Address
Weaver-Tremblay Award 2006

Reflections on Becoming an Applied Anthropologist

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Abstract: In responding to the honour given me by this 2006 Weaver-Tremblay Award, I will sketch some aspects of my academic and non-academic background, ponder the label "applied," discuss the balance between intellectual inquiry and pragmatic anthropology, and give some examples of my applied work, focusing on the James Bay region.

Keywords: applied anthropology, James Bay Cree, humanism, ethnographicity, long-term research, deep listening

Résumé : L'honneur de recevoir le prix Weaver-Tremblay m'amène à relater quelques éléments de mon parcours universitaire et non-universitaire, à réfléchir sur la nature de l'étiquette « appliquée », à discuter de l'équilibre entre la recherche intellectuelle et l'anthropologie pragmatique, et, enfin, à donner quelques exemples de mes travaux appliqués en focalisant sur la région de la Baie James.

Mots-clés : anthropologie appliquée, Cris de la Baie James, humanisme, ethnographicité, recherche à long terme, écoute profonde

First, my thanks to Harvey Feit for wanting to take the time and effort to assemble the nomination package, and to Chief George Wapache, John Turner, Toby Morantz and Fikret Berkes for writing generous letters of support. It is nice to have friends, and it is nice to be appreciated.

Now for the wordier part:

> His work and mentorship provided a model for contemporary anthropology as it negotiated the relationship between the more purely academic perspective and the emergent applied orientation of anthropology in Canada in the 1970s. [Harvey Feit, Introduction at Weaver-Tremblay Award Ceremony, CASCA 2006]

What was my negotiation? Where to begin? With sage advice to the young? Sure, I can do that in short order, recalling Barbara Myerhoff's (1982) comments that the elderly will present stories of what they would like to believe is true about their lives. My advice to you is to just appraise this old guy's stories with good social-scientific scepticism, for whatever value, pragmatic, abstract, comic or tragic, you may find in them. Be open-minded. As Northrop Frye commented, he was open-minded—but open at both ends. For my part, I believe what follows is true, complete with facets of the pragmatic, abstract, comic and tragic. My stance towards you mimics Rabelais, who suggested to his readers that they appraise, consider, savour and work on getting into his prose, and then go for the marrow. And if you do not like it, well, you can check out Rabelais for that.

A synopsis of my academic history would seem to recommend that everyone should start at the University of Chicago after grade ten, 16 and very immature. Then for three years fail a bunch of courses, go to Korea as a corporal in the U.S. First Marine Division, get shot at, be astonished at the way that a Korean woman in serious straits could laugh good-humouredly at my awkwardness

when I could do little to help her situation, return home to live in my father's house in Raleigh, NC and work as a "grease monkey" (that is a technical term), try engineering at North Carolina State University, fail chemistry, work as a draftsman, labour in the trench on a sewer pipeline, try philosophy and psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, get married and have kids, drop out of school, work for four years in a record shop in Chapel Hill, repairing, selling and installing radios, phonographs and hi-fi components, and finally return to school for the last term and graduate with a bachelors degree in philosophy. Take about 12 years for this. Then start grad school (still at UNC-Chapel Hill) with a wife, three children, an advisor (Lewis Levine) who was a linguist and, in my opinion, seriously misanthropic, and have weekly meetings with a psychiatrist-in-training.

On the other hand, after all that flunking, wage work, shifting majors and reflexive therapy, I did not have a big sociological ego to dance with on the heads of some objectified, hapless "study population," and I had a more normal family situation with my wife and children when I went to the community of Waskaganish on the coast of James Bay in 1963. I found a few friends, maintained those relationships and used the morality of friendship to define my professional ethics. And family makes another difference: my late wife Sarah and my daughters Susan and Jennifer have each done M.A. theses on Cree topics.

In the late 1960s I became a Quaker "by convincement," when I found the Society of Friends' morality, social conscience and actions, and their spiritual basis in silent (deep listening) worship very suitable. In 1971, after six years at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, I got a job at McMaster University, at that time the only university in the world with several "northernist" anthropologists, and stayed there until my retirement in 1996.

A half-dozen years ago Regna Darnell and Lisa Valentine invited me to a conference on theorizing the Americanist tradition. I had never thought of myself as being part of an *Americanist* tradition, but I went along and it turned out that many of those invited had the same initial reaction. It seemed reasonable and pleasing to see my work in the context of the work of others at the conference. The late Bea Medicine, Robin Ridington and I had a mini-reunion there after a gap of twenty-some years, and we were joined by some august Americanists—Dell Hymes, the Drs. Tedlock, Ellen Basso and many others. The book that came out of the conference is quite good, and my chapter describes the development, over the years, of my relationship with John Blackned, my principal Cree mentor (Preston 1999). I am now pleased to regard myself as an Americanist—a little like Candide discovering that he spoke prose.

