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# Historicizing Canadian Anthropology



*Edited by Julia Harrison  
and Regna Darnell*

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*I am a teller of stories among lovers of stories, and I tell  
stories as I know of no other way of making my point.*

Catherine Willson, graduate student in anthropology



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# Historicizing Canadian Anthropology



# 1

## Historicizing Traditions in Canadian Anthropology

*Julia Harrison and Regna Darnell*

What is Canadian anthropology? Who is a Canadian anthropologist? These questions, whether they are asked in formal sessions or in academic corridors, raise the additional question of whether Canada has a distinctive national tradition of anthropology. Although Regna Darnell (1975, 403) thirty years ago reassuringly identified a Canadian tradition of anthropology “from her position as an anthropologist, ethnographer, and insider-outsider” (Cole 2000, 124), there remains a certain essentialism to the definition. Musings over anthropological identity long predate globalization and continental free-trade agreements, issues at the core of whether there is such a thing as Canadian culture, never mind Canadian anthropology.

An essentialist concept of national tradition, moreover, has served as a resilient organizing device for the history of anthropology (Stocking 1968, 2001; Darnell 2001). Yet, the major national traditions – the British, the French, the German, and the American – have not remained wholly discrete. Individual scholarly careers have intersected, with colleagues meeting in their ethnographic field sites and through common research interests. Nevertheless, an intellectual genealogical distinctiveness persists. The character of Canadian anthropology is further complicated when these national traditions are borrowed and integrated in various combinations outside Canada.

Canada mediates national traditions, drawing upon three of the four major international intellectual paradigms, i.e., those of its two founding European nations and its southern neighbour. It is the amalgam that is uniquely Canadian: the Aboriginal collective presence as “third” founding nation, geographic isolation both internal and external, a shifting position of observer and observed-by-outsiders, and a national political commitment to maintaining a multicultural society within official bilingualism. This volume engages the idea of national tradition as an heuristic device rather than as an essentializing mechanism for the discipline in Canada.

Douglas Cole (1973, 44), describing the amateur, hobbyist, enthusiast, and dilettante character of late-nineteenth-century anthropological writing,

identifies a “Canadian school” of anthropology “concerned with North American problems as British anthropology could not be and yet insulated from some of the dominating influences upon American anthropology” (see also Inglis 1982; Hancock, Hamilton, this volume). Such confidence in Canadian distinctiveness has not always been echoed in later discussions. Rather, discourse on the history of Canadian anthropology, both published and in oral tradition, has emphasized marginality and absence, characterized by contrastive negative ethnography. Anthropological work done in Canada has always transcended national boundaries, for example, Franz Boas’ work on the Northwest Coast (Darnell 1998, 2000c). Canada’s First Nations have long been “subjects” for international anthropological investigation, with limited attention paid to Canadian anthropologists as the “doers” of anthropology.

Moreover, Canadian anthropologists have been defined by absences. Edward Sapir left the National Museum in Ottawa in 1925, returning to the United States to escape his perceived isolation from the centre of the emerging field of Americanist anthropology (Preston 1976; Cole 1999; Darnell 1976, 1990, 1998). Horatio Hale arrived in Canada late in his career and failed to obtain an academic position (Nock, this volume). The career of Boas’ first PhD student, Canadian A.F. Chamberlain at Clark University, left no significant mark on the profession (Darnell 1998).

Absences or truncations also characterize the work of other early figures. Oxford-trained anthropologists Diamond Jenness and Marius Barbeau were prominent in the discipline that emerged at the National Museum of Man in Ottawa. Jenness focused on the ethnographic study of the Canadian Inuit, while Barbeau compiled massive collections of text, songs, myths, and material culture from groups as geographically and culturally dispersed as the Tsimshian, the Huron, and Québécois “folk cultures.” Because neither established links to a university, they lacked students who could perpetuate and develop their intellectual and methodological legacies.

Mentoring opportunities developed slowly in Canada. In 1925 (the same year that Jenness took over as head of the National Museum of Man), Thomas McIlwraith became the first lecturer hired in anthropology at the University of Toronto, an event that eventually led to the founding of the first department of anthropology in 1936. Anthropologists were hired to teach at McGill University and the University of British Columbia in the late 1940s, but real institutional commitments to anthropology came much later (Darnell 1998).

