

Anthropology and Indian-Hating

Russel Barsh

Anthropologists have devoted considerably more effort to studying the cultures of the victims of oppression than the cultures of their oppressors. This is paradoxical and unfortunate, since anthropologists tend to identify with and support the claims of Indigenous peoples and other victims of racism and discrimination. Rigorous study of the organization, recruitment and reproduction of racist groups and oppressive institutions, from "Indian bureaus" to White supremacists, would contribute more to the liberation of Indigenous peoples than further study of the wounds these institutions inflict.

Les anthropologues ont consacré considérablement plus d'efforts à l'étude des cultures des victimes d'oppression qu'à l'étude des cultures des oppresseurs. Voilà un paradoxe déplorable, car les anthropologues se montrent enclins à appuyer et à s'identifier aux revendications des populations autochtones ainsi qu'aux autres victimes de racisme et de discrimination. Une étude rigoureuse de l'organisation, du recrutement et de la reproduction des groupes racistes, institutions oppressives, "Indian bureaus" et tenants de la suprémacie blanche contribuerait plus à la libération des populations autochtones que la prolongation d'une étude sur les maux infligées par ces institutions.

A wave of anti-Indian¹ advocacy and violence accompanied American Indians' court victories over fishing rights in the 1970s, and resumed in the 1980s with the harassment of Indian fishermen in Wisconsin, and the marketing of "treaty beer" as a fund-raising device by White hate groups.² Despite the terrifying impact of these phenomena on Indians, scholars who make their living studying Indian communities have shown relatively little interest in the psychology or social organization of Indian-haters.

Two explanations may be suggested for this omission. One is that predominantly non-Native scholars do not see Indian-haters as a threat on

the same order as apartheid or the Ku Klux Klan, both of which have been given greater attention. The other explanation is a fascination with the exotic. Anthropologists, in particular, have identified with the victims of racism and imperialism, and supported their struggles against oppression and marginalization. While this is to be welcomed morally, it ironically may lead anthropologists to *limit* their study to victims, rather than studying the victimizers.

A bias towards studying Indigenous peoples as victims exposes the weaknesses and divisions *within* Indigenous societies to criticism and manipulation, while Indigenous peoples themselves learn nothing about combatting their oppressors. If truly "liberated," anthropology would concentrate on questions considered important by the victims of power, rather than questions that are significant chiefly to anthropologists. The questions of greatest interest to Indians concern anthropologists' own class and culture.

Analytical Myopia

More has been written about the effects of oppression on Indians than about the causes of their oppression, and more about the cultures of the victims than about the organization of their victimizers. Most studies of "border towns" have focused on how Native people cope with discrimination, rather than the social construction and economic uses of discrimination by non-Native townspeople.³ A handful of surveys of contemporary Indian stereotypes have seen print, but they have gone no further than confirming a correlation between respondents' stereotypes and their perception of being threatened economically by Indians.⁴

The main studies of the struggle for Indian fishing rights in the Pacific Northwest devote but a few pages to the organization of White opposition groups.⁵ Only one recent paper explores the ways in which White Canadians have organized to block land claims.⁶ The *Handbook of North American Indians* devotes two chapters to "Indian hobbyists," but contains nothing on Indian-haters.⁷ Anthropologists continue to study Indians' cultures and "culture conflict," but not the White groups who believe they are defending *their* "way of life" against Indians.

Similarly, there have been few critical studies of the culture of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs: how it recruits and socializes its personnel (most of whom are Indians themselves), lobbies Congress for funds, or rationalizes the perpetuation of its control over Indians' lives.⁸ There is only one study of social processes within Canada's Department of Indian Affairs.⁹ However, the impacts of these institutions in demoralizing Indian communities have

been the subjects of hundreds of publications.

Vastly more has been published about *old* Indian-hating than about its contemporary manifestations, creating a false impression of moral progress. Attention is diverted from the violent tendencies still embedded in the culture of the victimizer, to the lingering ill-effects of past violence on the cultures and mental health of the victims. The "problem" no longer belongs to the oppressor, but to the oppressed.

Table 1 summarizes all 1995-1996 publications (excluding reprints and book reviews) on the Sociofile database in the "American Indians" subject classification. Exactly half of this current opus is devoted to the description and treatment of Indians' *problems*, including loss of identity, family and cultural breakdowns, family violence, suicide, addictions, crime, school failure and unemployment. Only one-sixth of these recent works address either the nature of discrimination against Indians, or Indians' patterns of resistance. Indeed, of just twelve works that dealt primarily with the nature of racism and discrimination, not one involved primary research on racist or oppressive organizations.¹⁰ Anthropologists, who wrote one-sixth of the total output, devoted only ten percent of their effort to racism or resistance;

Table 1 Current Publications on "American Indians," 1995-1996
Expressed as Percentage of Total (n=179)

Topic:	AUTHOR'S AFFILIATION				total
	anthropology	sociology	health	others	
Problems of	3.4	7.3	9.5	16.2	36.3
Treatment of	0.6	0.0	10.1	3.4	14.0
Racism against	0.6	3.4	0.0	2.8	6.7
Resistance by	1.1	2.8	0.0	4.5	8.4
Policy towards	0.6	0.6	2.8	3.9	7.8
Institutions of	2.8	0.6	0.0	6.1	9.5
Symbolism of	3.4	0.0	0.6	1.1	5.0
Other topics	4.5	1.7	0.6	5.6	12.3
Total	16.8	16.2	23.5	43.6	100.0

Notes: "Health" includes social work, psychology, public health and medicine. "Treatment" refers to counselling, helping and healing. "Institutions" refers to tribal governments, internal laws and courts. "Symbolism" refers to studies of discourse and symbolism within Native American cultures and religions.