Now I am also pleased to identify myself as part of another tradition, as an Applied Anthropologist. I do not have to choose between these two identities, for I see them as two facets of the same guy. I am convinced that if I had not learned from my long-term fieldwork experience as an Americanist, I would have been very poorly prepared to attempt applied work. And once again, it is reasonable and pleasing to see my work in the context of the work of my predecessors: the late Sally Weaver, Marc-Adelard Tremblay, the late Joan Ryan, the late Michael Ames, Paul Charest, Peter Stephenson, Michael Robinson, Michael Asch, Pierre Beaucage, Donat Savoie, Elvi Whittaker and the late Herman Konrad.[1]

I was good friends with Sal Weaver and her husband Dave, and helped Sal during the early 1970s as she implemented her single-minded initiative to create a new community of scholars, to be called the Canadian Ethnology Society. I will come back to this.

My practice of applied anthropology stems from on-the-job learning, and in perspective follows pretty much what Mike Asch spoke about in his plenary presentation for the Weaver-Tremblay award, now published in *Anthropologica*:

> we provide valuable perspectives on culture, on colonial history and on political relations that are missing from the conversation [of First Nations and Canada]; ones, which I know, can do much to enrich it and propel it forward as well as enrich anthropology in the process. We do not need to keep silent and remain on the sidelines. We can enter the conversation with respect and dignity. We can find a place to stand. [Asch 2001:206]

We anthropologists have the opportunity and the skills to make our voices heard, with full respect for the persons whose efforts towards social justice we choose to support. The prime requisite for trying to make anthropology useful, in my opinion, is to know the people and their history (ethnographic competence).

You may choose from a wide range of applied styles. The most controversial applied stance within anthropology is a confrontational or activist stance, exposing abuses of political power and celebrating tragic heroes like Nelson Small-Legs, as the late Joan Ryan did in the 1970s and documented in her book *Wall of Words* (1978). But Joan also did less controversial work, both before and after that book, as in her 1960s role in the Hawthorn-Tremblay report. Joan could be formidable, and many of us choose to stand somewhat farther back from conflicts

and simply work in support of some socially constructive goals.

Whatever style you may choose, be informed and aware of the power relations that are active or potential in the situation. Prepare for the task that is requested of you, in advance, to the extent that you can. Listen deeply to the guidance that may be available to you. My most satisfying applied (and in this case, unpaid) work was in support of a community planning initiative (Preston 1982, 2004, in press), where confrontation was explicitly not acceptable. The sequence of steps below draws from the guidelines the consultants and the government representatives were given as we began the Community Consult planning of the relocation of the people of Nemaska in northwestern Quebec in 1977. As part of the Baie James hydroelectric project launched by the Province of Quebec, strongly opposed by the Crees, and then negotiated to a settlement in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement 1975, the level of Lake Nemaska was to be raised over 20 feet in the process of making a reservoir. These guidelines were prepared by some leaders of the Grand Council of the Crees in conversation with two consultants from Peat, Marwick and Associates:

(1) Avoid taking initiatives on behalf of other people, unless you are specifically asked to by a person who has the moral and social authority to do so.
(2) Provide information when it is wanted, but do not sound too much like an expert who should not be doubted.
(3) Where it will not seem to be a challenge, ask for clarification of the concerns, values, hopes and dreams expressed by people to draw out ideas and values more clearly.
(4) Watch for potential problems, obscure details and obstacles with developing plans and bring them to light by asking probing and concerned questions, not by discouraging declarations.
(5) Find innovative, pragmatic and relevant solutions that do not compromise the community's desires.
(6) Build mental checklists of activities and resources that may be needed, based on previous experience or reading, and share them where and how it seems appropriate.

"Applied" implies something more than a pragmatic orientation, and is associated in many people's minds with a variety of praxis theory or some guiding critical theory and political ideology. I cannot over-emphasize the value of theory, in the general sense of an intellectual toolbox of general and abstract systems of ideas that may be brought to a situation to help discern what is going on on the ground, and what it relates to more abstractly. There are two "buts" coming next. But advocating *a* theory in the exclusive singular is an easy route to tunnel vision. We will naturally select the perspective that is most convincing and congenial to our thinking at any given time. After all, we have inherited tendencies to exclusivist thought preferences from millennia of ideologically exclusivist monotheism. But theories are many and have many differing potentials for making sense of experience. Even more, knowing something about many theories provides a relatively full mind with an intellectual ferment that informs each particular theory with its context of abstract forms, perhaps comparable to syntax in language. What we think and say in any given situation draws on a wide range of possibilities, and we select one from this range that seems intuitively appropriate.

I regard it as a frustration of intellectual maturity to advocate a single abstract perspective when it involves either explicitly or tacitly dismissing the potential of others, however urgently post-this or post-that the perspective may appear. And I regard claiming this moral high ground as partly a personal indulgence, imposing an elite intellectualist icon onto human events to make them more easily coherent in your own terms, sometimes before discovering what coherence the events have to the actual participants. Theories, like other human processes, gain meaning in their forms and, no less, in their relationships. If you build eclectically, the coherence will come. Or so I would like to believe. This belief has enabled me to manage considerable breadth in my work, and to have an interesting life.