To posit a more positive and distinctive Canadian anthropology presupposes our ability to define a national tradition, despite the well-established permeability of Canadian anthropology. Regna Darnell, however, has posited that national traditions coalesce around a centre that establishes intellectual paradigms, institutional frameworks, and social networks of scholars for a particular time. To label such a tradition is to capture the essence of its

key preoccupations. As scholars work around this core, its boundaries may become increasingly blurred, although works at the periphery can be related to each other by tracing them back to the centre. Several such centres have produced Canadian “anthropologies” (Ames 1976a, 5). This volume establishes one framework for the history of these diverse developments, with the identification of Canadian anthropology acknowledging interrelated yet variant historiographic paradigms in the Canadian national tradition (see Kuhn 1962).

### **Ongoing Conversations about Anthropology in Canada**

Michael Ames (1976a, 2) noted nearly thirty years ago that history, disciplinary or otherwise, “does not exist until it is invented by the process of description.” The description he called for has emerged within the Canadian anthropological community in the intervening decades, producing considerable scholarship on the history of the discipline.<sup>1</sup> Much of this work, however, remains little known because it has been published in widely disparate sources. The unavailability of textbooks has rendered the national tradition virtually invisible within the profession and has fed the insecurity around what one actually means by the notion of Canadian anthropology.

The invisibility of the baseline documentation results, at least partly, from a narrow definition of history that excludes contemporary practices and future trajectories from consideration of the past. History too often is conceived as a static construction (see McKillop, this volume). Historicizing, in contrast, is a process whereby the analyst frames a disciplinary tradition as a personal genealogy and/or theoretical and methodological template. Many of the earlier publications were primarily descriptive, documenting particular events and careers. Building on this foundation, the chapters of this book respond to both a material and a professional appetite for more systematic, synthesizing treatments.

In much of what has been written about the disciplinary trajectory of Canadian anthropology, thematic resonances recur. Each of these themes, when revisited, retains the particular character of the moment of its discussion. Both earlier writings and those included here engage with the problem of what constitutes Canadian anthropology. This ongoing intellectual debate remains grounded in a range of key questions, including

- What is distinctive about anthropology as practised in Canada?
- What has been the interplay among international anthropological traditions (specifically American, French, British) in the Canadian intellectual landscape? Do different factors shape this engagement in different parts of the country?
- Do particular intellectual and theoretical paradigms broadly define anthropology in English Canada? In French Canada? Does this distinction have any substantive reality in disciplinary practice?

- What dynamics have shaped the professionalization of anthropology in Canada?
- What can be said about the uniqueness of the “anthropological subject” in Canada? What impact has its definition had on disciplinary practice?
- Which anthropologists have actively shaped the discipline in Canada? Why have others failed to make a similar impact?
- What role, if any, do regional, historical, political, social, cultural, and economic factors play in the engagement with particular subject areas and theoretical paradigms?
- What has been (and is) the relationship among Canadian anthropology, Canadian anthropologists, and the Canadian state?
- How has Canadian anthropology been institutionalized in Canadian museums? In the Canadian academy?
- Is there a distinctive “applied” tradition of Canadian anthropology, or are there several such traditions? If so, what impact has it had on state policy? On the development of theory? On the lives of Canadians, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal? To what extent have First Nations peoples contributed to this discourse?
- What can Canadian anthropology say about being “Canadian”?
- What was and is, in Canada, the relationship of anthropology to its sister disciplines such as history, sociology, psychology and archaeology? How have these relations shaped Canadian anthropology at the institutional and political levels?
- How has the political culture of Canadian anthropology changed over time?

Canadian professional associations, such as CASCA (Canadian Anthropology Society/Société canadienne d’anthropologie), formerly CESCE (Canadian Ethnology Society/Société canadienne d’ethnologie), and CSAA (Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association/Société canadienne de sociologie et d’anthropologie) have provided a structural context for debate and reflection on these questions. The National Museum of Man (NMM), now the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC), supported the creation of an institutional framework for the self-identity of early Canadian anthropologists such as Marius Barbeau and Diamond Jenness (see Hancock, Nurse, Buchanan, this volume). This museum linkage was rekindled many years later when a group of sociocultural anthropologists wished to separate themselves from the dominant presence of sociologists in the CSAA. In 1973 they proposed a federation of anthropological science intended originally to include archaeologists, physical anthropologists, and linguists.<sup>2</sup> This new group, the Canadian Ethnology Society, restricted itself to the museum-based framework of “ethnology,” and included as a regular feature in its journal *Culture* (now *Anthropologica*) reviews of museum exhibitions, an idea borrowed by other international anthropological journals more than a decade later. “Ethnology”

seemed to capture the shared identity of the charter members and to be fitting, because the NMM hosted and published the papers from the society's early meetings (Freedman 1976, 1977; Manning 1983). The new professional association did not reclaim the broader label of "anthropology" until 1990, when it changed its name to the Canadian Anthropology Society.