Data includes all entries in Sociofile in all languages, except reprints and book reviews, for publication years 1995 and 1996.

Column and row totals may be affected by rounding.

sociologists, who also wrote one-sixth of the total, were proportionally four times more interested in these topics.

Anthropologists continue to focus their attention on the victims of racism rather than racist societies, while other social scientists are borrowing "ethnographic" methods from anthropology to unravel the world-views and recruitment processes of racist political parties¹¹ and criminal organizations.¹² If anthropologists consider it important to study how Indigenous peoples organize themselves to resist racism and oppression,¹³ can it be less important to understand how other peoples organize to oppress these Indigenous peoples?

Organized violence against African-Americans has been given much more thorough attention,¹⁴ though mainly by historians, sociologists and political scientists. Anthropologists have focused their work on African-American subcultures rather than racist organizations.¹⁵ The same pattern appears in the extensive body of literature on apartheid, which ranges from the grass-roots organization of White supremacists to the role of South African churches and industry in promoting official racism.¹⁶ South African anthropologists devoted themselves largely to the dynamics of Black communities and the effects rather than ultimate causes of apartheid, however.¹⁷

On the whole, then, research on racist organizations has bypassed Native Americans, and the academic discipline most closely associated with Native peoples – anthropology – has shown the least inclination to study the organization of oppressors. Most works about Indian rights and resistance are published in law journals, which creates an illusion that Indians are victims of government policy rather than of popular racism.

Is Anthropology Upside-Down?

A generation ago, amidst American anthropologists' great crisis of conscience over the military abuse of ethnography in Vietnam, Laura Nader and Kathleen Gough challenged their colleagues to "study up" – to focus their analytical lenses on the institutions of power in today's global society rather than on the misery of the powerless.¹⁸ Why has their appeal not yet been fully heeded?

Anthropology is unusual among Western social science disciplines, in that it tends to be identified with a class of subjects, rather than its objectives or its methods.¹⁹ Other disciplines focus on a category of institutions, a category of behaviour, or a way of measuring behaviour. Economists study markets, psychologists study thinking and perception, and sociologists study relationships between attitudes and conduct.²⁰ Anthropologists

generally study *marginalized peoples*. Anthropologists originally studied societies living outside the influences of European civilization ("primitive people"); today, they study peoples who have been impoverished by European civilization ("Indigenous peoples," the poor, minorities).²¹

While anthropologists readily acknowledge the adverse *effects* of other societies on its "primitives," they avoid direct observations of the *causes* of oppression and racism since that would require fieldwork *among the oppressors*. Elite classes and dominant cultures may be less amenable to being studied than the poor, who have little choice in the matter.²² In the golden age of fieldwork, ethnographers were viewed as emissaries of the colonial powers; offending them risked offending the gods. Perhaps anthropologists also *identify with* the poor, because they are marginal within their own societies.²³ They are refugees from the culture of the oppressor, seeking redemption through labours among the oppressed. Herein lies a contradiction, however. Anthropologists may best help the oppressed by going home and studying their own peers and institutions of power.²⁴

Some progress has been made. Feminist anthropologists have drawn connections between patriarchy and imperialism, and shown how colonial institutions have reproduced patriarchy as a means of dominating other peoples.²⁵ There is a small but growing literature on the cultures of Western bureaucracies, chiefly social-welfare agencies.²⁶ However, it is still easy to find books purportedly devoted to the anthropology of power that eschew the study of contemporary Western institutions.²⁷

Anthropologists have not, for the most part, turned their lens on the institutions of power that exist within their home societies. However, they *have* experienced rejection and marginalization within "primitive" societies, rather than absolution or solidarity.²⁸ Reluctant to study *up*, and more and more denied access to studying *down*, they are turning to studying themselves. The past twenty years of anthropological writing have witnessed a trend towards self-reflection, and efforts to justify anthropology as an art rather than a not-science.²⁹

Refuge and Responsibility

Anthropologists have long enjoyed a monopoly of interpretation of the oppressed to the oppressor. The dangers that attach to this role have not been overlooked,³⁰ and this may help explain anthropologists' growing tendency towards self-criticism and self-absorption. The role of anthropologists as purveyors of information *to the oppressed* about the world of their oppressors – the anthropologists' own world – merits equal attention. Anthropologists

study *down* because they prefer the company of "savages," while the savages try to learn what they can by studying the anthropologists.³¹

Textbooks offer guidance on choosing a place to live, dressing appropriately ("impression management"), avoiding getting involved in local politics or with local women, and overcoming informants' reluctance to discuss their neighbours, but relatively little about researchers' role as sources of strategic knowledge. One textbook from my student days conceded that fieldworkers were "constantly asked about our ways of doing things," but argued that such exchanges of information helped the subjects "raise their level of awareness of their own culture," as opposed to the anthropologists' culture.³² A somewhat more recent text explained how the researcher could "trade on expertise" as a means of gaining credibility and access to local knowledge – albeit warning that scholars should not *inflate* their expertise.³³ Exponents of new "dialogical" research methods encourage reciprocity as an inquisitorial tool,³⁴ but overlook the consequences of the dialogue for the subjects. At least one recent work on feminist methodology does not mention the potential impact of female scholars' gender values on studied communities.³⁵