I would like to illustrate my point about theoretical pluralism with an example from a different genre of symbolic forms. Thanks to my mother's love of music, since infancy I have heard a great number of classical and folk performances, and I have a good memory for the sound phrasings of many works. I think I was weaned onto Brahms' Second Symphony, and in my teens I loved to shadow-conduct. During the 1950s I became immersed in the music of Bela Bartok. His intense and often anxious music was built upon the idioms learned in his years of collecting Magyar folk music, and was composed against the backdrop of the rise of Hitler's fascism. My passion for Bartok's music was built on more than the appeal of Magyar idioms and compassion for the persecution of people excluded from Hitler's vision for Germany in the 20th century. It was built also upon familiarity with the music of many of Bartok's artistic ancestors and some of his contemporaries. I "got" Bartok at a deep intuitive level in substantial part because of the subjective musical universe I could set him within. Although my wife may sometimes have wondered, my passion for his music did not make me an exclusive "Bartokist."

Now I will mimic Pierre Trudeau, who replied to a 1960s challenge as to whether he was a communist with "no, I'm a canoeist." He opined that the various left-wing and right-wing political oppositions—the big "isms"—were obsolete, limiting and immature. I very much admire public intellectuals like Trudeau, the late Edward Said, or the late Paulo Freire, or the still very much alive Michael Ingatieff. Edward Said, you may recall, is best known for having thought and then radically re-thought *Orientalism* (1978), but his strongest influence on me is his little gem *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004). Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1973) was great in some of my Anthropology of Education courses, but his *The Politics of Education* (1985) was a better personal guide. I have read more books by Michael Ignatieff than by any other non-fiction author, not because I always agree with him but rather because, like Freud, he asks difficult and fundamental human questions and constructs his answers with the guidance of rich first-hand experience. And he is big enough to say that he was wrong, as with his retraction of his initial support for the Iraq War. My first choice among his books is *The Needs of Strangers* (1984).

But my orientation—perhaps it is an ideology—took explicit form in my first term of graduate school (1961), when I read Edward Sapir's essay "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" (1958). I felt a deep intuitive surge of recognition, and spent several days re-reading and thinking about that one small essay, phrase by phrase. It is curious to me now that Sapir, in this single essay, used the word "spirit" so many times, without its being noticeable. I will come back to "spirit" in a minute. I read Sapir very intensively, with most attention to the "culture and personality" papers, and my initial surge of recognition expanded as his words and thoughts sank more deeply and intuitively until I "got" it.

My immersion in Sapir went further than intellectual cognizance. I believe that I got to a level of grasping intuitively what he was thinking in the whole domain of personalized ethnography. And like my experience of "getting" the music of Bartok, my experience of Sapir's thoughts and intuitions was (and continues to be) enriched substantially because of the much larger subjective intellectual universe I could set him within.

I wrote a master's thesis (Anthropology, North Carolina) on Sapir's approach to anthropology, and rewrote those 60-odd pages for two years. That is another example of something that graduate students might well regard as academic suicide. On the other hand, it was published, with minor revisions, as lead article in *American Anthropologist* (1966), and the editor complimented me on my "clarity and excellence of exposition." I developed that quality of writing and thinking by concentrating for two years on that article, and it really helped in my getting the McMaster University job. So two years of focused and self-directed learning on a MA thesis was not only a means to "getting" Sapir; it was also an academic success. Go figure. Let me give you a quote from Sapir that we can apply to the hazards of indulging in theoretical fashions:

> Now fantasied universes of self-contained meaning are the very finest and noblest substitutes we can ever devise for that precise and loving insight into the nooks and crannies of the real that must forever elude us. But we must not reverse the arrow of experience and claim for experience's imaginative condensations the primacy in an appeal to our loyalty, which properly belongs to our perceptions of men and women as the ultimate units of value in our day-to-day view of the world. If we do not thus value the nuclei of consciousness from which all science, all art, all history, all culture have flowed as symbolic by-products in the humble but intensely urgent business of establishing meaningful relationships between actual human beings, we commit personal suicide. [1958:581]

Let us follow the arrow of experience, then, from theory all the way down to the ground. Taking theory, held lightly in the hand, down with us.

Perhaps my first applied anthropology role was fixing radios and record players for folks at Waskaganish. Like an attending country doctor I was able to bring life back to a silent record player by dripping a little nearly boiling water onto some dried vomit that had stuck between the speaker magnet and the voice coil—demonstrating to the onlookers a quick and miraculous cure.

I have always liked to busy myself in fixing things, and this has led me into "applied" tasks in anthropology and elsewhere. When I went off to do fieldwork in the 1960s I had just a little of the obviously relevant bush experience, hiking, canoeing, camping, using an axe and shooting. But gradually I became known as a versatile repairman—most conspicuously by climbing a tower to fix the brake on a seriously over-productive Hudson's Bay Company wind charger. My electro-mechanical reputation later led to tough expectations of the grad student who went to Waskaganish after me. He sent me an epic-length letter recounting his responses to a request for repairs to an outboard motor, titled "The Adventures of Ichabod Craik." Brian Craik stayed at Waskaganish for years, became the only anthropologist in the history of the world to become wholly fluent in Cree, and after 30

years is still working for the Grand Council of the Crees. He should be getting this award. But not for his repairs.