Symposia on the history of Canadian anthropology took place at CSAA meetings in 1971 and 1974 (Ames and Preston 1975), and at CESCE meetings in 1975 and 1976. The 1975 theme was "The History of Canadian Anthropology" (Freedman 1976), although not all of the papers were "historical" in the narrow sense, nor was there only one idea of Canadian anthropology. In 1976, the focus was more narrowly stated as "Applied Anthropology in Canada" (Freedman 1977), implying that applied anthropology held particular salience in the Canadian context. The plausibility of such a premise is reiterated by Dyck; Waldram and Downe; Pope; Whittaker and Ames; Tremblay; Hancock; and Graburn (all in this volume). These applied anthropologists aimed to increase the relevance of the discipline to the wider Canadian population by demonstrating its potential contribution to mainstream Canadian society. The discipline seemed well poised to offer insights that would improve the lives of Canadians, particularly those on the margins of society. Marginalized sectors would continue to include the traditional Aboriginal subjects of Canadian anthropology, but would be expanded to incorporate other minorities in the wider Canadian multicultural milieu.

Ames (1976a) lamented the narrowing of an earlier, more interdisciplinary field, attributing the increasing specialization to the Boasian four-field paradigm, initially introduced in Canada by Boas' student Edward Sapir, director of the NMM from 1910 to 1925. Sapir imported the Americanist hallmark: the study of Aboriginal populations as the core subject matter of the discipline (Darnell 1998b). The NMM concentrated on Aboriginal research, and Sapir turned a blind eye to Barbeau's persistent documentation of rural Québécois culture. The Boasian or Americanist influence spread with the hiring of American anthropologists, and later American-trained Canadians, during the expansionary period of the Canadian academy in the 1960s and 1970s, when the baby boom generation arrived at the university. This trend prompted some anthropologists (along with other social science colleagues) to call for the Canadianization of the academy (Symons 1975; Inglis 1982; see also Darnell, Graburn, this volume).

But not all anthropology in Canada was Americanist at the end of the 1970s. Gordon Inglis (1978, 375; see also Maranda 1983, Graburn, this volume), responding to a charge of blandness in Canadian anthropology (and in Canada more generally) published in the *American Anthropologist* in 1978, adamantly countered that since 1950, "a lot of things have happened. Major contributions in applied anthropology have been made from the University of British Columbia, McGill and other places. Université Laval is probably

the main center of French structuralism outside of Paris ... and Memorial University has earned an international reputation in community studies. The National Museum of Man and Northern Science Research Group of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs have sponsored an impressive body of work."

Nevertheless, until university curricula began to expand in the 1960s and 1970s as Canadian anthropologists ventured beyond their national borders, anthropology followed the Americanist tradition of almost exclusive study of the nation's indigenous peoples. Although every academic department had Indian and/or Inuit specialists, many students dismissed contemporary First Nations peoples as "spoiled" by assimilation (Darnell 1998b), fostering the perception that it was less chic to study them than, for example, the Ju/'Hoansi of the Kalahari desert studied by University of Toronto anthropologist Richard Lee. His research, which began in 1963, gained him an international reputation that few anthropologists working in Canada at the time could boast. Lee's extended empirical research with the Ju/'Hoansi challenged long-held assumptions about hunter-gatherers, thereby confronting many assumptions implicit in the work of anthropology (Solway 2003). Other Canadian anthropologists also expanded their fields of study beyond Canadian borders. African studies was especially strong, especially in Quebec institutions from the early 1970s on (Lumsden 1983; Tremblay, this volume).

Anthropological research in Mexico, Latin America more broadly, and the Pacific (particularly in Quebec) showed similar trajectories. China and Asia emerged later as sites of study for Canadian anthropologists (Konrad 1995; see Smart and Smart; Tremblay, this volume).

