2013 Weaver-Tremblay Award Winner
Social Justice, the Graph of Zorro and the Outsider

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Abstract: This article surveys, from a social justice perspec-
tive, the author's experience of 50 years of field-based research
in northern Indigenous communities, before and after that
research involved local partnerships. While the objectivity of
research is never absolute, it is a better guide to social justice
than is political ideology. Examples are cited where public
policy and certain politically influential academic research, are
motivated by ideology, ignoring ethnographically based re-
sults. Finally an example from an unrelated context cites a
study that showed, in the United States, that political affiliation
determines either belief in or denial of anthropogenic climate
change, regardless of educational level.

Keywords: long-term research, social justice, Canadian
indigenous communities, political ideology

Résumé : Dans cet article, l'auteur rend compte, à partir d'une
perspective de justice sociale, de son expérience de cinquante
ans de recherche de terrain dans les communautés autochtones
du Nord canadien, et ce, avant et après avoir établi des par-
tenariats de recherche avec elles. Bien que la recherche ne
puisse jamais prétendre à une objectivité absolue, elle consti-
tue un meilleur guide vers la justice sociale que ne l'est l'idéo-
logie politique. À cet effet, des exemples de politiques publi-
ques, et certaines formes de recherche académique exerçant
une influence politique sont citées pour illustrer comment elles
sont avant tout motivées par l'idéologie, sans tenir compte des
résultats scientifiques de la recherche ethnographique. L'article
se termine par l'exemple d'une étude, tirée d'un contexte très
différent, qui montre qu'aux États-Unis, sans égard au niveau
d'éducation, l'affiliation politique détermine la négation ou la
croyance en des changements climatiques anthropogéniques.

Mots-clés : recherche à long terme, justice sociale,
communautés autochtones canadiennes, idéologie politique
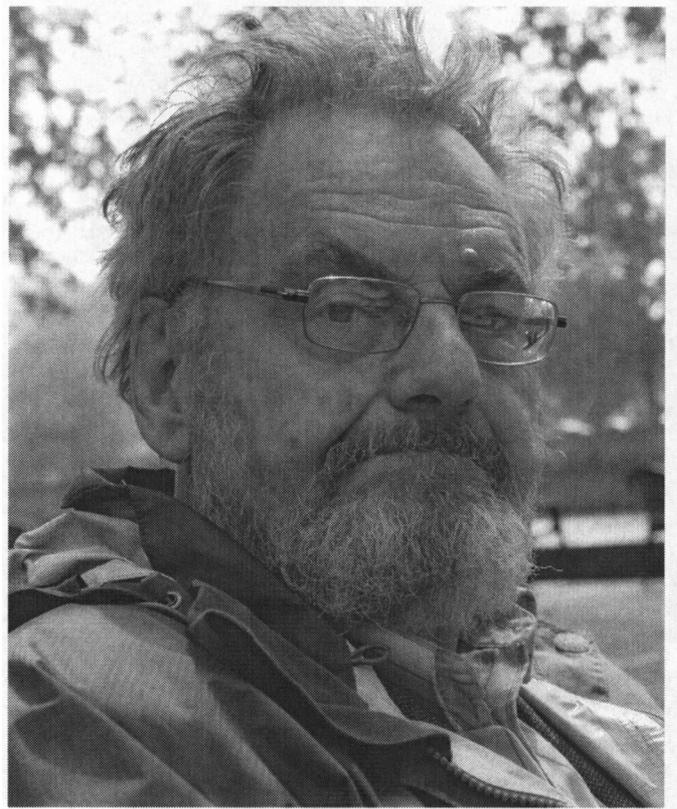
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later working on arctic weather stations, where he spend
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Bringing Home Animals, ISER Books (1979, new edi-
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and Post-Colonial Misrepresentation of Indigenous Fijian
Land Tenure," *Human Organization* 66(1) (2007).

At a gathering of Liberals to honour the party's past leaders, Tom Axworthy, the former principal secretary to Pierre Trudeau, stated that "if he were alive today, [former Prime Minister Lester] Pearson would consider the ongoing rupture between Canada's indigenous peoples and the rest of the country the defining issue of the day" (Harper 2013a). In Pearson's day (he was prime minister when I became an anthropologist) the same kinds of issues that have caused the current rupture were already present in indigenous communities: the gradual dispossession of land and resources, the consequent creation of economic dependency, leading to social pathologies, poor life expectancy, poor levels of health, poor educational levels and high unemployment—even if these issues were then less matters of public discussion than they have become. Policies to address indigenous issues were then only rarely matters that went beyond the back rooms of government, and there was little discussion between government and the indigenous peoples themselves.