To be sure, proponents of anthropological "advocacy" have argued more recently that anthropologists can contribute to the liberation of oppressed peoples by three means:

- the anthropologist can translate the situation of oppressed peoples into terms *the dominant society* can understand;
- the anthropologist can raise peoples' awareness of *their own situation* so that they can better advocate their own cause;
- the anthropologist can provide oppressed people *analyses of the dominant society* so that they can improve their strategy and tactics of resistance.³⁶

The first goal merely restates a classical goal of anthropology – to give civilization an accurate picture of the savages. Undoubtedly, arming progressive elites such as academics and environmentalists with better "damage reports" from the field can help influence decisions in national capitals. This may win a reprieve for marginalized peoples, but it does not ensure their security in the long term: the root of oppression is power rather than ignorance or misunderstanding. American history is, moreover, replete with examples of the damage done by the "friends of the Indians" when, from time to time, they wrested control of Indian policy away from the army and the developers.³⁷

It also seems presumptuous to suppose that an anthropologist who is just beginning to learn about an unfamiliar culture can help it to understand

itself. Even if a community were so isolated as to have no conception of its differences from others, the superior solution would be to help *them* travel, rather than purport to serve as their eyes and ears. In other words, isolated peoples need *their own* anthropologists or explorers, who can look for the differences and ask the questions they consider most important when they come to study *us*. The fact of the matter is that the “primitives” are already far ahead with respect to understanding themselves. The enigma, for them, is *us*.

As for anthropologists’ possible role as interpreters of *dominant societies*, this presumes that they actually study and have specialized knowledge of their own cultures and political systems. Mayberry-Lewis contends that real advocacy:

requires an ability to study our own society (or other “modern industrial societies”) with a detachment similar to that we strive for in studying the exotic. It requires the ability to analyze national policies, developmental ideologies and the workings of bureaucracies with a detachment that enables us to see beyond their familiar obfuscations and self-deceptions.³⁸

This is a severe test, since anthropologists are *products* of their own class and cultures. Mayberry-Lewis recommends building alliances with urban middle-class intellectuals against “settler societies [who] are always unscrupulous”—for example, a mestizo peasant might propose uniting the poor in a struggle against the rich. In any case, the kind of advocacy Mayberry-Lewis promotes would begin with fieldwork at the Department of Indian Affairs, the head offices of major corporations and the conventions of hate groups. The failure of anthropologists to study *up* their own societies is incompatible with advocacy, since it deprives the anthropologists of the one gift they might deliver to their hosts.

Some anthropologists counter that the goal of their discipline is “to increase our *self-knowledge*.”³⁹ This is a worthy aim if it means an understanding of anthropologists’ own societies, and not just the personal growth of individual anthropologists. The Romantics of the nineteenth century went abroad to find *themselves*, giving birth to “orientalism” and anthropology. Romanticism survives in anthropology, fed by modern forms of alienation, escapism and a search for lost values.

Were There No Racists in Plainville?

What might studying *up* reveal here in North America? A few clues can be found scattered through the social science literature, starting with the “community studies” that were once in vogue among midwestern American

sociologists. Although several "White" North American communities have been the subject of classic ethnographies, the authors devoted little attention to racial and ethnic tensions. *Middletown* had a Black neighbourhood, but racism was relegated to a footnote.⁴⁰ *Plainville* makes no mention at all of race or ethnicity, while the exhaustive study of *Jonesville*, after briefly noting the existence of a Polish enclave, made no effort to understand why other groups treated Poles with disdain.⁴¹ Even the study of *Elmtown*, completed at the height of the American civil-rights movement, devoted only three pages to the role of ethnicity in determining social status.⁴²

The exception to this pattern was an ethnography conducted in the South, with a specific focus on the socio-economic bases of the colour bar.⁴³ The authors concluded that the *function* of contemporary racism was the control of local farm land, just as the function of ante-bellum racism had been the control of slave labour. This echoes John Demos' finding that land disputes lay behind seventeenth-century Massachusetts witch scares.⁴⁴ In both cases, struggles for the control of economic resources were waged indirectly through a discourse about inferiority, deviance and danger.

The victims of such tactics, whether they be African-Americans or alleged witches, are presumably not impressed by contentions that they do not deserve a decent livelihood. They are oppressed by differences in power, not by the force of their opponents' logic. If the ultimate result is dictated by power, why do oppressors bother to devise racist ideologies? The answer is suggested by the fact that only a small minority of the "dominant" group (Whites, godly Christians) ever directly benefits from the redistribution of resources. Most Euro-Americans in the Old South did not own slaves; most of the Puritans studied by John Demos were not land speculators. Those who *did* stand to profit from bigotry needed the support of the others, however, and they used pride, status and fear to mobilize that support. Racism has the ability to achieve a level of solidarity that transcends class divisions.