The largest applied research project in the history of Canadian anthropology – the government-commissioned Hawthorn-Tremblay Report (Hawthorn 1966, 1967; Weaver 1976; see also Tremblay, this volume) – began at the same time Lee was heading for the Kalahari. University of British Columbia professor Harry Hawthorn's two early projects – *The Doukhobors of British Columbia* (1955) and (with Belshaw and Jamieson) *The "Indians" of British Columbia* (1958) – had proved useful in provincial government policy development for both of these populations. In 1963 Laval professor Marc-Adélar Tremblay's team-based applied approach, founded on his earlier work in Nova Scotia and with francophone populations on Quebec's North Shore, provided valuable background expertise for policy changes under consideration by the Indian Affairs Branch of the federal government (Tremblay, this volume). As Sally Weaver (1976, 55) noted, "The Hawthorn-Tremblay Report stands out as a marked departure from the traditional kind of anthropological reporting." Its purpose was to serve the needs of policy developers (see Graburn, this volume, for a discussion of other early work commissioned by the federal government). Along with Hawthorn and Tremblay, a total of thirty-five

researchers, including faculty and graduate students, worked on the project. They attempted to gather broad information through interview and survey techniques, and made recommendations on the political, educational, and economic needs of Aboriginal populations in Canada. All of these recommendations were ignored, however, by the controversial 1969 White Paper on Indian Policy (see Weaver 1976).

By 1982, it was time for “both a state-of-the-art assessment of Canadian ethnology and, somewhat more ambitiously, an attempt to examine the ethnological exercise in relation to Canadian society” (Manning 1983, vii). CESCE and the NMM co-sponsored a symposium titled “Consciousness and Inquiry, Ethnology and Canadian Realities” (Manning 1983). In the same year, an *Ethnos* special issue on national anthropologies replicated the taken-for-granted two solitudes of the national discipline with Inglis (1982) representing the anglophone tradition and Gold and Tremblay (1982, 1983) the francophone tradition (see also Maranda 1983; Dunk 2000, 2002). The central question in this formulation was the parallel dualism of Canadian anthropology and of Canada itself. Ironically Inglis and Gold and Tremblay identified these dualistic traditions as substantively engaging with parallel issues and subjects, even though each remained situated within particular political and social contexts.

Writings on the state of the field in the late 1970s and early 1980s emphasized the silencing or retreat of anthropology from social commentary, the need to seek validation beyond our own borders by taking our research elsewhere, and the framing of the emergent social and political context of contemporary Canadian Native people as it unfolded through such events as the Berger pipeline inquiry. Kallen (1983; see also Weaver 1976; Dyck, this volume) returns to this latter question of how anthropology could contribute both to the workings and the ideologies of the Canadian state, with particular relevance to Canada’s Native population. The limited impact of accumulated anthropological knowledge on the often grim lives of Canadian Native people, and on policy development, has been a recurrent source of reflection for anthropologists, suggesting at the very least, disquiet at the inability of the discipline to play a clear and constructive role in these arenas.

Our pedagogies and the scope of the field defined for students in the Canadian academy, along with the often inadequate institutional support available to Canadian anthropology professors, came under scrutiny in the 1980s (Lee and Filtreau 1983; see also Van Esterik, this volume). The need for the discipline to serve as an engaged, sophisticated, yet comprehensible commentator in the public fora of the print media, film and television, and museums was resurrected, revitalizing familiar debates and challenges (Paine 1983; Dunk 2000, 2002).

All of these discussions were embedded in an examination of the political culture of the field in Canada. Had we yet started to Canadianize the field, or

had Inglis' arguments (1982, 93) that the field "knows no national boundaries and quality should be the only standard" dispensed with this concern? Burrige (1983, 319) reflected that the multiple, even pluralistic, influences that ran through anthropology in Canada should be celebrated and acknowledged, rather than depicted as under threat. He welcomed the potential to "reconceptualize, forge new tools" for the discipline.

Much of the assessment that took place during the 1980s was in practice historicizing, although without the label. The core question about the relation of anthropology to "Canadian realities" was prescient, but the proposed answers remained fragmentary. The discipline in Canada "lacked a clear identity," with the proviso that this "may be less of a disadvantage than has been generally thought" (Manning 1983, 2). This sentiment has been reaffirmed twenty years later by Amit (this volume).