Minorities within a democracy are always at risk of a "tyranny of the majority"; that is, the tendency of those in power to rely on assumptions rather than objectively established conditions and to neglect reasonable interests and concerns as not high enough among national or regional priorities, or as unacceptable because they challenge entrenched interests. Canadian indigenous peoples face the additional legacy of almost a century of incompetent supervision as wards of the state, under a sometimes brutal policy driven by an ideology of forced assimilation. The impacts of this policy, including a toxic atmosphere of deep-seated mistrust, were felt over the longest period and continue to resonate in the southern areas where Indians became encapsulated on reserves or in cities by settlers and privately owned land. By contrast, the Indigenous peoples of the north, where most of my research has been conducted, were settled into villages relatively recently, during the supposedly more enlightened period, when assimilation was in theory being abandoned in favour of self-determination. Despite this, the impact of the settlement program has turned out to be just as socially devastating.

Well after the post-World War II beginnings of what was a tortuously slow rethinking of Canada's previous failed Indian policy, anthropology had a predominant role among other disciplines in providing the government with evidence-based, policy-oriented advice, replacing earlier reliance on the reports of explorers, traders, missionaries and Indian Agents. Today, with some issues around indigenous policy from time to time becoming the subject of protest, particularly where these concern large-scale development projects, new relevance is being added to the question: Where does indigenous policy fit within the wider ambit of Canadian political ideology?

A lot of anthropological research now takes place within multidisciplinary teams. It is my observation that anthropologists, including younger members of the profession, conduct impressive amounts of well-organized, socially relevant, community-based and often innovative applied research on indigenous issues, even if on bad days we may feel that only other anthropologists are paying any attention. Applied research must be prepared to address and engage a wide range of disciplines if it is to have relevance for public policy. I do not reject the notion or the practice of advocacy, but our primary value to our indigenous partners, to other researchers in multidisciplinary teams and to the public is not our passion but our objectivity. Individual anthropologists collect empirical data from which they gain new insights, discoveries and hypotheses, sometimes in contradiction to prevailing assumptions. Through the normal processes of science, these are shared with others to be confirmed, modified or replaced. Objectivity may well appear unattainable or not particularly relevant for any individual anthropologist (Tarr 2013). However, by retaining the conception of anthropology as a fundamentally comparative science of humanity, findings, and the empirical data on which they are based, as well as any limitations or uncertainties, need to be presented in a form that can be used by our peers and set alongside their own results. Out of this process of sharing and comparison, I believe objective understandings generally do emerge.

However, too often results of social science research, even when backed by adequate evidence, remain insufficiently used in planning or policy formation, particularly by the state, and especially when it happens to run counter to dominant ideologies. Anthropological findings are seldom reported in the media (unless it concerns a major archaeological find). Our work seems to have generally not reached what should be its potential to contribute to the kind of intelligent, reality-based discussion of policy to achieve some needed changes. One still hopes for the day that media coverage of indigenous news stories would be from journalists who are at least as well informed on the relevant background situation as the average CBC Middle East correspondent is aware of how Israeli society works.

The challenges for intellectually informed social policy on indigenous issues are enormous. It is becoming increasingly difficult for graduate students to mount ethnographic research projects without specific, predetermined

research questions and methods. While this latter approach may be effective with the experimental sciences, in my experience an initial open-ended enquiry is necessary to allow anthropologists to learn what a new outsider needs to understand. This is also a better route to making unexpected discoveries, some of which turn out to have useful applications. In northern Canada, in particular, research generally takes place in the context of an ongoing competition between powerful players over lands and resources and periodic flare-ups over internal community social problems. Because research necessarily takes place in partnership with indigenous communities and political organizations, often in teams with other disciplines, we have to communicate our findings to several audiences who have diverse needs, interests and prior understandings.

While my own love for anthropology began with the truly rich rewards of old-fashioned ethnography, my applied anthropology work has, over many years, been prompted by encounters with social injustice—racism, dispossession, impoverishment, ill health and some of the consequent symptoms of "social suffering." As an anthropologist, I have also encountered socially unjust situations abroad, mainly in Indonesia and Bangladesh, and in less serious forms in Vanuatu and Fiji. These are all places where I conducted reconnaissance visits for potential long-term research, but, apart from the last one, found I could not have obtained a research permit. Even in Fiji, where I have periodically conducted research since 1985, there have been three military coups in the interim. It is currently under a dictatorship that does not generally respond well to any kind of advice. For a foreigner, the ability to engage politically or attempt to influence public policy is generally restricted. To put what follows in a global context, therefore, I should first acknowledge that socially useful and politically engaged anthropology in Canada, as difficult as it may be, does not face quite the same barriers as in many other countries.