The Ethnography of Borders

A useful venue for exploring the economics of racism would be the "border towns" where Native and non-Native people compete for the same jobs, attend the same public schools and sometimes marry. In a study of Canada's northern frontier, Jean Morisset argued that "the Canadian psyche" is dominated by exculpatory beliefs in the breakdown of Indian and Inuit society, and in the liberating power of capitalist expansion.⁴⁵ A key element of this self-serving logic was "blaming the victim" for the adverse consequences of development, a view reinforced by official studies and government policy. The most destructive aspect of racism, Morisset

concluded, was its power to co-opt Native people into seeking respectability with Whites by confirming Whites' racist beliefs.⁴⁶

Evelyn Plaice's ethnography of ethnicity and class boundaries in North West River, Labrador, also stressed the role of justification in the construction of non-Aboriginal identities.⁴⁷ The "settlers" with greatest status based their collective claims, paradoxically, on their knowledge of Indigenous technology, and their ability to trace some of their ancestry to Indigenous roots. Latin American mestizo societies have made similar claims to hybrid superiority.⁴⁸

It should not be startling that the boundaries between groups are constructed and maintained with the aim (or the effect) of controlling resources. Somewhat less obvious are the effects of oppression on the internal order of the oppressors. Mobilizing violence against others involves an increase in uses of power and violence *within* the dominant society to levy greater taxes, organize industrial and military labour and suppress dissent.⁴⁹ Internal differences of class, ethnicity and gender gain salience, along with increased aggression, frustration and anxiety.

Recent research on the Ku Klux Klan offers some further hints for the study of Indian-hating. Popular media long characterized the Klan as a relic of the aristocracy of the Old South,⁵⁰ but in fact the Klan appears to have enjoyed its strongest support among the rural poor and urban workers.⁵¹ The Klan has been opportunistic, exploiting whatever issues could be used to mobilize White fears and frustrations, ranging from immigration and desegregation to crime and homosexuality.⁵² Klan fortunes have waxed and waned with business cycles and times of social crisis.⁵³ It is a movement looking for a moment.

This kind of organized hate is not limited to "extremists" but is a phenomenon of the poor mobilizing against the poor. The ethnography of hate suggests that racism is a function of economic conditions, and not merely popular ignorance. Other factors may help racism coalesce and grow stronger, such as a lack of public confidence in the ability of government to maintain order and restore prosperity, as well as the level of media attention given to the problems (or the gains) of other groups in society.⁵⁴ These factors intensify the perception that "the Other" is responsible for economic downturns. This perception can be manipulated by hate groups to increase their support, and by political and economic elites wishing to divert attention from themselves.

If one thing is clear, however, it is the resurgence of organized racism and racial violence in the 1980s, a time of declining optimism and expectations.⁵⁵ Gaps in income and employment between Whites and non-

Whites grew, while public confidence in government declined in the face of colossal errors of judgment by public officials and the antics of junk-bond and merger kings on Wall Street. Indeed, racism grew in proportion to the evidence that *uncontrollable Whites* were running the country.

If this analysis is correct, anthropological "advocates" need to address the underlying poverty and inequality in their own societies, rather than simply challenging stereotypes, ignorance or bad science. They must, moreover, be sensitive to economic differentiation among *non-Indigenous* people, and acknowledge that Indians and the worst Indian-haters may be victims of the same phenomena. The objective should be to find the roots of power, rather than simply opposing the people who shout racist slogans the loudest. This might lead anthropologists to be advocates and interpreters for poor Whites, not just Indians.

Subcultures of Power

Eric Wolf once observed that "disregarding the problems of power" was characteristic of American anthropologists.⁵⁶ Being accustomed to having power, Americans are less conscious of it. Powerful societies, indeed, are the ones that invented anthropology.⁵⁷ Nonetheless, North Americans are in a favourable position to help liberate anthropology, because they have such rich ground to plow. They have two departments of "Indian affairs" to study, as well as a splendid variety of private hate groups.

Whether the subject of study is a public institution or a private organization, a common core of issues needs to be addressed:

- *social base* – Who joins the organization, for what reasons and with what effect on their families and communities?
- *recruitment* – How are potential members identified and selected by the organization?
- *socialization* – What rituals and training are used to construct a shared vision and solidarity?
- *ethos* – What myths, symbols and "science" (or pseudo-scientific theories) are used to establish group legitimacy and purpose?
- *action* – What is the group's strategy for survival, growth and achieving its goals, and what tactics does it employ?
- *mobilization* – How does the group mobilize support among other sections of society, and deflect opposition, including its use of the mass media?

The central strategic issue is the organization's source of *power* – its *power resources* in the terminology of contemporary political science – which may

come in part from its social base, its utility to a broader range of interest groups and, in the case of a state bureaucracy, its legal status. Without this analysis, it is impossible to know how it can be most effectively challenged or mitigated, where its social base can be eroded or how its actions can be neutralized. Useful models can be found in studies of the cultures of business corporations, which have explored mythology,⁵⁸ ceremony⁵⁹ and dispute resolution,⁶⁰ using tools borrowed from ethnography.

My own personal contact with organized Indian-hating began when I was a member of an interfaith speakers' bureau organized to combat the worst excesses of White reaction to Indian treaty fishing rights.⁶¹ I visited scores of churches, fraternal societies, union halls and other local gathering places, debating opponents of Indian treaty rights, or responding to often-hostile audiences. One norm was shared by all of the opposition groups I encountered: *equality*.⁶²

Why are the most vocal and organized opponents of Indian treaties and Aboriginal rights preoccupied with *equality*? One hypothesis might be that they are self-consciously the underdogs of *non-Native* society. *Equality* is not only an attack on the legitimacy of Indian claims, but an implicit demand for justice vis-à-vis other Whites. These citizens do not cry "equality!" at the Rockefellers or Bronfmans, however. The limited context in which the appeal to *equality* indicates that it is a demand not for equalization with the rich, but for preserving the existing status hierarchy among different groups of the poor. Not surprisingly, this recalls the argument that imperialism distracts the poor within the colonizer's society. Instead of combatting injustices at home, they compete for status with the poor abroad.⁶³ Hence we see again that the key to understanding the situation of Indians is not to be found within Indian societies, but in the injustices and opposition that exist among European-Americans.