Widespread interest in studying Canadian Aboriginal peoples again reasserted itself in the late 1970s and 1980s, albeit in a more overtly politicized context than earlier Americanist work on Native peoples. This later work focused increasingly on realities of Aboriginal life in the sociopolitical context of the Canadian state (see, for example, Weaver 1981; Preston 1976; Salisbury 1986; Asch 1984; Gold and Tremblay 1983; Dyck 1981, 1983; Waldram 1988; Feit 1985, 1989; Tanner 1979). Foreshadowed by the Hawthorn-Tremblay Report (Hawthorn 1966, 1967), much of this research was done under the rubric of applied anthropology. Some of it shifted somewhat to a more activist posture in response to conflicts concerning Aboriginal rights and resource development in Canada.

Following a tradition of "community studies" in Quebec anthropology that had seen Tremblay working on Quebec's North Shore and among Acadians in Nova Scotia, Norman Chance at McGill started work with the James Bay Cree, "providing an analysis of traditional Cree culture" with a particular interest in the "sedentarization of ... trappers and the introduction of wage labour in the forestry industry" (Gold and Tremblay 1982, 107, 110). This work eventually developed into the McGill James Bay Development Project under the direction of Richard Salisbury. Under this umbrella, faculty and graduate students conducted research in the context of the 1970 James Bay hydro-electric project and the 1975 signing of first modern-day treaty with the James Bay Cree (Silverman 2004). These events led to the relocation of Aboriginal communities and to an increasingly sedentary lifestyle among the Cree. Aboriginal lives were changed forever. These and later generations of anthropologists sought to document what that meant socially, culturally, and economically (see, for example, Feit 1985, 1989; Tanner 1979; Scott 1989).

Community studies of non-Aboriginal communities were at the heart of the research program at the Institute of Social Research (ISER) at Memorial University, founded in 1961 "to foster and undertake research into the many

social and economic questions arising from Newfoundland's particular historic, geographic, and economic circumstances. ISER ... specialized in empirically-based social scientific research in Newfoundland and Labrador, Atlantic Canada, the Eastern Arctic, and the North Atlantic Rim. It [became] a centre of expertise in community and cultural studies, social and economic development, social impact assessment and policy evaluation."<sup>3</sup>

Practical engagement by marginalized groups with the political and social realities of the wider society characterized this work; some claimed it to be "a style of anthropology which is distinctively Canadian" (Leyton 1977, 168; Kennedy 1997; Graburn, this volume). Others, worried about the need to appear neutral and objective, queried whether the discipline should be heading in this direction.

What has been the impact of this applied work? Harry Hawthorn (1976, 183) commented on his own massive work of "useful anthropology," the Hawthorn-Tremblay Report, that its physical unwieldiness, cumbersome language, and poor binding ensured that its most practical use was "to prop up the shortest table leg in any [Band] Council office" across the country. (It was largely ignored by Ottawa policy makers and politicians.) Nonetheless, a contemporary reading situates this report as a seminal step in the emergence of a Canadian Aboriginal policy more attuned to the needs and aspirations of the First Nations peoples, a step rarely credited to date (Dyck, this volume; Weaver 1976). However, it failed to stimulate theoretical developments in the wider discipline (Dunk 2002, 29; see also Asch 1983). The results of anthropological work were and are too often used as tools for territorial and nationalist claims (see Graburn, this volume). They also evoke the counter-productive responses of fostering exoticism or awakening state and corporate consciousness about potential resource exploitation in indigenous homelands.

Nonetheless, anthropology and anthropologists have played constructive roles mediating and interpreting events in recent Canadian political history. Individually and collectively, anthropologists have acted as expert witnesses, researchers, advocates, commentators, and consultants in major legal cases, boycotts, agreements, and referenda, such as the following:

- 1969 The White Paper was a federal policy document that essentially recommended the full assimilation of Aboriginals into mainstream Canada.
- 1973 The *Calder* case was a Supreme Court split decision that affirmed the existence of Aboriginal title in Canadian law.
- 1976 The James Bay Agreement, called the "first modern treaty," gave Inuit and Cree people in northern Quebec large cash payments and hunting and fishing rights to surrendered lands, in exchange for allowing the provincial government to build hydro-electric dams.
- 1977 The Mackenzie Valley pipeline debate resulted in Justice Thomas Berger declaring a ten-year moratorium on oil and gas development in the

- Canadian North, pending a framework for socially and environmentally sound development.
- 1987 The Lubicon Lake Cree boycotted the Olympic exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*.<sup>4</sup>
- 1991 *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*, taken to the Supreme Court by the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en, determined that Aboriginal title incorporates rights to land, and that oral testimony is a valid form of evidence.
- 1996 The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples framed its deliberations under the rubric of the foundations of a fair and honourable relationship between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Canada.
- 2002 The referendum on Aboriginal treaties in British Columbia was held (see Dyck, this volume).