The very first recommendation of the 1966 Hawthorn-Tremblay Survey of the Contemporary Indian of Canada stated, "Integration and assimilation are not objectives which anyone else can properly hold for Indians" (Hawthorn 1966–67:13). Even today, in some quarters, this message has yet to be understood. Hawthorn put his finger on an important principle, considering that, as a country of immigrants, Canada has had a comparatively successful experience with the integration of newcomers, accomplished, apart from a few shameful exceptions, with a minimum of policy inducements. While indigenous peoples are not at all like immigrants, one can imagine if all immigrants were consigned to holding areas on arrival and afforded limited rights until such time as they had proved to authorities that they were ready to enter main stream society. Hawthorn's approach was thus a proposition to reverse the existing policy of imposed integration. Many fellow anthropology graduate students at the time I attended the University of British Columbia conducted research for the Hawthorn-Tremblay study, and all went on to make further important contributions in applied anthropology.[1] But beyond my personal memories of graduate-school gossip about this research, much insight that remains relevant today is to be gained from Sally Weaver's assessment of the Hawthorn-Tremblay study (Weaver 1993). The report was also ground-breaking in drawing primarily on ethnographic research specifically undertaken for policy advice and because the team included in senior positions people who have been referred to, in other contexts, as our "academic competitors" (Dyck and Waldram 1993), from the disciplines of economics, law and political science.[2]

Since then, I have been associated with several multidisciplinary applied-research teams that drew on the findings of original ethnographic research.[3] A medical sociologist led one and a transcultural psychiatrist led a research network, but anthropologists led the others. Many graduate-student anthropologists on these research teams went on to further applied work, people familiar to many of you, of whom I will only mention a less-familiar one, Ditte Koster. She was of particular inspiration to me for her extraordinary commitment to social justice. Like Sally Weaver, Ditte conducted research within the very guts of the beast, if I may use that characterization, with federal Indian Affairs bureaucrats. Unfortunately, this research never saw the light of day, due to her untimely death from cancer in 1981 and her principled unwillingness on ethical grounds to pass on to others research material acquired from people whose confidence she had undertaken to personally protect.

Starting 40 years ago, dating from when government first officially recognized and funded indigenous political organizations in all parts of the country as legitimate representatives of their members and the first land use and occupancy studies for land claims were undertaken under their authority, a less colonial and, potentially, more healthy research situation has developed. People with diverse disciplinary backgrounds began conducting a great deal of policy-oriented research. Some of these researchers are based outside the academy working as consultants, many of them also conducting excellent, ground-breaking work.[4] Much of this research is being conducted for use by a variety of governments and interest groups and, in particular, for indigenous communities and political organizations. Some of this is for regulatory

requirements—environmental impact assessments, indigenous self-government requirements to develop their own policies and procedures and wildlife co-management arrangements, among others. However, it is often assumed that research, particularly for environmental impact assessments, can be completed within short time lines. As a consequence, participant observation is often sidelined, with literature reviews, household questionnaires and focus groups substituted for this methodological approach. As important as these methods are, they still need to be placed in a broader and in-depth ethnographic context.

While most social science research in the north is now, to a greater or lesser degree, community based, much of the work continues to require specialist researchers from elsewhere. This is mainly because there are just not enough local indigenous researchers with the required training. However, such projects have sometimes managed to be effective in skills transmission by engaging the participation of local people. At the same time, local people, who go on to pursue relevant advanced training is such research methods, often find they must sustain themselves full-time by moving away to get work or taking on local administrative jobs. In cases like documenting local peoples' environmental knowledge, now required for a wide variety of regulatory and legal contexts, there is also particular urgency. Members of the elder generation who lived full-time on the land are becoming fewer and fewer each passing year. There are, thus, great advantages for an established researcher who has previously conducted fieldwork with the same group and has acquired some competence in the local language.

With all due respect to the important work being done by geographers, biologists, engineers, physicians, climatologists and others who now conduct policy-oriented research with indigenous communities, I believe there is no replacement for an ethnographically centred approach as the core to multidisciplinary research on these issues of social policy, one that does not impose ethnocentric assumptions and classifications on empirical observations. Scientific enquiry, however much influenced by terms of reference specified for administrative needs or funding agency priorities, should proceed on the basis of questions that personally engage, motivate and inspire researchers. As outsiders, anthropologists tend to form intimate relations with those among whom they live, which can often become the basis for an enduring trust relationship. In sharing in everyday living conditions, ethnographers see up close the unvarnished reality of existing problems and cases of social injustice, as well as the pleasures and values of these ways of life.