Future research should also address the parallels between popular forms of private Indian-hating, and institutions of government charged with the management (or "protection") of Native peoples. Private hate groups and public agencies recruit personnel and mobilize support from the same population. To survive, they must forge an ethos of communal solidarity and legitimacy in the face of resistance by the groups they control or oppose. Public agencies may enjoy the security of a legal and financial relationship with the state, but can lose this sinecure if they disappoint public expectations.

Of course, "Indian bureaus" are supposed to protect Indians from Indian-haters. They are said to bear a *trust*, or *fiduciary obligation* to Indians under contemporary American and Canadian law. But this may only be an illusion. What do these state bureaucracies do in reality? They

mediate between Indians and Indian-haters. They exist *because* of opposition to Indian rights; it is their *raison d'être*, and they have historically defended Indians up to the point that their own survival, growth and power were threatened. The history of an Indian bureau is a series of *compromises* with the Indian-haters, at Indians' expense.⁶⁴ Moreover, the ability to make self-perpetuating compromises depends on adopting some of the language, if not the ethos of Indian-haters. Why do we protect Indian land, only to open their land to developers later when its value has increased? The bureaucrats reply: It is good for the Indians, and will make them equal!

We may find that periodic reversals or "cycles" in Indian policy, lasting from twenty to thirty years, reflect cycles in the social and economic momentum behind private Indian-hating. In other words, Indian-policy cycles may have more to do with periodic disillusionment and perceived injustices within White society than anything pertaining specifically to Indians.

Insufficient attention has been paid to the interplay of internal and *external* violence in the history of a powerful, dominant society, such as White America or Canada. Indeed, a major historical survey of collective violence in Canadian history mentions Aboriginal peoples in only two contexts (the 1885 Red River conflict and domestic violence on modern Indian reserves) as if the gradual but aggressive removal of people from their homelands over the intervening 110 years was somehow *not* a form of violence.⁶⁵ Indian-hating and other forms of collective violence and hatred, directed for example against the poor, immigrants or francophones, may have different targets but the same perpetrators. It is tempting to speculate that Indian-hating has frequently provided a safety-valve for other personal, ethnic and political frustrations.

Indian-hating has arguably been the most *consistent* diversion for the frustrations of North American immigrant populations for centuries – except perhaps in the largest American industrial cities and the Old South, where African-Americans have apparently supplied the same need. In Puget Sound, public officials and the press blamed declining stocks of salmon variously on the Japanese, Russians, Koreans and Canadians; but the only group *consistently* blamed for the decline, over a twenty-year period, was American Indians.⁶⁶ Aboriginal peoples have likewise long served as a scapegoat in Quebec politics.⁶⁷

Racial and ethnic conflicts heighten the salience of boundaries and encourage individuals to take sides rather than admit to diversity of ancestry. Might it be true, as a corollary, that organizations and institutions preoccupied with racial and ethnic purity tend to attract individuals who are

experiencing difficulty coming to terms with their own complex or ambiguous identities? Are ethnically *ambivalent* people more likely to support racial and ethnic extremism than people who are candidly self-aware of their own ethnicity? There do not appear to be any published studies of ethnicity and ethnic self-consciousness among Indian-affairs bureaucrats or Indian-hate groups, unfortunately.

This line of inquiry might also reveal an important difference in motivational structure between Indian-hating and colour racism. North American and European mass cultures today accord a *positive* status to Aboriginality. To the extent that Indian-hating attracts ethnically ambivalent individuals, it may reflect envy as much as material greed.

Liberating Anthropology

Liberation theology has become a significant political factor in Latin America by "speaking in the name of the poor" against all forms of elite power, including the Church itself.⁶⁸ What makes this school of theology "liberated" is not merely its opposition to oppression but the fact that it is a theology informed by experience and interpreted *from the bottom up*. It is a theology liberated from its priests and returned to parishes. Instead of telling people what they must do, it gives them a language in which they can express their own aims.⁶⁹

To liberate exploited people, anthropologists must liberate their own societies. They need to begin by studying the acquisition and use of power, and recognize the role of anthropology as the source of data and theories historically used to justify oppression. They also need to challenge the "church" directly by liberating anthropology itself, as a discipline.

Liberation anthropology would seek to answer the questions posed by oppressed and marginalized peoples. Of necessity, it will become a study of power and domination rather than victimization. Anthropology has long claimed for itself a more holistic and universal perspective than political science, sociology or economics. Now is the time for anthropologists to prove it by doing an even *better* job of analyzing the same organizations and institutions.

Anthropologists of the early twentieth century tried to preserve some memories of pre-contact cultures; anthropologists in the 1950s began to document processes of destruction; since the early 1970s, anthropologists have taken an interest in the processes of resistance. This shift from lamenting culture change as *decay* to recognizing it as a function of resistance and renewal was the first step in liberating anthropology.⁷⁰ "Studying up" should be the next.

