutz has argued, we need to treat the interpretations of the observer and the observed as “equally mytho-historical.” Moreover, if, as UBC anthropologist (and one-time co-supervisor of the Stó:lō-UBC Ethnographic Fieldschool) Julie Cruickshank has so persuasively argued, Indigenous stories have a social life, the same must be true of the non-Indigenous tales.46 Perhaps more to the point, we also need to examine them as a single field. Treating the interaction coherently means putting both parties under the same ethno-historical lens, posing the same questions to the different sources about the relationship of myth to history, and then finding the interpretive lenses that are best suited to bringing insights.47

Concerned as it is with understanding the consequences of modernity and the multi-faceted expressions of colonialism on distinct Indigenous communities, the new ethnohistory is often, of necessity, theoretical. So called “post-colonial” and “critical theory” scholarship initially developed in the mid-to-late Twentieth Century to better understand the history of former British and French colonies in India and Algeria not only better revealed the ongoing exploitative economic consequences of colonialism into the supposed post-colonial era of national independence, but did so with an eye towards creating scholarship that could be used to directly

University Press, 2001); Mark Salber Phillips and Gordon Schochet, eds. Questions of Tradition, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Haubssbaum famously posited “‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.” Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).


combat colonialism itself – what has come to be known as “critical theory.”

Drawing on the insights offered by post-colonial studies both Patrick Wolfe’s and Lorenzo Varacini theorized the implications of the distinction between “settler colonialism” (as characterized North American, Australian, and New Zealand colonialism) and classic “conquest colonialism” (as occurred in most parts of Asian and African controlled by the British and French). The key difference, Wolfe determined, was that settler colonialism remains an ongoing form of colonization faced by Indigenous people who confront a settler society which, within a few generations came to regard itself and its descendants as collectively inheriting Indigenous people’s lands and resources. Thus, much of the new ethnohistory is predicated on the notion that both the Canadian and American governments are settler colonial regimes. Understanding this colonial history is a decolonizing methodology which is inherent in much of the New Ethnohistory.

On the Northwest Coast, it was Michael Harkin, in particular, who worked to bring the perspective of literary theory scholars like Bakhtin and the discourse analysis of Michelle Foucault to ethnohistory. The dialogism in Bakhtin’s work was later amplified by Lutz in his examination of the history of Indigenous wage labour and the emergence of hybrid moditional economies (part modern and part traditional). Lutz invites us to practice Bakhtin’s “exotopic trick” to surmount the double challenge of how to become enough of an “insider” to have a partial understanding of the other and enough of an “outsider” to have a partial understanding of one’s own side of the dialogue. This place, which Bakhtin refers to as “exotopy,” requires an acute awareness of one’s positioning in one culture (be it ethnic or academic) to engage in effective conversation with another.

The new ethnohistory therefore necessarily embraces notions like hybridity; seeks to deconstruct discourse for what it reveals about colonial and patriarchal exploitation; is comfortable finding and critiquing power relationships of various kinds – including those within Indigenous society; recognizes that cultural change (even colonial-induced cultural change) need not be unidirectional; embraces the tensions between tradition and innovation; and does not need to be reminded that non-Native newcomers are not always the most important thing in Aboriginal society and history. Indeed, as Keith Carlson notes in his study of the history of Stó:lô collective identity, “once history is resituated so that Aboriginal people can be appreciated not only as minor players on the stage of Indian–white relations but as leading characters in plays that they increasingly co-author if not compose outright themselves, interesting images of the

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dynamics within Indigenous society emerge.”50 Colectivly, the work of Carlson and director of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, Dave Schaepe, highlight a Stó:lō history that dates back centuries before the arrival of Europeans and that persists throughout the colonial period. Thus, ethnohistory today asks us to explore the full history of Indigenous people, not just the story of Aboriginals in western and colonial history.51

Carlson and Alexandra Harmon have used the complexities of the Coast Salish people of the Pacific Northwest to highlight another element of the New Ethnohistory – attention to the evolution and shifting nature of identity among Indigenous people both before and after contact with Europeans. As Harmon points out, the identities of settler and Indian were in constant flux in Puget Sound in the 19th and 20th centuries. Carlson shows that there was no stable “Stó:lō” identity at any point in time but rather that identity was constantly being remade (See also the essay by Amanda Fehr this volume.) Lutz, Penelope Edmonds, and Renisa Mawani, have all pointed to how settler colonialism has used shifting racial identities as a tool of displacement, 52 while Carlson and Harmon examine the often innovative Indigenous responses to settler colonialism as played out within multiple Aboriginal histories. 53