As a result of this work, a vigorous and widespread intellectual and social activism positioned some anthropologists in Canada well outside of the all too frequent discourse that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s and posited colonialist and neo-colonialist motivations as the sole rationale for the work of anthropology (Deloria 1969; Inglis 1977). Proponents of these negative broad-brush positions tended to generalize to anthropology as a whole, without acknowledging variability in individual, institutional, and national practices. The legacy of this discourse still exists within the profession and among some communities and peoples with whom anthropologists work.

Graburn, Dyck, Plaice, and Darnell (this volume; see also Darnell 1998b) argue for the centrality of the study of Canadian Native people to contemporary anthropological work. Buchanan (this volume) explores suggestions of resistance to broader discourses of emendation concerning Aboriginal people in the early years of the discipline's history, presaging the later tradition in which anthropology more consistently argued for positions contrary to established government policies. Noel Dyck (this volume), however, argues that Canadian anthropologists have somewhat ignobly retreated from work with First Nations peoples, abandoning their imperative to engage with the political economy of anthropological knowledge production (see also Asch 1983, 2001, 2004). He queries the absence of any place for anthropology in critical reflections on Aboriginal-state relations, such as the SSHRC Dialogue on Research and Aboriginal People (2002-3).

The CSAA, in 1990, organized four sessions "to provide an occasion for critical reflection ... [on] sociology and anthropology in Canada," which resulted in the publication of *Fragile Truths: Twenty-five Years of Sociology and Anthropology in Canada* (Carroll et al. 1992). Albeit heavily sociological, this special issue received a much wider distribution than earlier such materials. Of particular interest is Howes' (1992) discussion of a Canadian anthropological "fragile truth." He argues that Canadian ethnography (and ethnographic fictional literature) reflect a structural bicentrism (as opposed to American

concentrism). Drawing heavily on French theory, Howes built on his earlier discussions of Canadian popular song (1990) and art (1991a). The persistence, if not acceptance, of this ability of the part to stand for the whole, according to Howes, is in fact a strength of the Canadian reality (1992, 163-4). Further grounding this argument in the Canadian Constitution, Howes (this volume) responds to critiques of his bicentric thesis, particularly those of Tom Dunk (2000, 2002; see below).

Peter Harries-Jones edited a special issue of the *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* titled "Canadian Anthropology in an International Context" in 1997. It argued that anthropology had a vested interest in a comparative global and ethnographic perspective on Canada. The persistent focus on First Nations and on their political, social, and ethical relation with the academy and the state (Darnell 1997; Dyck 1997); on the impacts of globalization on the subject, methodology, and theoretical frameworks of the field (Amit 1997; Kennedy 1997); and on the commentary that anthropology can offer to previously unimagined territories, such as those of biomedicine and the environment (Stephenson 1997), all echo themes of earlier moments of self-reflexivity. In a special issue of *Anthropologica* in 2000 titled *Reflections on Anthropology in Canada*, many authors approached contemporary issues historiographically, although the volume as a whole defined itself in terms of the state of the art in contemporary practice. The table of contents speaks to historical consistencies (albeit some with contemporary twists) in what constitutes the field of study of anthropology in both French and English Canada. Dunk engages the discussion of how this Canadian anthropological tradition is best described. He challenges Howes' principle of bicentrism, arguing that it reflects a Central Canadian, upper- and middle-class view of the nation-state. If there is a "Canadian school" that frames anglophone Canadian anthropology, Dunk (2000, 2002) situates it in Harold Innis' political economy, a theory grounded in a discussion of staple development and how it shaped Canadian local, regional, state, and international structures and relationships. To Dunk, this Canadian school additionally reflects the influence of Canada's historical relationships to the imperial powers of the United Kingdom, the United States, and France (Dunk 2000, 141). Dunk (2002) later refined this analysis, arguing that a defining feature of Canadian anthropology is that the academy continues to hire preferentially those trained elsewhere rather than its own graduates, a theme that evoked discussions during the 1970s about the need to nationalize the field.