I would also argue that anthropology's general orientation to practice the non-ethnocentric approach that we preach is of particular need and relevance in multidisciplinary research teams with indigenous people. The point here is not to assume that all aspects of every social situation or cultural practice are necessarily socially beneficial or that no society has dysfunctional social practices but that their significance may not at first be obvious, particularly if judged on the basis of the values and practices of mainstream Canadian culture. A naïve outsider best not rush to judgment, but first observe and learn. As we are aware from linguistics, all people can speak grammatically without necessarily being aware of the rules of grammar they follow, a principle that applies to other aspects of social life. There is, therefore, the need for both an outsider and an insider perspective, for understanding and appreciating not just indigenous communities, but any social group, including us academics.

The symptoms of indigenous social suffering in Canada direct us in two main research directions. First, there is the need for communities to develop healing strategies for those already affected, most critically, for the prevention of youth suicide. Second, we need to understand how communities can restore well-being, to break the chain of transmission of these problems to subsequent generations. Restoring an individual's or a family's sense of self-worth and ability to look after their own needs may well be the most important practical strategy to realize this outcome.

In this regard, many northern indigenous communities now face major obstacles in finding and maintaining an adequate economic base that gives meaningful and rewarding employment to community members. Indigenous groups were settled into reserves, settlements or arctic hamlets where, in most cases, there was not much basis for or prospect of ways to supply the cash component of making a living, beyond building, maintaining and administering the new community infrastructure. Subsequent development activity requires several years' lead time for local groups to be able to participate and benefit from employment in any meaningful way. Meanwhile, hunting, fishing and trapping use local renewable resources and are generally healthier than sedentary occupations. When the wildlife harvesting economy is diminished, and in the absence of other forms of employment, people lose a great deal of their sense of economic independence. Not only has the resulting dependency created an ongoing and unresolved funding issue, but economic self-reliance is generally a better alternative for physical and mental well-being than is social assistance or other forms of economic dependency. Although food is today becoming a decreasing portion of a family's total economic need, as other cash requirements

increase, the common assumption I encountered 40 years ago—that hunting was about to disappear from northern indigenous household economies—has not, in fact, occurred.

Economic problems in the north have continued to escalate over the years, due in part to the dramatic increase in the birth rate in the communities. The policy to settle hunters into houses in villages, initiated in the 1950s, appears to have been carried out with an assumption that, as if by magic, this would lead to self-sustaining forms of salaried employment. This was in spite of the findings of economic studies conducted early on in the settlement process that illustrated the important role of hunting and trapping and the shortage of viable alternatives. Some of these kinds of studies were conducted in the 1960s and 1970s by the Northern Science Group (NSG), under the direction of the anthropologist A. J. Kerr, after the Northern Development portfolio had been added to Indian Affairs. Several attempts were made at the time to relocate people to places where employment was available, the very few relatively successful ones being those where the workers were on scheduled rotation between the work site and their home communities (Lloyd 1974).

Several of the NSG studies were in the Mackenzie Valley and Western Arctic regions, and the expertise they established, by anthropologists, geographers and economists, took on added significance after the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline was first proposed. Oil and gas were discovered in the Beaufort Sea in 1970, and the pipeline proposal assessed by the Berger Inquiry of 1974–1977 was ground-breaking in its attention to local indigenous perspectives and its conclusion that, under the prevailing social conditions in the communities, the impacts on local people of the proposed pipeline would be devastating and should, therefore, not proceed. Despite the widespread international admiration for the way this inquiry was conducted, in the subsequent legal context of environmental assessment (EA) any potential social impacts not directly related to environmental impacts, which were the main reason the pipeline project was halted, are now excluded from reasons to modify, mitigate or stop a northern industrial development.

Today, southern taxpayers are becoming increasingly aware that they must pay for some of the large and mounting basic operating costs of northern Indigenous settlements, particularly as most supplies have to be transported at high cost from the south. At the same time, in many of these communities, conditions remain dismal, whether in terms of health, education or any other indicators of social well-being. Finding solutions to this dilemma has generally eluded both state and indigenous policy-makers and has not yet received the sustained attention needed of politicians. The EA of industrial developments often now occurs alongside secret Impact Benefit Agreements, which, for all anyone can tell, may not have normal conflict of interest and accountability provisions in order for them to be monitored to ensure they achieve their supposed social-policy objectives.

However, there are precedents for substantial conditions being placed on some northern development projects outside the EA process. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador imposed a requirement for ore from the Voisey's Bay mine in Labrador to be sent to a smelter that the company is obliged to build in the province for the social purpose of providing jobs for provincial residents. Given the number of mining, hydroelectric and forestry projects under way or being planned in the north, an obligation for them to contribute meaningfully to the creation of sustainable economies for the indigenous communities that they impact looks like a reasonable and defensible public policy, and might be a way to go beyond current piecemeal half-measures, even though this would no doubt require considerable political capital to achieve.