My experiential education as an applied anthropologist began at Waskaganish in the mid-1960s. It was fundamentally holistic. I am convinced that qualitative ethnography is necessary to learn, painstakingly, from the ground up, and I am convinced that to understand culture deeply and reflexively, we need a broad grasp of theory. I opened myself to a long process of re-socialization that is not quite done yet. This background also helps to know what is really going on in the quantitative data. In addition to a strong base in qualitative understanding, quantitative analysis generates new hypotheses, has utilitarian value and is politically persuasive. And immediate experience is fundamental to doing a good job of both.

Immediate experience means humility, and no conceptual agendas to intervene between you and the people you wish to understand. Rather than importing the theory of "equivalence of discourse" we can simply try sharing conversations, with deep listening. I thought of my "self" as if in the position of a piece of litmus paper, dipping into Cree culture to see what happened to my perception of the immediate environment. That sounds passive, I know, but I think of it as being open and sensitive to what I may be told or shown, comparable to listening to music or reading Sapir. Put in another way, you may look into the eyes of another person and see through the differences of personality, age, culture, gender and the rest—to a level where you see yourself mirrored in the other person's fundamental human nature. And that is the basic requirement, I believe, of my being able to "get" Cree oral tradition. As with my rapprochement with Bartok, and then with Sapir, I learned about Cree stories by listening deeply, and building up a large context of stories that had a cumulative and emergent affect on me. During the third summer of my listening and recording, I had a rather sudden awareness that I was "getting" an intuitively sound understanding of the idiom of experience that the stories were embedded in. My "getting" has gradually deepened over the years, thanks to more stories and more thinking about them, but also thanks to developing a relatively full subjective intellectual universe as a context that I could set the Cree stories within.

The theme of this CASCA 2006 conference articulates a stance on what we do: Human Nature/Human Identity: Anthropological Revisionings. I believe that it is timely to argue for an anthropological revisioning by putting our various contemporary intellectualist urgencies a bit more at arm's length, and beginning at the human basics of person-to-person friendship. When I hear a satiric tone of voice on the CBC telling me that the previous musical selection has been described as post-post-punk, it seems time to set the various post-Lyotard negative and vague "post" claims on a shelf until we can do a better job of figuring out what it is that we anthropologists are trying to find out, and realizing that what we have to offer the rest of the intellectual enterprise is not a post-fashion (the Cultural Studies folks are adroitly doing that), but rather the unique precision of long-term ethnography. Postmodernity as a critique of a past that is based on a hypothesized master cultural meta-narrative and the correlated silencing of polyvocality, seems opinionated and historically naïve when it is espoused as an appraisal of anthropology. In my opinion, we anthropologists have never had something approximating a Kuhnian paradigm, and even those 19th century guys were looking for other voices to engage. Way back at the turn of the 20th century, A.M. Hocart urged that we listen to what the people say. This humanist theme matured by fits and starts, boosted by Sapir in the 1920s and 30s, until in the 1970s Geertz argued that the basic purpose of interpretive anthropology is to expand the universe of human discourse. Post-structural critiques may, I suppose, challenge the past of that minority of anthropologists who were actually competent in structural analysis. Postcolonialism again critiques our past errors, so that we can re-harrass the reputation of Evans-Pritchard and more recent infelicities of ethnological thought. On the other hand, Evans-Pritchard's *Nuer Religion* (1956) is still one of the best books in anthropology, and his combination of ethnographic depth and intellectual breadth are still exemplary. Over the last 40-odd years there have been many brilliant and short-lived theoretical fashions claiming our loyalties. Some, like hermeneutics (remember hermeneutic circles?), would not now sound too comfortably familiar to the younger generation. On the other hand, at the time of its sweeping popularity we made it too comfortable. I recall Gadamer saying he regretted the reduction, by North Americans, of his theoretical work to a methodology. We do that: methodology madness. Read Bettelheim's *Freud and Man's Soul* (1983) to discover how his theoretical work was similarly reduced by Ernest Jones' translation into English pragmatics. And a few decades ago I had students complaining that they did not know how to do anything other than deconstruction. Remember Derrida and deconstruction? Remember his disavowal of postmodernism? Remember Paul de Man's urging that these ideas want emergence, not methodological orthodoxy? (Godzich 1992:112) My advice to you (does this sound familiar?) is to know and appraise these theories with good social-scientific/humanistic scepticism, for whatever value, pragmatic, abstract, comic or tragic, you may find

in them. But be open-minded. In addition, most of us can simply be more reflexively aware of hubris in ourselves and in others.