Notes

- 1 I hope to be forgiven for mixing the currently preferred American terminologies ("American Indian" or "Native American") with those that enjoy greatest favour in contemporary Canada ("Aboriginal peoples" or "First Nations"). My use of the term "Indian-hating" is a deliberate attempt to evoke the state of mind of those who hate, rather than that of the victims of hatred.
- 2 Bruce E. Johansen, "The Klan in a Can," *The Progressive* 52, no. 7 (1988): 13; Craig Neff, "The Wisconsin Fishing War," *Sports Illustrated* 70, no. 5 (1989): 16; Scott Kerr, "The New Indian Wars: The Trail of Broken Treaties Grows Longer," *The Progressive* 54, no. 4 (1990): 20-22; United States Congress, "Anti-Indian Violence": *Hearings before the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives, 101st Congress, 2nd Session* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1988).
- 3 Evelyn M. Plaice, *The Native Game: Settler Perceptions of Indian-Settler Relations in Southern Labrador* (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1990), p. 7. Examples include Jeanne E. Guillemin, *Urban Renegades: The Cultural Strategy of American Indians* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978) and Donna Deyhle, "Navajo Youth and Anglo Racism: Cultural Integrity and Resistance," *Harvard Education Review* 65, no. 3 (1995): 403-44.
- 4 Jeffery R. Hanson and Linda P. Rouse, "Dimensions of Native American Stereotyping," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 11, no. 4 (1987): 33-58; Linda P. Rouse and Jeffery R. Hanson, "American Indian Stereotyping, Resource Competition, and Status-Based Prejudice," *American Indian Culture & Research Journal* 15, no. 3 (1991): 1-17.
- 5 Fay G. Cohen, *Treaties on Trial. The Continuing Controversy over Northwest Indian Fishing Rights* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), pp. 175, 186; Dianne Newell, *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), pp. 176-78.
- 6 Peter Armitage and John C. Kennedy, "Redbaiting and Racism on Our Frontier: Military Expansion in Labrador and Quebec," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 26, no. 5 (1989): 798-817. Cf. Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1990), which devotes a score of pages to Whites' "attitudes," but contains no information on organized opposition groups of landowners and loggers.
- 7 Wilcomb E. Washburn (ed.), *History of Indian-White Relations. Vol. 4, Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1988).
- 8 Russel L. Barsh, "The BIA Reorganization Follies of 1978: A Lesson in Bureaucratic Self-Defense," *American Indian Law Review* 7, no. 1 (1979): 1-50; Russel L. Barsh, "Progressive-Era Bureaucrats and the Unity of Twentieth-Century Indian Policy," *American Indian Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1991): 1-14; Duane Champagne, "Organizational Change and Conflict: A Case Study of the Bureau of Indian Affairs," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 7, no. 3 (1983): 3-28; Stephen E. Feraca, "Inside the Bureau of Indian Affairs," *Society* 27, no. 4 (1990): 29-39. This last paper is actually a diatribe against preferential employment of Indians.

- 9 Sally M. Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968–1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981). See Noel Dyck, *What Is the Indian "Problem": Tutelage and Resistance in Canadian Indian Administration* (St. John's, Newfoundland: Memorial University, 1991) for a critical history of policy development.
- 10 Seven dealt with the nature or demography of negative stereotypes, three used the history of American Indians as an example of racism in broad terms and two used historical case studies of mass killings of American Indians to support a theory of the cause of genocide.
- 11 See, for example, Cathie Lloyd and Hazel Waters, "France: One Culture, One People?" *Race & Class* 32, no. 3 (1991): 49–65; Bruce Matthews, "Sinhala Cultural and Buddhist Patriotic Organizations in Contemporary Sri Lanka," *Pacific Affairs* 61, no. 4 (1989): 620–32. An exceptional study by an anthropologist is Stanley R. Barrett, *Is God A Racist? The Right Wing in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).
- 12 For example, Francis A.J. Ianni, *A Family Business: Kinship and Social Control in Organized Crime* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1972); Francis A.J. Ianni, *Black Mafia: Ethnic Succession in Organized Crime* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1974).
- 13 Shuichi Nagata, "From Ethnic Bourgeoisie to Organic Intellectuals: Speculations on North American Native Leadership," *Anthropologica* 29, no. 1 (1987): 61–75; Alexander M. Ervin, "Styles and Strategies of Leadership during the Alaskan Native Land Claims Movement: 1959–1971," *Anthropologica* 29, no. 1 (1987): 21–38.
- 14 See Lenwood G. Davis, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984) and, most recently, Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991). See C. Matthew Snipp, "Understanding Race and Ethnicity in Rural America," *Rural Sociology* 61, no. 1 (1996): 125–42 for a recent comment on the need for more work by sociologists on race relations – and an admission that Indians have been overlooked.
- 15 E.L. Cerroni-Long, "Benign Neglect? Anthropology and the Study of Blacks in the United States," *Journal of Black Studies* 17, no. 4 (1987): 438–59; Andrew H. Maxwell, "The Anthropology of Poverty in Black Communities: A Critique and Systems Alternative," *Urban Anthropology* 17, nos. 2 & 3 (1988): 171–91.
- 16 See, for example, Heribert Adam, "Variations of Ethnicity: Afrikaner and Black Nationalism in South Africa," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 20, nos. 3 & 4 (1985): 169–80; Ken Jubber, "The Prodigal Church: South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church and the Apartheid Policy," *Social Compass* 32, nos. 2 & 3 (1985): 273–85; Timothy Keegan, "Crisis and Catharsis in the Development of Capitalism in South African Agriculture," *African Affairs* 84, no. 336 (1985): 371–98; K.C.M. Rogerson, S.O. Beavon and G.H. Pirie, "The Geography of the Afrikaner Broederbond in Namibia," *Social Dynamics* 5, no. 2 (1979): 13–17.