When indigenous issues intersect with development policies, they may become matters of national or provincial/territorial politics and thus enter the area of public debate. Parenthetically, I might note that, for me, in what seem the greener fields of Quebec, anthropologists like the late Bernard Arcand, Serge Bouchard, Paul Charest, José Mailhot and Rémi Savard have often engaged publicly in intellectual discussion, not to say combat, in various media. English Canada, however, seems to be less well served. There is no shortage of excellent books and academic articles, but it seems the ones that grab the headlines are too often those less well informed.

While most modern anthropology books and articles are written in very accessible language, I would guess that much published applied anthropology is mainly read and used by other anthropologists and closely related disciplines. Contributions to the large body of grey literature are directed at administrators, bureaucrats and consultants. At the same time, many of the growing number of indigenous authors are writing for the general public and now, partly as a result, it is publicly acknowledged that something needs to change in indigenous policy. Any solutions to the various problems faced by indigenous communities, as indicated by social indicators of well-being, will necessarily be complex and diverse, because indigenous people are diverse, as are local conditions. We have seen, following on the heels of the report of the Royal Commission on Indigenous Peoples,

several generalist books on policy aimed at wider public audiences: Cairns' *Citizens Plus: Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian State* (2000); Flanagan's *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (2000); Widdowson and Howard's *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry: The Deception Behind Aboriginal Cultural Preservation* (2008); and Gibson's *A New Look at Canadian Indian Policy: Respect the Collective, Promote the Individual* (2009).[5] Each approaches the question of the appropriate social policies to address the problems faced by Indigenous communities from the perspective of either explicit or implicit political ideologies, but with inadequate attention to actual existing conditions. One wonders how many readers of these books would be familiar with the report of the Royal Commission or have independent knowledge of the so-called Aboriginal Industry.

It is perhaps a sign of the times that the *Toronto Star* has begun publishing columns on indigenous issues by the generally well-informed Christopher Alcantara, a political science professor. In a recent column, Professor Alcantara (2013) suggests four reasons why some land claims agreements are taking a long time to be concluded—reasons that rather directly reflect a government perspective on this issue, although it might be asked if these perspectives are necessarily in the best general public interest. For example, one of his conclusions is that "Indigenous groups must avoid using confrontational tactics. Federal, provincial and territorial officials prefer to work with groups that negotiate rather than litigate and protest" (2013:n.p.) This ignores the fact that there are simply too many cases where litigation or protest have achieved results that previous negotiation over many years had failed to produce. It may also be the case that ideologically based reactions to indigenous issues in Canada tend to invoke extreme views, such that polite Canadians like Professor Alcantara prefer that their open expression be suppressed, or embedded in a Thomas King trickster tale.

By questioning the objectivity of political science authors on indigenous issues, I am not claiming essential disciplinary incompatibilities. We need dialogue in which ideological positions and assumptions are acknowledged, clarified and tested against empirical data. For instance, a part of the work of the so-called Aboriginal Industry entails capturing local environmental knowledge for use in new ways, outside its normal social context. I accept that this poses enormous challenges in eliciting, documenting and presenting in a form suited to new intercultural purposes. This is as much a challenge for locals as it is for science. Local knowledge is particularly relevant in the north, where we encounter ecosystems that are relatively unfamiliar, not only to the average Canadian, but also to many in the environmental sciences. While the concept of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and its requirement to be taken into account in certain legal and regulatory contexts is relatively new, earlier ethnographers encountered and found ways to document such knowledge. It is thus important that the results of past research not be overlooked but verified and corrected or updated where appropriate.

For indigenous people, their challenge is to educate others, even if a more normal mode of knowledge transmission among themselves may privilege direct real-world engagement ahead of words and written texts. Observing what more senior members of the community do usually comes first, with verbal elaboration and explanation only later on in the process of knowledge acquisition. Moreover, there is a need with such research by outsiders to be sensitive to the reality that, in its normal use within the indigenous group, when such knowledge is communicated, a great deal of additional shared unspoken understanding and experience can be assumed; thus, knowledge comes from a perspective that western scientists and regulatory agencies usually do not have. Such knowledge transmission can take the form of stories and other kinds of communication that may make little sense to those without sensitivity to such background knowledge and experience. To put this differently, local knowledge as used within indigenous communities often takes the form of what Bernstein (1964) somewhat misleadingly called a "restricted communication code"; that is, forms of speech that assume a great deal of shared, unspoken and taken-for-granted knowledge between speaker and listener, such that utterances may not make complete sense to anyone who does not share that background knowledge. Anthropologists with a long acquaintance with these communities may be able to work in conjunction with the elders to help demystify and unpack such knowledge, providing the appropriate interpretive context (e.g., Legat 2012).