We have benefitted a great deal from the interpretive turn, building momentum from Geertz, Schneider and Turner at the University of Chicago and building increasingly sophisticated parallels with literary criticism. But the balance between literate sophistication and ethnographic groundedness has tipped pretty far into abstraction. I believe that it is time to give these contemporary reactive and oppositional critiques a lower priority and return to Sapir's "arrow of experience" and to define more affirmative intellectual goals. Let me be more specific. Humanist scholarship has developed skills to account quite well for the ontology of persons. We anthropologists could develop skills to account for the ontology of communities. What we know from studies of human maturation, from life histories, from biographies both actual and novelistic, and from the other arts, is enough to have a sense of the unity and variety of human processes of growth and maturation. Let us try for similar skills in tracing the processual dynamics of communities, from formation to maturation through internal changes and adaptation to external forces. We will then be obliged to account for the differential ability of communities to serve human ends: some are good places to live and raise children; others are more problematic, and their members are usually less relativistic about their situation than we would like to be. Relativism requires the withholding of our judgment, but not forever; just until the situation is appreciated as if it were understood from an insider's position.

Further to this, let us return to a guarded optimism about discerning kinds of cumulative change, as the ecologists are now doing. And let us do all this without losing sight of the simple truth that cultural changes take place in the lives of actual, specific individuals, including, reflexively, ourselves. After all, where else could cultural change take place? In addition to this fundamental starting point of a shared human nature and identity, we can then add on the ethnographer's skills:

- as much as you can of your personal character,
- a disciplined and humbled intelligence,
- a determination to withhold judgment as long as possible,
- a resilient sense of humour.

This comes to the point of what I consider to be maturing spiritually. What do I mean by "spiritual"? It is not receiving Jesus as part of your fieldwork. It is a more Gnostic view: consciously and deliberately living holistically. I am defining spirituality as a condition of whole-ness or holiness, relating to others as one person to another, at once open to being surprised, open to conditional personal insights or revelation and open to learning and being disciplined by respect for what has been learned by others, encompassing a whole mode of life experience. In a sense, it simply means being an ethnographer as completely as possible while minimizing those urgent intellectual impositions. If this sounds weird to you, do not worry about it.

In 1966 I got a little bit politicized. This was caused by witnessing the blatant ignoring of the Waskaganish Chief and council by three different "southern" educational authorities coming to survey parental opinion about the language of instruction. The Federal team asked in English, using a local interpreter, and heard the preference for English. The Quebec group asked in French, through an interpreter, and heard the preference for French. The local Oblate priest asked and heard a preference for French Catholic instruction. Parents tried to give helpful answers, without knowing what the future language of jobs for their kids might be. I wrote a letter to Federal, Provincial and Oblate officials pointing out that going through the existing community Chief and council might be less divisive. But in a community of 500 people, three schools were provided—Federal, Provincial and Catholic, probably to keep peace between the competing school authorities. Ten years later, there was the James Bay Agreement, including a Cree School Board, and one school system. As part of the new Board, each community had a Community Education Administrator, an occupational position that I am proud to have contributed to the drafting of in the Agreement.

It is not only in Indigenous communities that anthropologists may have a pragmatic role to play. It may even happen in the academic world, and in fact is a part of the history of the organization giving me this award. In the mid-1970s I was one of the founding caucus for this society, and served as its third president, just after Sally Weaver and just before Ade Tremblay. We aspired at that time to get much more participation than we had found within the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, and we planned to do this by creating a distinct, overarching four-square anthropology society. But we soon found that the archaeologists, physical anthropologists, and linguists were not ready to merge with us—they too wanted their own distinct societies. So we reduced our ambitions and were the Canadian Ethnology Society/ Société Canadienne d'Ethnologie (CESCE). Right from the beginning the Society drew a good turnout every year, and for us it was an exhilarating period, guided by Sal's vision of building a community of scholars. We published a thematic proceedings in our third year, a panel on *The*

History of Canadian Anthropology (1976) and, in the fourth year, one on *Applied Anthropology in Canada* (1977). As CESCE president I had the honour of having these proceedings printed and bound at the McMaster print shop, addressed all the envelopes myself, filled them, licked all those yummy flaps and mailed them with Departmental postage. Now this is considered executive entitlement.

Within a few years the CESCE got into politics, and we had, for example, a plenary session on the fate of the Hawthorn-Tremblay report *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada, Political, Educational Needs and Policies* (1966). I should mention that the late Joan Ryan, who received this award in 1993, contributed the section on indigenous education. I found the plenary pretty lively and sometimes useful, but the opinions lofted from the floor verged on conspiracies of low cunning in high places, and the story was too fragmentary until Sally Weaver wrote her 1981 book, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda 1968-1970*, on the topic. Later political activism within the Society tended to inspire more judgmental venting, and to my mind, it was not so useful, and after a while I withdrew. As Leonard Cohen remarked, we live in an opinionated and belligerent world. I regard this as a profoundly flawed way to live well together.

Social conscience and a concern for people who suffer injustice requires that we know in some depth what is at stake, both past, present and in the foreseeable future. I have been very selectively enthusiastic about political activism, whether as an anthropologist, as a Quaker or just as a citizen. Without resorting to an analysis of the character flaws that lead me to avoid conflict, let me pose an example of why being cautious and selective may be reasonable, based on the way fashions of irrelevance and relevance have shifted in my career. When collecting Cree stories in the 1960s, I was committing the neo-colonialist sin of "butterfly collecting," that is, going to the natives, collecting specimens of living culture, symbolically asphyxiating them and pinning them to a blotter in a museum case, in this case the printed page. Edmund Leach, once the angry middle-aged man of British Social Anthropology, coined this butterfly collecting analogy in the mid-20th century. That should make him the unacknowledged mythic ancestor of the postcolonialists.