Almost since its origin, ethnohistory has been interdisciplinary, encompassing archaeology, ethnology, history and linguistics. The New Ethnohistory has additionally drawn in a range of skill sets from disciplines as diverse as cultural studies, law, statistical analyses, and of course, Indigenous Studies to work with partners -- often Indigenous partners -- to discern which are the correct and appropriate tools for a given ethnohistorical situation and then to use them to engage empathetically in deep and humble(ing) conversations. The objective is to better understand the history of the people we research with from their perspective so they can be heard, seen and understood. This richer, expanded ethnohistory is characteristic of the essays here, and indeed, we are opening up that definition further to include literary criticism and other classically humanist approaches.54 As part of the reflexivity of the new scholarship, authors have become increasingly aware of their analytical tools and more willing to foreground their theoretical and methodological influences.55

53 Alexandra Harmon, Indians in the making : ethnic relations and Indian identities around Puget Sound, (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1998); Carlson, *Power of Place*;
The faculty and students who have worked with the Stó:lō have been inspired by many of the principles that define Indigenous Studies, such as those articulated by legal theorists Robert Williams (Lumbee) and John Borrows (Anishinabec) who have each taken as a starting point that Indigenous rights are derived from Indigenous people’s prior occupation of, and special relationship to, particular lands and resources. Indigenous rights, seen from this perspective, are unlike any other rights in Canada or the United States in that they are not derived from, nor bestowed by, the nation state.

The intellectual power and social/political potential of post-modern, post-colonial, and subaltern critiques have revealed that, despite individual scholar’s efforts to the contrary, the disciplines of anthropology and history had been closely tied to colonialist projects – actually facilitating them in the case of anthropology and systematically justifying them in the case of history. As a consequence, as Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith pointed out in her 1999 path-breaking book Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People, the word research “is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary.” Smith challenged Indigenous people to assert themselves and assume authority and authorship over research that involved and impacted them. She also pointed out ways in which non-Indigenous scholars could reimagine their scholarship to enable them to participate respectfully and supportively in the decolonizing agenda. Smith’s book Decolonizing Methodologies has been joined since then by other examples of Indigenous research practice. Indigenously driven research coupled with methodologies and analysis that emphasized partnerships and the co-creation of knowledge offered an avenue for extricating history and anthropology from their colonial complicity.

To help ensure its usefulness and meaningfulness, some of the new ethnohistory aspires to the best practices in community-engaged scholarship (CES). Deeply influenced by Ernest Boyer’s and Eugene Rice’s work spearheaded through the Carnegie and the Kellog Foundations in the 1990s it recognizes that community outreach is not the same thing as community-engagement. Outreach involves scholars reaching out to communities to provide them with the benefits of their research, but does not necessarily mean that the community was meaningfully involved in


identifying the research as a priority, let alone in the planning and conducting of the research and subsequent analysis/interpretation. The new ethnohistory recognizes that to qualify as truly community-engaged, scholarship must be not only of benefit for communities and of high academic quality, but it must also be genuinely collaborative and cooperative.59

The Stó:lō have been a focus of innovations in anthropology, ethnography and ethnohistory since the 1880s and at the bow-edge of ethnohistory since the 1970s. More recently, they have been leaders in many of the elements that make up the “New Ethnohistory.” In summary, best practices in the New Ethnohistory we have been describing includes some or all of the following:

- It is an expression of community-engaged scholarship (CES) where the research is co-designed and co-executed with communities so that the scholarship can be genuinely co-created by communities in partnership with scholars (faculty and students).
- It is a relationship that requires time to build, time to do, and time to share the results.
- It places emphasis on a methodology of sustained conversation where scholars return to communities and engage in conversations with the same people over the course of multiple research projects.
- The scholarship created is both meaningful to and accessible to the community being researched.
- It is reflexive in that the authors are aware of their subjectivity and positionality.
- It brings the culture of the researchers and the community into a single field, breaking down the barriers between the researcher and the researched.
- It embraces the notion that historiographies are culturally bound and as intercultural research, the new ethnohistory requires understandings of other historiographical approaches.
- It is interdisciplinarity, and aspires to transdisciplinarity, so that it can better answer questions and provide insights.
- It is analytical, informed by appropriate methodologies and theoretical insights.
- It is complex, realizing that identities change over time, rejecting identity binaries, received racial or ethnic categorization, and romantic simplifications of complex societies.
- It embraces the opportunities for research, dissemination, and sharing presented by new media tools and arts-based cultural practices.