When indigenous people speak about land, they may use descriptive terms or place names that convey complex environmental information of great significance to local land users but that have no direct English-language equivalent. These terms can nevertheless be made perfectly understandable with adequate translation and explanation. Usher (2004) has shown how biologists in the past were openly hostile to northern indigenous groups on the basis of incompatible understandings and approaches to game management. It sometimes seems that most books and international journal articles on local knowledge (or TEK) are elaborate abstract theories *about* such knowledge, but may have little practical utility in specific cases (Davis and Ruddle 2010). However, to

my mind, what tend to be the more valuable practical *applications* of the concept are too often buried in specialist journals and the grey literature (e.g., Jacqmain et al. 2008). Current theories seem to unnecessarily exaggerate differences from science, rather than reveal concordances.

Earlier developments in anthropology and linguistics, like ethnoscience, have not yet been systematically included in research on local knowledge. These approaches were at one time seen as holding out hope for important bridges between the study of indigenous knowledge and western science. Beginning in the 1950s, it was established that languages organize the semantics of any particular subject field as distinct groups of noun concepts within frames of discourse that, like western science, utilize a hierarchical form of classification. All languages do so, even though the criteria used for the key classificatory distinctions may not be the same as those used in western science. Roger Keesing (1972) provided a critique of ethnoscience, part of his argument being that the method usually focuses on the trivial. The current political and legal relevance of TEK is yet another example that what was once seen as irrelevant can later become important. Moreover, without embracing the full ethnoscience methodology, the approach has some useful tools, such as formal eliciting procedures when doing cross-cultural taxonomic research.

We also find in the earlier anthropological literature concepts like ethnobotany, ethnohistory, ethnolinguistics, ethnomedicine and ethnogeography. Earlier anthropological and linguistic approaches should now be better recognized to have relevance in understanding local indigenous knowledge. Biologists and others trained in western scientific classification of plants and animals, as well as geographers trained in the classification of terrestrial features, who may sometimes be in a position to set multidisciplinary research agendas, may naively assume that their own scientific classifications are universally valid and free of culturally based framing of knowledge. For this reason, anthropologists need to work with linguists, in partnership with indigenous communities, even if such communities may happen to be bilingual, in teams with geographers and other environmental sciences.

When I began research, indigenous wildlife harvesting rights were a matter of fierce contention and uncertainty, even though research had already provided compelling empirical evidence of its continuing dietary importance in northern indigenous communities. In 1964, I witnessed Yukon territorial wildlife officials seizing game meat from indigenous hunters in the bush but without laying charges, because Indian Affairs advised

them that the legal status of the territorial game laws was uncertain. Again, in 1967, I witnessed a similar situation at Chibougamau in northern Quebec. After starting research in Labrador, I found that provincial officials had no such scruples about laying charges and, in two such cases involving Innu hunters, I testified for the defence. In the first case in 1977, while the local Innu political organization gave the hunters moral and legal support, charges against the three hunters were upheld. In 1990, a case involved a Naskapi Innu hunter normally resident in Quebec who had shot a goose in the part of his traditional lands that happened to be on the Labrador side of the border and was charged under Newfoundland and Labrador game law. After the case was heard and while the judge was deliberating, the Supreme Court's Sparrow decision (1990) was announced, and the charges were instantly dropped. However, this decision left many indigenous groups to implement their own forms of wildlife management, even where they lacked control over non-indigenous hunting on their lands.

Ideology plays an unfortunate role in this kind of reluctance by both the authorities and the non-indigenous public to acknowledge the legal and public-policy importance of indigenous hunting, and this kind of prejudice even extends to some social scientists. This importance is not based on any assumption that all indigenous people have some innate "instinct" to never over-harvest, a bizarre thesis that the historian Shepard Krech (1999) apparently set out to test. But it means they need to institute culturally-appropriate management practices and, in some cases, coordinate with other land users. Management of indigenous harvesting and that of non-native sportsmen in the same region may each exist within silos that do not share results. Terry Tobias (1993) describes an example of what he calls "stereotyped village economies" in northern Saskatchewan, in which several conventional economic studies by private consultants in the 1970s failed to take account of, let alone quantify, domestic consumption of fish and game. Some of these studies simply relied on the findings of an earlier economic study of the region by a university-based rural sociologist who had made no mention of such in-kind production. By contrast, Tobias, also a private consultant, showed, on the basis of his research that, in one year, a single community of 700 people consumed 84,370 kg of edible fish and game meat.