Four papers published in 2000 discussed the study of Canada's indigenous populations: Briggs on the Inuit, and Darnell, Scheffel, and Gélinas more generally on First Nations peoples. Darnell argues that the Americanist study of First Nations still predominates in Canadian anthropology, while Scheffel "asks for honest debate within the discipline about the future of the anthropology of First Nations" (Cole 2000, 125) and about the relationship

between politics and anthropological practice at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Gélinas concludes that the focus on First Nations in Quebec anthropology is diminishing, based on his analysis of the independent journal *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*. Highlighting this publication, he returns to an earlier understanding of anthropology in Canada, and concludes that the discipline outside the academy has made an important contribution. Concern about the renewal of the discipline and worries for the future of upcoming generations of students (Labreque 2000) and for invisible figures in the social landscape (such as women) – whether they are in the developing world or in rural Quebec (Phillips and Ilcan 2000; Saillant and Gagnon 2000) – are familiar themes in the discussion of who and what will comprise the subject and the practitioner in years to come. Such wide-ranging resonances remind us that national traditions coalesce around characteristic centres and paradigms (Darnell 1998b).

Despite these periodic bursts of interest, however, the self-reflexive posture has not maintained its momentum. We believe that this will change. The emerging historiographic paradigm adopted by the authors in this volume is supported by the work of scholars at all stages of their careers. The mapping of the disciplinary field over time invites students in particular to articulate their own work within the context of an ongoing genealogy of Canadian anthropology. The publication of this book by a respected university press transcends the ephemeral character of previous reflections.

The chapters of this book build on these precedents and call for a further sustained self-examination of Canadian anthropology and anthropologists. The proximity of Canada and the United States makes it harder to document the relationship among the First Nations, Canada's anthropologists, and the Canadian nation-state. This task requires both empirical research and interpretive elaboration of the underlying narrative thread(s) of the national discipline. These collective discussions revolve around the moral and ethical positioning of anthropological observers relative to their own communities as well as to those studied. This self-examination anticipates many of the insights of poststructural critical theory, especially the questions of epistemology and the empowerment of alternative voices.

### **Telling Our Stories**

Contributors to this volume encompass much of the diversity of Canadian anthropology and represent most Canadian provinces and regions. Their institutional affiliations and academic training are both Canadian and international, predominantly American and British. Interestingly most individual contributors identify with several locations, which reflects their educational and professional mobility, fieldwork sites and present institutional affiliation. Waldram and Downe remind us of the perspective gained from those who work as anthropologists in interdisciplinary and other contexts. Pope,

Whittaker and Ames, and Tremblay explicate the localized contexts that fostered particular developments in Canada (see also Salisbury 1976; Trigger 1997; Preston 2001). All of these multiple affiliations feed into the core definition of a Canadian national tradition. Contributors range in professional generation from elders reflecting back on their careers, to those who are mid-career as practising anthropologists, to graduate students situating themselves in relation to their profession. Twelve contributors are women; fourteen are men. With the exception of those by the editors, all of the co-authored chapters are by a female and a male. Theoretical approaches range from political economy to interpretive ethnography, and intersect with other disciplines, particularly history, sociology, and political science. Some authors identify themselves within the tradition of applied anthropology in Canada.

Despite the editors' efforts to be comprehensive, there remains within this volume and within the discipline a need for more inclusive treatment. Canadian anthropology fails to reflect the full racial and ethnic diversity of the national population (francophone scholarship is seriously under-represented in this volume). Canadian anthropologists are found outside of the academy in museums, in government, in the corporate world, and as private consultants. Several chapters discuss museum-related research (Hamilton, Willmott, and M'Closkey and Manuel), yet all the contributors were at the time of writing employed or studying in the academy. Further, an adequate history of Canadian anthropology must include the voices of those who have been the traditional subjects of our study.

The turn of a new millennium induced intensified self-reflection among Canadian anthropologists. This milestone, albeit arbitrary, lent a certain urgency to our debates, especially given that it also marked a generational turnover, with significant numbers of academic retirements occurring across the country. Over one-third of Canada's professoriate is expected to retire by 2010. Colleagues who hold the institutional memory of their departments are leaving. The chapters of this book contribute to documenting the histories of the founders and key participants of Canadian anthropology. Such histories need to be framed within a critical analysis of the historiography, theoretical relevance, and political economy of the discipline.

The collective engagement of this volume's contributors with the project of "historicizing" disciplinary traditions combines rich ethnographic detail with critical theoretical analysis. How our stories are told, how they are constructed, and how they engage larger analytical abstractions are all central to historicizing diverse traditions in Canadian anthropology.