I was never much for literally collecting butterflies, or for tormenting other creatures. Actually, I went off to my first fieldwork with a proposal to study social disorganization that—one would assume—must have resulted from 300 years of contact with mercantile capitalism (The Hudson's Bay Company). But alas, I did not find much social disorganization at Waskaganish. I started collecting stories because I was taken by Willy Weistchee, my friend and interpreter to John Blackned, a gifted storyteller, and because I found that these stories deeply interested me. They still do.

Then, in the mid-1970s I collaborated with John Murdoch, a school teacher in Waskaganish who thought that school should meet the children where they were. That is, school should be taught in Cree, and as much as possible with a Cree teaching style. So, some of these stories came out in locally printed "Cree Way" curriculum materials—they had become relevant "butterflies" because they encouraged children to learn to read in the context of their own past. Their parents also were quite interested in reading these storybooks and more of the old people contributed their story-telling and their stories.

In the 1980s there was another change of ideology, and the old stories and storytellers were withdrawn from the schools on protest from born-again Pentecostal Christian Cree parents, who felt strongly that the stories, since they came from the period before they found Jesus, were the work of the devil.

But in life, sometimes you have just got to be patient. In the 1990s this fundamentalist view was moderated and the stories once more came into use in the schools. When the second edition of my book *Cree Narrative* came out in 2002, the Cree School Board bought 500 paperback and 100 clothbound copies, the stories having become not only relevant, but positively valued. Then I got a contract to supply the School Board with sets of 26 CDs with John Blackned's voice, making the stories audible in Cree. So now Old Dick is a sinner no longer? Well, for the moment.

My biggest intellectual challenge came as director of the multidisciplinary TASO project, 1982-96, in the Mushkegowuk region of northern Ontario. TASO is the acronym for Technology Assessment in Subarctic Ontario, and we focused on the planning being done by Ontario Hydro for rivers in the James Bay drainage region, and learning from shortcomings in the Baie James project in the preceding decade. With the endorsement of the Mushkegowuk Council and active assistance from many Crees, there were many disciplinary boundaries to cross and subdisciplinary specialities to try to merge. Over the 14 years, five anthropologists and four economists covered socio-economic and cultural topics. By arguing the virtue of doing good environmental science before a major project begins, we sustained research by 20 individuals in hydrology, climatology and plant biology. TASO secured grants from the Donner Foundation, SSHRC and NSERC, totalling nearly a million dollars.

It was a far cry from my normal life as an interpretive anthropologist, and drew me into the domain of hard science, quantitative analysis, and apparatuses. We produced some good publications and research reports, and I am especially pleased with our land resources study (Berkes et al. 1994, 1995; George et al. 1995) that showed that "traditional pursuits" animal harvesting for the year 1990 in the Mushkegowuk region as a whole, if divided evenly across the population, provided twice the minimum daily requirements of protein, and figuring moose at the equivalent price of beef and goose at the price of chicken (in the Northern Store at Moose Factory), one third of the dollar income value for the region. Hunting continues to be a very important activity, even when taken in only quantitative terms. We did not try to put a dollar value on the cultural aspects.

We also discovered that the earth under the salt flats at our test sites on the west side and the south end of James Bay contains a an ancient layer of salt that would cause salinity grief for any mega-scheme of water diversion, such as the Grand Canal Plan of the 1970s to build a dike across James Bay and channel the freshwater output of these rivers south to the great lakes, to western Canada and to the southwest U.S.A. Ontario Hydro shelved their plans, so that our results will have to wait until the demand for power makes the hydro initiatives re-surface.

It has been a privileged and remarkably varied career, and I am not quite finished yet. Sapir's broad and optimistic humanism continues to inspire yet another re-reading. One of my reviewers for this publication asked several probing questions that I would like to answer here. The reviewer asked me to explain my current theoretical or methodological approach, but I think that I have done that already. I am interpretive in the broad humanist sense that I want to know what events mean to people. I am disinclined to be labelled. I value a broad familiarity with theory in social science and in the arts, and am leery of specialized applied approaches like many "impact" studies. I do what I do, not objectively, but as accurately as I can. In terms of awareness of the political economy, I go where opportunity opens and where my conscience leads me. I have refused to apply for a contract for a study I found pathological in orientation and content. I have worked for nothing (except for my academic salary) more often than for a salary. I do what I do because I personally want to do it and think that I can do a good job. Am I pro-native? Somewhat, but not ardently. Am I pro-Cree? Yes. I have a lifetime of connections to some Crees, and I will honour them. But not as an advocacy spokesperson. That is a responsibility with potential consequences and is therefore best suited for the Cree leadership. The reviewer said that I "would probably not criticize the government." Wrong, but I prefer to make a case solidly, not to seek catharsis.

In sum, I have done and will continue to do what I want to do and am welcome to do. I have enjoyed my career, sometimes intensely. I still love the stories, and am now embarked on a long-term search for the Trickster. Watch for me!