It must be acknowledged that today the cash portion of northern household economic requirements is increasing relative to hunting production. But hunting still provides high-quality food, in addition to being an activity that entails satisfying intangible values. Yet, it has often been given insufficient consideration in public
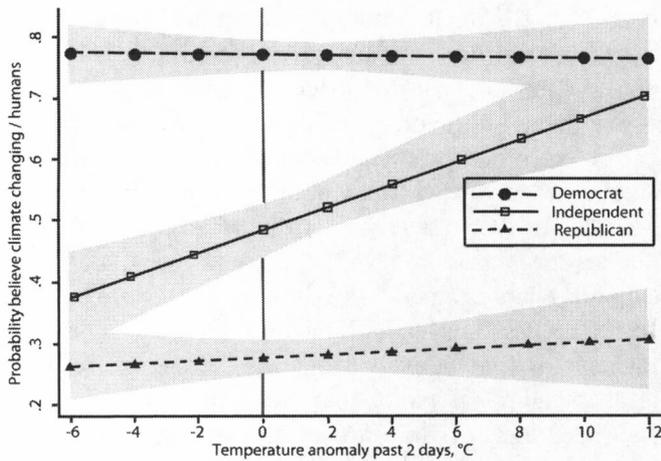
Figure 1: Belief in anthropogenic climate change by temperature and political party. Author rendering of a graph from Hamilton and Stampone (2013).

policy and development planning. Harvesting studies across the north have not only deepened anthropological knowledge about the economics of hunting, they have also made important contributions to our general understanding of this mode of production, but often remain overlooked in policy formation.

From at least the time of Galileo, science has a history of being rejected, ignored or muzzled where it comes in conflict with dominant ideologically driven agendas. Some forms of indigenous understanding have been suppressed as incompatible with Christianity. Recently, attention has been paid by some anthropologists to the thesis that, before the rise of Judaic and Christian monotheism, most cultures did not see human society as separate from and outside of "nature." That is certainly the case among the northern peoples I am familiar with. Moreover, the notion that animals have minds that can be perceived by indigenous hunters "as through a glass darkly" seems increasingly compatible with an emerging western scientific perspective on the matter and so may help us to demystify some aspects of indigenous knowledge.[6]

Political ideology clearly plays a large role in public-policy formation, although one lives in hope that, as with Galileo's discoveries, eventually even governments cannot turn back the tide of factual evidence. The 1969 White Paper was very much an ideologically-based policy proposal, one that blinded itself to the realities of indigenous life as documented in the Hawthorn Report, expressed by indigenous people of the day, and documented in the Report of the Indian Act Consultations of 1968–69 (I attended the one held in Toronto). Attempts were made in the organization of these consultations to manufacture consent, for example, with a set of questions in the booklet, "Choosing a Path." This was the main agenda item that the meetings were supposed to discuss and which Peter Kelly, the Anishinaabe co-chair of the Fort William, Ontario, meeting, perceptively renamed, "Leading Us Down the Garden Path." Yet, despite this agenda, it is clear from the transcripts that what the delegates themselves wanted to discuss were issues not in the booklet. These included native rights, treaties and, particularly in the more northern meetings, hunting and fishing rights (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1968–69). While popular assumptions and political ideologies, both at the time and now, often see these features as archaic remnants, they have proved over the intervening years to remain of major practical significance for indigenous people.

I question if political or religious ideologies unsupported by factual data, which are today, as they have been in the past, being directed at indigenous policy questions, can bring understanding or effective policies to public-policy issues. A recent study on an unrelated subject, climate change, illustrates what I see as the danger of addressing complex social issues through a lens of simplified and polarized political ideologies.

Hamilton and Stampone (2013) show, on the basis of polling of 5,000 respondents throughout the United States gathered between 2010 and 2012 that self-identified Democrats tend to believe in anthropogenic climate change, regardless of the degree of unusual weather around the day of being asked. Self-identified Republicans consistently tend to believe either that climate change does not exist or that it is not caused by human activity, regardless of unusual weather at the time. As Figure 1 illustrates, those who have no party affiliation, however, are more likely to say they believe in anthropogenic climate change on days of unusual weather around the time of the interview than at times when the weather is more normal. Perhaps the rapid cycling of headline news is shortening attention spans.

A more interesting finding of this research, for my immediate purpose, concerns the role of level of education in these results. This shows that no matter what their level of education, Republicans consistently reject the idea of anthropogenic climate change, while those without party affiliation are somewhat more likely to believe this the higher their level of education. Among Democrats, however, the tendency for education level to influence belief in anthropogenic climate change is most pronounced (see Figure 2).