The New Ethnohistory in Practice

This volume presents a selection of the Stó:lō Ethnohistory Fieldschool papers that best reflect the promise of the New Ethnohistory. With funding from the University of Saskatchewan’s Provost’s Office, we hosted a symposium in March 2015 where most of the authors had the opportunity to workshop their chapters. We also invited a few of the students from the May 2015 fieldschool to join the project.

Adar Charlton’s chapter “Kinship Obligations to the Environment: Interpreting Stó:lō X̲ex̲á:l̓s Stories of the Fraser Canyon,” brings a literary scholar’s eye to the ethnohistorical enterprise. Responding to a request from Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, Charlton’s study originally waded into the discursive landscape where stories of X̲ex̲á:l̓s – the Transformers -- reside to try and tease out some of the lessons they offer to contemporary Stó:lō about ecological responsibility. What she found, however, was that attempting to reduce the rich multiplicity of interpretations and teachings of the stories of these sites into codified and singular didactic environmental lessons became almost impossibly problematic because the stories cannot be taken out of their anchored context in the canyon landscape. Her study illuminates an ecology of real and fictive kinship ties between stories, their tellers, and the transformation sites that are written into the landscape. Rather than providing didactic lessons, she helps illuminate the ways that the X̲ex̲á:l̓s stories of the Canyon serve as continual reminders of the familial obligations Stó:lō people have to the land – which is itself is populated by ancestors who were transformed into the trees, animals, fish and landscape features by X̲ex̲á:l̓s.

If Charlton’s paper provides a broad framework for viewing Stó:lō kinship and place-based knowledge, Amanda Fehr’s essay, “Relationships: A Study of Memory, Change, and Identity at a Place Called î:yem” helps us appreciate the way individuals connect to a particular location within the Fraser Canyon – a site called î:yem. Originally identified as a topic with great community currency by Sonny McHalsie, Fehr investigates the multiple ways î:yem has been understood by different people over time, for the site is a disputed location, simultaneously associated with salmon fishing and wind drying, the early Native rights movement, environmental change brought by industrial developments, and a grave yard where ancestral spirits reside. It is also the site where in 1938 Stó:lō people concerned that their fishing rights and ancestors might be forgotten or overlooked in a rapidly changing world erected a concrete memorial cross. Fehr examines the functioning of memory around î:yem to reveal the way relationships are built between people and places, and how these relationships change over time. Indeed the î:yem memorial, located four kilometres north of Yale British Columbia, represents the first time that the name “Stalo” was publicly used “in print” by the people of the Fraser River Valley and Canyon to describe themselves. This is significant as the nature of what it means to be, and who should be considered Stó:lō, continues to be contested today. Incorporating interviews with Stó:lō elders and community members, this is an attempt to trace the themes of memory and changing understandings of place and the implications of î:yem for Indigenous claims.

In a related way, Katya MacDonald’s contribution to this collection, “Crossing Paths: Knowing and Navigating Routes of Access to Stó:lō Fishing Sites” examines that same canyon landscape through the lens of Stó:lō people’s concerns over compromises to their rights to access salmon due to various restrictions that government and corporate bodies have imposed. MacDonald’s focus goes beyond an analysis of the physical, administrative, and legal issues associated with accessing the salmon fishery to examine the broader intellectual, social, and hereditary cultural matters pertaining to “access” in a much larger sense. Access to the fishery, she argues, involves matters that are sometimes in conflict with one another, and always affecting one another. MacDonald’s study stretches to encompass such culturally nuanced and

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60 Interestingly, as part of a larger dispute this memorial was destroyed by members of the Yale First Nation in 2012 and then reconstructed by the new Yale First Nation leadership, in collaboration with the Stó:lō Nation and Stó:lō Tribal Council, in 2016.
historically contested matters as intellectual and social access to the protocols and ideas of tradition; access to the political knowledge necessary to circumvent, discuss, or adapt to government restrictions; and, above all, access to the collective and individual histories and the arguments for identities that accompany them.