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Note

1 Sally M. Weaver spent most of her research career with the Department of Anthropology, University of Waterloo. Marc-Adelard "Ade" Tremblay was with the Département d'Anthropologie and was a senior administrator at Université Laval. Joan Ryan was based at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Calgary, and with native organizations after "retiring." Michael Ames was at the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, and curator of the Museum of Anthropology, at the University of British Columbia. Paul Charest was at the Département d'Anthropologie at Université Laval. Peter Stephenson was in Departments of Anthropology at McMaster University and then at the University of Victoria. Michael Robinson was at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. Michael Asch spent most of his career in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Alberta. Pierre Beaucage was at the Département d'Anthropologie at the Université de Montréal. Donat Savoie was with the Federal Department of Indian Affairs. Elvi Whittaker was in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of British Columbia. Herman Konrad was in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Calgary.

Projects and Relevant Publications

(1) Publicizing the school issue at Rupert's House–1967

1968a When Leadership Fails: The Basis of a Community Crisis. The Northland 24:7-9.

1968b Functional Politics in a Northern Canadian Community. Proceedings of the 38th International Congress of Americanists 3:169-178.

(2) Assessing the Ontario MNR importation of Quebec Cree trappers–1967

1967 Going South to Get a Living. Research Report to Ontario Ministry of Lands and Forests.

(3) Amelioration of Stanford-Binet IQ testing at Horden Hall by means of Projective (Rorschach and TAT) testing–1968

1968d Facing New Tasks: Cree and Ojibwa Children's Adaptation to Residential School. Research Report to the National Museum of Man.

(4) Human (specifically Cree) problems inherent in the Baie James project–1971

1971c Problèmes humains reliés au développement de la Baie James. Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec 1: 58-68.

(5) Harvesting survey by five McMaster students for Baie James negotiations

(6) Science and technology about Baie James may be blind to cultural factors

1973a Human Problems in Northern Development. Paper read at the SCITEC Symposium, Montreal.

(7) Atomistic assimilation of Cree residential school students–1974

1974a The Means to Academic Success for Eastern Cree Students. *In* Proceedings of the 1st Congress, Canadian Ethnology Society. J. Barkow, ed. Pp. 87-96. Ottawa. National Museum of Man, Paper in Ethnology No. 17.

(8) Post-residential school careers of Cree high school graduates

1977c Academic Success for Northern Indian Students. Research Report to the Ontario Ministry of Education.

(9) Report to Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec on problems in the Fort George high school–1975

1975f Report to the Grand Council of the Crees, on Problems in the Fort George Schools, with Recommendations.

(10) Regional survey of Cree educational needs–1976

1976c A Comprehensive Survey of the Educational Needs of the Communities Comprising the Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec). R.J. Preston and M. MacKenzie, Report to the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec and the Quebec Ministry of Education.

(11) Contribution of Community Education Administrator job to the James Bay Agreement–1975

1976d Community Education Administrator, section 16.0.20 in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, Editor Officiel de Quebec, p 272.

(12) Consultant to CBC-TV for documentary *The Cree of Paint Hills* (advised in filming and editing, provided most of the script material)—1976

1976b The Cree of Paint Hills. Film, 57 minutes, for CBC The Nature of Things series. National Film Board 106C 0176 165.

(13) Expert witness at sentencing hearing–1976

1979c Community Default and Personal Disintegration: An Eastern Cree Example. McMaster University. Restricted document in the author's files.

(14) Cree Way curriculum development project–1974-80

1979b The Cree Way Project: An Experiment in Grass Roots Curriculum Development. *In* Papers of the 10th Algonquian Conference. W. Cowan, ed. Pp. 92-101. Ottawa: Carleton University.

(15) Study and report: Moosonee student residence problem

(16) Nemaska Consult–1977

1982b The Politics of Community Relocation: An Eastern Cree Example. Theme issue. Culture 11(3):37-49.

1991d The Community Consultation Method. IDRC Workshop, Winnipeg.

2004 Cumulative Cultural Change in the Moose and Rupert River Basins: Local Cultural Sites Affected by Global Influences. *In* Globalization and Community: Canadian Perspectives. J.L. Chodkiewicz and R.E. Wiest, eds. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Anthropology Papers 34:87-98.

In press Twentieth Century Transformations of Native Identity, Citizenship, Power and Authority. *In* Globalization, Autonomy, and Community. D. Brydon and W. Coleman, eds. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

(17) Survey of Saskatchewan Cree residential schools–1979

1979d Training Guide for Cree Student Residence Staff.

1979e Report on Survey of Student Residences in Northern Saskatchewan.

(18) Taught UQAC-Chicoutomi college-preparatory course "The Social System" for Cree School Board staff–1981

(19) Technology Assessment in Subarctic Ontario 1981-96

1984a Algonquian People and Energy Development in the Subarctic. *In* Papers of the 14th Algonquian Conference. W. Cowan, ed. Pp. 169-179. Ottawa: Carleton University.