One might conduct a similar sort of public-opinion poll on whether respondents think indigenous "social suffering" or the "Idle No More" movement are caused
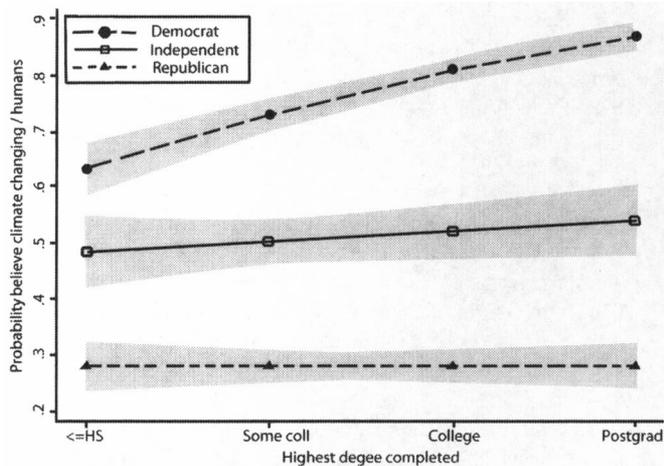
Figure 2: Belief in anthropogenic climate change by education and political party. Author rendering of a graph from Hamilton and Stampone (2013).

by the activities of non-indigenous society or not. I do not wish to overgeneralize the implications of Hamilton and Stampone's findings on the influence of political ideology and education in public-policy opinions, particularly on indigenous issues. Thankfully, Canada is not as strongly divided along ideological lines as the United States is. Moreover, the implications of climate change are not as much national and regional, as is Canadian indigenous policy, but more global. Rather than add to the rhetoric generated by some of the recent books on indigenous policy, anthropologists need to continue doing what they do best: providing clear analyses based on the best factual evidence they can acquire. We also need to find ways to better engage and communicate our findings to make more positive contributions to public discussions of these issues.

All university-based anthropology is in some sense "applied," in that we teach students, most of whom will never become professional anthropologists, but who may help shape public policy. I myself question how well I have succeeded in raising the level of public knowledge and understanding of, for example, the reasons for the epidemics of northern indigenous suicides (Tanner 2008). When the chief of the Neskantaga First Nation of 700 residents in northern Ontario recently declared a state of emergency, citing widespread OxyContin addiction and 20 suicide attempts resulting in seven deaths in the past year, national media gave it a day's attention, without much relevant social background, and moved on (Harper 2013b). I have well-educated, non-anthropologist friends of various stripes, some of whom react to headlines like those about the "Idle No More"

campaign with concern, while others think they have already done more than enough with their taxes and assume that assimilation is the only option.

To conclude, engagement with indigenous issues is sometimes frustrating, but occasional progress is being made, often unexpectedly. It is not always possible to see the extent to which anthropological research played a significant role in such progress. The Iinuu (sometimes spelled Eeyou, who are also known as the East Cree) of northern Quebec, where I have returned periodically since 1967, have managed to avoid or address some of the problems I have discussed in this talk. Despite massive industrial developments in the region—forestry and mining, in addition to hydroelectric generation—the Iinuu (Eeyou) have had success on many fronts.

As outsiders, anthropologists not only encounter injustice, but they may also be privileged to share in the too few cases of improvement in the lives of those they study, as in some of my own encounters in the lives of James Bay Iinuu families or the impressive progress I have observed by the Mi'kmaq of the Miawpukek First Nation in Newfoundland since 1979, when they achieved recognition under the Indian Act (Andersen and Crellin 2009).

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Notes

1 Those I came to be influenced by, either then or subsequently, include Joan Ryan, Bernard Bernier, Paul Charest, Roger McDonnell, Robin Riddington, Gordon Inglis and Erik Schwimmer.

2 They were Stuart M. Jamieson in economics, Kenneth Lysyk in law and Alan Cairns in political science, scholars who all subsequently continued work on Iindigenous policy issues.

3 They include the Yukon Research Project of the Northern Science Group, the overall director of which was the anthropologist Moose Kerr (Peter Usher, Josè Mailhot, Derek Smith and Hugh Brody were among many applied social scientists who passed through that extraordinary institution), the McGill Cree Project under Norman Chance (an initiative expanded on by Richard Salisbury), and the Identity and Modernity in the East Arctic project lead by Robert Paine at Memorial University.

4 Here I have in mind such researchers as Peter Usher, Peter Armitage, José Mailhot, Hugh Brody and Doug Elias.

5 Barsh has an interesting review of the first two of these, together with two other books on Canadian indigenous self-government (Barsh 2004).

6 For a similar kind of perspective, but based on an African hunter-gatherer group, see Liebenberg 2013.

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