Anastaziya Tataryn’s examination of the changing role of hereditary names among the Stó:lō in recent decades helps explain some of the ambiguity and contestation associated with the ownership of fishing sites described in MacDonald’s chapter. Tataryn argues that a deeper understanding of Indigenous identity emerges as one comes to appreciate the role of ancestral names in Stó:lō society and the colonial pressures that have challenged the transference of names and associated rights over time. Ancestral names remain a tangible manifestation of a Stó:lō person’s connection to not only to ancestors but to future generations. Her analysis uses names to reveal a deep, multilayered understanding of history, and through that history, identity. Tataryn notes that individuals who carry ancestral names, and more widely those who participate in naming ceremonies, play a significant role in rekindling ethical and moral teachings. Importantly, ancestral names reinforce an individual’s accountability to their family and community.

Kathy McKay is also interested in the ways that Stó:lō people connect with their ancestors to build family and community, but her study approaches this through an examination of the historical treatment of ancestral remains and contemporary cultural heritage policy development at the Stó:lō Nation. Recognizing that the treatment of human remains is a controversial topic in many First Nations communities, her essay, “Disturbing the Dead: Diversity and Commonality Among the Stó:lō,” reveals just how dynamic tradition can be. McKay compares the attitudes and beliefs of contemporary Stó:lō elders and cultural workers with descriptions of cultural practices derived from archaeological, ethnographic and historical information. Her work, motivated by a case involving the RCMP and the recovery of ‘found human remains’ being dealt with by Stó:lō Nation’s archaeologist (Schaepe) and Cultural Advisor (McHalsie) in 2000, provided practical information on Stó:lō protocols involving the taking care of ancestral remains. The results of her work helped inform Schaepe and McHalsie’s development of elements of the Stó:lō Heritage Policy, adopted by the Stó:lō Nation Chiefs Council in 2003. Significantly, McKay links her analysis to discussions of the ongoing relationship between the living and the dead, and to the preservation of cultural heritage in the Twenty-First Century.

Examining Stó:lō views of traditional foods, Lesley Wiebe provides voice – or ‘talk’ – about the value of ‘non-Western’ foods in contemporary Stó:lō society to explore Stó:lō peoples’ perceptions of Twentieth Century change in their dietary practices. Stó:lō peoples’ discussion of the historic shift from a ‘traditional’ to ‘store-bought’ diet reveals attitudes towards cross-cultural exchange within the context of colonial power relationships. Stó:lō elders and community members emphasized the nutritional and even spiritual superiority of Indigenous vs. ‘store-bought’ foods. In some cases, however, certain ‘Western’ foods have been acceptably used in traditional contexts. The fluidity and multiplex nature of such ‘talk’ about food defies academics’ previous attempts to characterize this twentieth century transition as either wholly a scenario of decline or a testament to the ‘power’ of Stó:lō traditional knowledge. The discourse surrounding traditional as opposed to ‘store-bought’ foods among the Stó:lō comprises a set of historical understandings in continual dialogue with the present. Her focus on food provides a common ground that elucidates cultural differences as well as historical power-plays.
History and culture are likewise the focus of Ella Bedard’s chapter in this collection. Bedard provides a history of the efforts by Stó:lō women and men in the early 1970s to not only research Stó:lō history and culture, but to exercise control over the process and results of that research. The Skulkayn Heritage Project, later called the Stalo Heritage Project was in ways a beneficiary of the shift in government funding priorities following the universal condemnation of the federal government’s 1969 White Paper. Indeed, the Skulkayn/Stalo Heritage Project (initiated in 1971) was one of the first Aboriginal-run cultural education projects to receive funding from the B.C. government. For the Stó:lō people who spearheaded the initiative, the idea that heritage research and cultural revival were essential to the protection of Indigenous rights was a given. Indeed the pan-Indian discourse of cultural rejuvenation served to galvanize Stó:lō people in defence of their rights and title. Bedard reveals that to the organizers and workers of the Skulkayn/Stalo History Project the goal of facilitating inter-generational cultural transference was regarded as requiring the reclamation of authority over knowledge. Shared efforts to further these goals served to meaningfully foster a meaningful, historically based, sense of collective Stó:lō identity rooted in the region’s landscape.