1985d Forum: The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, Ten Years After. McMaster University, TASO Report No. 22.

1985e Recent Developments in Eastern Cree Leadership. McMaster University, TASO Report No. 20.

1987b "Going in Between": The Impact of European Technology on the Work Patterns of the West Main Cree of Northern Ontario. P. J. George and R.J. Preston. The Journal of Economic History. XLVII:447-460.

1989a Introduction to TASO. TASO Retrospective: An Assessment for the First Phase of the TASO Research Program, 1982-1988. McMaster University, TASO Research Report No. 31.

1989b Sociocultural Research under TASO Auspices. TASO Retrospective: An Assessment for the First Phase of the TASO Research Program, 1982-1988. McMaster University, TASO Research Report No. 31.

1991f Co-management: The Evolution of the Theory and Practice of Joint Administration of Living Resources. F. Berkes, P.J. George and R.J. Preston. Alternatives18:12-18.

1992a The TASO Research Program–Retrospect and Prospect. P.J. George and R.J. Preston. Anthropologica 34:51-70.

1992b The Cree View of Land and Resources: Indigenous Ecological Knowledge. F. Berkes, P.J. George and R.J. Preston. McMaster University, TASO Report, Second series, No. 8.

1992d Wildlife Harvests in the Mushkegowuk Region, 1990. F. Berkes, P.J. George and R.J. Preston, J. Turner, A. Hughes, B. Cummins and A. Haugh. McMaster University, TASO Report, Second Series, No. 6. (some materials not included in 1994)

1992e Indigenous Land Use and Harvesting among the Cree in Western James Bay. P.J. George, F. Berkes and R.J. Preston. McMaster University, TASO Report, Second series, No. 5.

1993a Wildlife Harvest Areas in the Mushkegowuk Region, 1990. A. Hughes, F. Berkes, P. George, R. Preston, J. Turner, J. Chernishenko and B. Cummins. McMaster University, TASO Report, Second Series, No. 10. (some materials not included in 1995a)

1993c Sustainable Development in the Hudson's Bay/James Bay Region: Gleanings from 10 Years of the TASO

Program and Hopes for the Future. Annual Lecture of the President's Committee on Northern Studies, University of Waterloo.

1994 Wildlife Harvesting and Sustainable Regional Native Economy in the Hudson and James Bay Lowland, Ontario. F. Berkes, P.J. George, R.J. Preston, A. Hughes, J. Turner and B.D. Cummins. Arctic 47(4):350-360.

1995a The Persistence of Aboriginal Land Use: Fish and Wildlife Harvest Areas in the Hudson and James Bay Lowland, Ontario. F. Berkes, A. Hughes, P.J. George, R.J. Preston, B.D. Cummins and J. Turner. Arctic 48(1):81-93.

1995b Aboriginal Harvesting in the Moose River Basin: A Historical and Contemporary Analysis. P.J. George, F. Berkes and R.J. Preston. The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 32(1):69-90.

1996a Perspectives on Sustainable Development in the Moose River Basin. R.J. Preston, F. Berkes and P.J. George. *In* Papers of the 26th Algonquian Conference, D. Pentland, ed. Pp. 386-400.

1996b Envisioning Cultural, Ecological and Economic Sustainability: The Cree Communities of the Hudson and James Bay Lowland, Ontario. P.J. George, F. Berkes and R.J. Preston. Canadian Journal of Economics 29, Special Issue: S356-S360.

(20) Treaty No. 9 workshop

1990c Hunting Where We Please: Land, Territories, Ethics and Treaties in the Mushkegowuk Region, Ontario. Paper presented at the Ontario Sociology & Anthropology Association, Brock University.

1990d A Sustainable Life Perspective: The Whiteman View and the Cree View of the James Bay Treaty. Paper presented at the American Society for Ethnohistory, Toronto.

(21) Moose River James Bay Coalition & Aboriginal Research Coalition: EIS assessments 1991-1992

(22) Past Grievances report for New Post First Nation

1998c Apportioning Responsibility for Cumulative Change: A Cree Community in Northeastern Ontario. Richard J. Preston and John S. Long. *In* Papers of the 29th Conference on Algonquian Studies. D. Pentland, ed. University of Manitoba.

(23) Past Grievances report for Moose Cree First Nation

(24) Facilitator of Education workshop, Kashachewan

(25) Sanikiluaq and Rawson Institute Hudson's Bay Project

1993b Cumulative Cultural, Social and Economic Impacts. Ottawa, Hudson's Bay Project workshop.

(26) Land Skills Programme curriculum

1998b Land Skills Programme, with John Murdoch and others, for Chief Malcolm Diamond Memorial Education Centre: course list and descriptions, objectives, standards, and learning activities for 27 accredited courses.

(27) Medical history and its cultural context: Moose River region

2001 James Bay Cree Culture, Malnutrition, Infectious and Degenerative Diseases. *In* Papers of the 32nd Conference on Algonquian Studies, J.D. Nichols, ed.

2002 From Fur Trade Canoe Routes to Railroad Lines: The Context of Transmission of Disease. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of CASCA, Windsor (Ontario) May 5-9.

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