- 17 For example, Isak A. Niehaus, "Relocation into Phuthaditjhaba and Tseki: A Comparative Ethnography of Planned and Unplanned Removals," *African Studies* 48, no. 2 (1989): 159–81; Andrew D. Spiegel, "The Ambiguities of Betterment: A Transkei Case Study," *African Studies* 47, no. 2 (1988): 147–69; M.G. Whisson, "Tswelletswele: From Settlement to Community in a Peri-Urban Area of the Ciskei," *Urban Anthropology* 13, nos. 2 & 3 (1984): 237–59. But see Vincent Crapanzano, *Waiting: The Whites of South Africa* (New York: Random House, 1985).
- 18 Laura Nader, "Up the Anthropologist – Perspectives Gained from Studying Up," in *Reinventing Anthropology*, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 284–311; Kathleen Gough, "Anthropology and Imperialism," *Monthly Review* 19, no. 1 (1968): 12–27 and "New proposals for anthropologists," *Current Anthropology* 9, no. 4 (1968): 403–7.
- 19 Here I disagree with the view of Ernest Gellner, "The Politics of Anthropology," *Government and Opposition* 23, no. 3 (1988): 290–303, that anthropology defines itself by its *methods* rather than its substance. Anthropology and sociology share the same basic qualitative methods of observation and interviewing. More persuasive is Gellner's argument that anthropology has a "baptist" character – you do not really belong until you have been baptised in the field.
- 20 Of course, the universalist pretensions of mainstream disciplines such as economics, psychology and sociology do not mean that they are truly culture-free. On the contrary, they focus on *dominant* societies and institutions – the exact reverse of traditional anthropology – which they model and interpret according to Western cultural paradigms.
- 21 The *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures*, a self-conscious effort to promote the study of cultural forces *inside* Western society, was launched in 1992 – and is largely devoted to European "minorities."
- 22 Stanley R. Barrett, *Anthropology: A Student's Guide to Theory and Method* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), nicely describes his own misgivings and difficulties launching a study of White supremacists.
- 23 As I argued in Russel L. Barsh, "Are Anthropologists Hazardous to Indians' Health?" *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 15, no. 4 (1988): 1–38. My criticism is aimed at the dominant forces within the discipline of anthropology in the West; anthropologists themselves are stratified – by colour and gender – with respect to status and privilege, and there are always voices of resistance inside the profession.
- 24 David Mayberry-Lewis, "A Special Sort of Pleading: Anthropology at the Service of Ethnic Groups," in *Advocacy and Anthropology*, ed. Robert Paine (St. John's, Newfoundland: Memorial University, 1985), pp. 130–48; he observed that "anthropologists usually try to help because of their conviction that such societies are being wronged, often with no clear idea of how to set about righting the wrong" (p. 130).

- 25 Henrietta L. Moore, *Feminism and Anthropology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988); Micaela Di Leonardo ed., *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991). It should be noted that Western feminists have been criticized for overlooking their own relatively privileged status in the world: Kimberly Christensen, "'With Whom Do You Believe Your Lot Is Cast?' White Feminists and Racism," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 22, no. 3 (1997): 617-48.
- 26 For a thoughtful recent survey of this research, see Susan Wright, "Anthropology: Still the Uncomfortable Discipline?" in *The Future of Anthropology: Its Relevance to the Contemporary World*, ed. Akbar Ahmed and Cris Shore, (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone, 1995), pp. 65-92. For a recent example of the genre using a discourse approach, see Josiah McC. Heyman, "Putting Power in the Anthropology of Bureaucracy: The Immigration and Naturalization Service at the Mexico-United States Border," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 2 (1995): 261-77.
- 27 For example, Nicholas B. Dirks, ed., *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); John S. Henderson and Patricia J. Netherly, eds., *Configurations of Power: Holistic Anthropology in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1993).
- 28 Barrett, *Anthropology: A Student's Guide*, refers to the growing rejection of anthropology by the primitives as a force tending towards the "taming of the anthropologist" (pp. 236-37).
- 29 See Laura Nader, "Post-Interpretive Anthropology," *Anthropological Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (1988): 149-60.
- 30 Deborah Gewertz and Frederick Errington, "We Think, Therefore They Are? On the Occidentalizing of the World," *Anthropological Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (1991): 80-91; Marc Manganaro, ed., *Modernist Anthropology: From Fieldwork to Text* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).
- 31 Triloki Nath Pandey, "Anthropologists at Zuni," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 116 (1972): 213-37.
- 32 Thomas Rhys Williams, *Field Methods in the Study of Culture* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), p. 46. Two more representative works from that era are Pertti J. Pelto, *Anthropological Research: The Structure of Inquiry* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), and G.N. Appell, *Ethical Dilemmas in Anthropological Inquiry: A Case Book* (Waltham, MA: African Studies Association, 1978).
- 33 Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (London, New York: Tavistock, 1983), pp. 81-84.
- 34 Dennis Tedlock, "Questions Concerning Dialogical Anthropology," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 43, no. 4 (1987): 325-37.
- 35 Peggy Golde, ed., *Women in the Field: Anthropological Experiences* (Berkeley: University of California Press, rev. ed., 1986). More seems to have been written about the psychological stresses experienced by anthropologists in the field than the stresses their presence imposes on the people they study. John L. Wengle, *Ethnographers in the Field: The Psychology of Research* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988); Hammersley and Atkinson, *Ethnography*, pp. 98-101.