The editors have spearheaded a long-term strategy for empirical research and shared reflection on the history of Canadian anthropology. The selection of contributors drew on a series of gatherings and conversations at professional meetings over several years; on a roundtable discussion titled "Talking across Generations" at the 2002 CASCA annual meetings; and on a 2002

session on “Canadian National Traditions” at the centennial meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Subjects discussed at the AAA session covered a spectrum comparable to the one contained in this volume. They included how the definition of the first Canadian “ethnographers” could be extended to include early fur-trade factors; issues surrounding languages shared by Native groups whose traditional lands cross the political boundaries of Canada and the United States; and the marginal position of Canadian anthropology relative to other disciplines and national traditions. Oddly, however, most AAA presenters began with a disclaimer of the session’s premise that their papers dealt with traditions of Canadian anthropology (from the presenters at this session, only Vered Amit contributed to the present volume). The editors of *Historicizing Canadian Anthropology* resolved to address this myopia of Canadian anthropologists about their own disciplinary lineages. Invitations to contribute to this volume focused around historicizing Canadian anthropology with the intention of initiating an examination of the history of Canadian anthropology as both a record of the past and a guide to contemporary practice.

Before they prepared the essays that constitute *Historicizing Canadian Anthropology*, the authors debated the potential definitive features of Canadian anthropology and Canadian anthropologists. The questions they raised formed the framework for the volume and include the following: Does Canadian anthropology include work done by anthropologists who were socialized, formally educated, and teach in Canada but may trace their roots to First Nations research and an Americanist tradition? Does it include work by “outsider” anthropologists who study Canadians and may or may not teach in Canada? Does it include research done by native-born Canadians who have studied and done research elsewhere, and may live and teach outside of the country? Given the magnitude of the task, the editors resolved to concentrate on sociocultural anthropology, raising issues in archaeology and in physical and linguistic anthropology only as they speak to the core focus. Contributors arrived at an informal consensus of inclusivity rather than a rigid prescriptive definition of a monolithic Canadian anthropological tradition. Several observed that this consensus itself seemed fundamentally Canadian; the merit of the project would be to clarify the coherence of its subject matter rather than to circumscribe it in advance.

Because this volume breaks new ground in assembling diverse thematic, topical, and methodological strands of existing research under the rubric of “historicizing Canadian anthropology,” the particular contributions are presented as the basis for future scholarship rather than as exhaustive treatments of the history of Canadian anthropology.

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Part 1:  
Situating Ourselves Historically  
and Theoretically

Chapters 2 and 3, by Brian McKillop and Robert Hancock respectively, situate the analytical frameworks – theoretical, historical, and historiographic – for this volume. These frameworks, which have been employed by the other contributors, constitute a new paradigm for studying the history of Canadian anthropology. The framework dissolves the arbitrary boundary between past, present, and future by applying continuities within the discipline to its contemporary practice. Key to this paradigm shift is one of process, of historicizing rather than reifying history and then locking it in the past. Reflexivity is key to the increasing significance placed by Canadian anthropologists on exploring our history and broadening the scope of what might constitute that history. Recently there has been a burgeoning of literature, but as of yet no theoretical framing of the potential of reflexive historiography for professional socialization and contemporary practice.

Brian McKillop, a distinguished historian of Canadian intellectual traditions, muses over what he calls the “alliances and skirmishes” between the disciplinary “tribes” of anthropology and history. He concludes that the two disciplines have more often than not been allies. Indeed, one might extend his argument to suggest that anthropologists writing their own history consider themselves to be operating as anthropologists doing ethnography. Anthropologists are, perhaps, more likely than historians to supplement their archival documents with evidence from oral history when it is available.

McKillop identifies a “Canadian sensibility.” At the core of this Canadian uniqueness, whether in anthropology or in the nation-state, is the Canadian propensity to acknowledge that one’s perspective will vary depending on one’s standpoint (Darnell 2000). Almost by definition, such an identification or sensibility is difficult to pin down. It emerges more from the stories anthropologists tell themselves about their tradition(s), than from the documentation of particular events and circumstances.

Robert Hancock emphasizes the historiographic methods that define the scope and substance of our history. As a young scholar, he seeks to establish a baseline for what is already known and what remains to be explored. At the same time he emphasizes the need to respect the methods of the historian. Hancock insists on the intimate relationship between historiographic documentation and contemporary activism. Acknowledging the dialectic between its political realities and its history is important for the future of Canadian anthropology.