Cultural change and innovation is also the theme, albeit in a different direction, of Christopher Marsh’s essay. Marsh takes inspiration not only from Stó:lō mixed martial artists (MMA) like Darwin Douglas but also from Philip Deloria’s remarkable book Indians in Unexpected Places. Marsh was invited by Douglas to research the history of his community’s engagement in boxing – the “manly art of self defence” as expressed through the Marquess of Queensberry rules. His chapter, “Totem Tigers and Salish Sluggers: A History of Boxing in Stó:lō Territory, 1912-1985,” reveals the centrality of sports to Stó:lō people, and especially to young Stó:lō men who found in boxing an arena where they could compete with and against non-Indigenous people in a manner that reinforced pride in their own cultural traditions. And as the retired boxers that Marsh interviewed explained, being a good boxer not only gave you status and prestige within Stó:lō society, it also enabled one to contest many of the negative stereotypes non-Indigenous people applied to Stó:lō people in the mid-twentieth century.

Colin Osmond’s study of logging in Stó:lō history and historical consciousness likewise tells the story of a largely overlooked aspect of Indigenous history – Stó:lō men’s participation in the logging industry. His chapter “I was born a logger: Stó:lō Identity Forged in the Forest” examines the way retired Stó:lō loggers remember their careers as highball fellers and chokermen in the forest industry. He also interrogates the way these men associated their employment in this hyper-masculine industry as providing them with a means of escaping aspects of the racism directed at most Coast Salish people in the mid-twentieth century. In part a reaction to some earlier scholarship that depicted West Coast Indigenous men as reluctant and largely transient loggers who participated in the clear cutting of forests despite their inherently environmentalist opposition to the commodification of trees, Osmond gives voice to Stó:lō logger’s who tell a story that is much more complicated and nuanced, and that ultimately helps depict the complex humanity associated with Indigenous identity in the modern era.

Wrapping up this collection is an essay by Noah Miller that speaks to the way micro-narratives and macro-narratives challenge one another not only within scholarship but within the

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61 The White Paper was a policy document that proposed eliminating the “Indian Act” and any distinctivc status for Indigenous People in Canada.

context of Indigenous historical consciousness. His thoughtful argument in “They’re Always Looking for the Bad Stuff: Historians and the History of Coqualeetza” is that ethnohistory can provide a balance to some of the more ideologically driven post-colonial studies that worked to portray cultural binaries even as they worked to break down earlier stereotypes. In responding to Chief Frank Malloway’s critique of the assumptions that underlay the perspectives of some of the academics who have interviewed him in the past, Miller reveals the benefits of careful listening as a methodology for what it can do to attend to the submerged voices that sometimes run contrary to those highlighted in academic discourse. In Miller’s article, federally run segregated Indian tuberculosis hospitals cease to be mere tools of colonialism for the simple reason that they were spaces where Indigenous people lived portions of their complex lives. As such, while there is no denying that they were sites of oppression, they were also, to Stó:lō people, sites where they went to get well, sites where they sometimes met caring doctors and nurses, sites where they gave birth, sites where they met other Indigenous people from throughout the province and built lasting friendships and alliances, and therefore complicated sites that tell an important part of their history.

At the end of this volume readers will find a short crisply worded afterword by University of Alberta Indigenous Studies scholar Adam Gaudry. Adam is at the forefront of efforts within Canadian universities to shift not only the location of learning away from the university campus and onto the land of First Nation and Metis communities, but to do so in ways that meaningfully build capacity within those communities. With Elaine Alexie and a team of community-based knowledge keepers from the Teetl’it Zeh community he has recently launched a land-based “bush-camp learning initiative.” We invited him to read over the manuscript of this book and to provide us with a reflection on the work that is being accomplished through and with the Stó:lō ethnohistory fieldschool. His contribution helps to highlight the major trends, challenges, and opportunities facing scholars and Indigenous communities as they explore new ways to partner into the future.

Collectively, the new ethnohistory depicted in these essays speaks to intimate local Stó:lō concerns, but in ways that illuminate larger intellectual and social issues. We started this essay with a quote from the late Stó:lō Elder Rosaleen George highlighting the importance of historical knowledge to Stó:lō people’s sense of place, identity, and belonging. Those who know their history, Rosaleen explained, have worth. They know where they come from, they know who they come from, and through that knowledge they secure their position within their family and their broader community. In helping co-create new forms and expressions of historical knowledge in partnership with Stó:lō community members, the new ethnohistorians featured in this collection are helping Stó:lō knowledge keepers secure an anchor that their descendants will be able to use – an anchor located somewhere in the waters between the rock of ancestral tradition and the hard place of settler colonialism.