- 36 Kirsten Hastrup and Peter Elsass, "Anthropological Advocacy: A Contradiction in Terms?" *Current Anthropology* 31, no. 3 (1990): 301-311; Georg Henriksen, "Anthropologists as Advocates: Promoters of Pluralism or Makers of Clients?" in *Advocacy and Anthropology*, ed. Robert Paine (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1985), pp. 119-29; Mayberry-Lewis, "A Special Sort of Pleading."
- 37 Russel L. Barsh and James Y. Henderson, *The Road: Indian Tribes and Political Liberty* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 63ff.
- 38 Mayberry-Lewis, "A Special Sort of Pleading," p. 147. A legitimate question may be posed about the feasibility of "detachment" in any study of human behaviour.
- 39 Gewertz and Errington, "We Think, Therefore They Are?" p. 89 (emphasis added).
- 40 See Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrill Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929), p. 479.
- 41 W. Lloyd Warner, *Democracy in Jonesville: A Study in Quality and Inequality* (New York: Harpers, 1949); James West, *Plainville. U.S.A.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945).
- 42 August de Belmont Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth and Elmtown Revisited* (New York: Wiley, 1975).
- 43 Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941).
- 44 John P. Demos, *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972).
- 45 Jean Morisset, *Les chiens s'entre-dévorent . . . : Indiens, blancs et métis dans le grand nord canadien* (Montreal: Nouvelle Optique, 1977), pp. 247-51. Morisset over-generalizes; his subjects were a particular group of Euro-Canadians engaged in frontier development.
- 46 Including positive stereotypes. On the ties between romanticism, "nouveau primitivism" and blaming the victim in contemporary Canada, see Russel Barsh, "James Fenimore Cooper in Canada," *Literary Review of Canada* 5, no. 1 (1996): 11-13.
- 47 Plaice, *The Native Game*. Compare Niels W. Braroe, *Indian and White: Self-Image and Interaction in a Canadian Plains Community* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), concluding that each side had deployed stereotypes to maintain borders and defend resources.
- 48 Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Classes, Colonialism, and Acculturation," in *Masses in Latin America*, ed. Irving L. Horowitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 235-88; Colin M. MacLachlan and Jaime E. Rodriguez O., *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: A Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
- 49 Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).

- 50 D.W. Griffith's controversial film, *Birth of a Nation*, endorsed a romantic view of the Klan, fashioning imagery that has been as hard to shake from American iconology as the "vicious" Indians in the formula Westerns of the 1930s and 1940s.
- 51 Leonard J. Moore, "Historical Interpretations of the 1920's Klan: The Traditional View and the Populist Revision," *Journal of Social History* 24, no. 2 (1990): 341-57; Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); Rick Seltzer and Grace M. Lopes, "The Ku Klux Klan: Reasons for Support or Opposition among White Respondents," *Journal of Black Studies* 17, no. 1 (1986): 91-109; Kenneth D. Waid, "The Visible Empire: The Ku Klux Klan as an Electoral Movement," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11, no. 2 (1980): 217-34.
- 52 Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City*; Blee, *Women of the Klan*; Thomas J. Keil, "Capital, Labor, and the Klan: A Case Study," *Phylon* 46, no. 4 (1985): 341-52.
- 53 James L. Massey and Martha A. Meyers, "Patterns of Repressive Social Control in Post-Reconstruction Georgia, 1882-1935," *Social Forces* 68, no. 2 (1989): 458-88; Robert Alan Goldberg, *Hooded Empire: The Ku Klux Klan in Colorado* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981).
- 54 Martha Menchaca and Richard R. Valencia, "Anglo-Saxon Ideologies in the 1920s-1930s: Their Impact on the Desegregation of Mexican Students in California," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1990): 222-49; Lawrence Bobo and Vincent L. Hutchings, "Perceptions of Racial Group Competition: Extending Blumer's Theory of Group Position to a Multiracial Social Context," *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 6 (1996): 951-72.
- 55 Mary H. Cooper, "The Growing Danger of Hate Groups," *Editorial Research Reports* 1 (1989): 261-75; James E. Blackwell, "Persistence and Change in Intergroup Relations: The Crisis upon Us," *Social Problems* 29, no. 4 (1982): 325-46.
- 56 Eric Wolf, "American Anthropologists and American Society," in *Reinventing Anthropology*, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 251-63. Gellner, "The Politics of Anthropology," p. 300, argued that Americans are an extreme group among anthropologists, not because they assume power, but because they are fleeing from a society pervaded by its sense of superiority. Cultural relativism consequently has "a very special potency for them"; "it will be addictive and constitute a revelation."
- 57 Including Imperial Rome: Tacitus' *Germania* described the customs of each German tribe in detail; Seneca's *Problems in Natural Science* compiled ethnographic material on Persia and India; Virgil's *Georgics* attempted a theory of cultural evolution.
- 58 For example, Barry A. Turner, "Sociological Aspects of Organizational Symbolism," *Organization Studies* 7, no. 2 (1986): 101-115; Nancy DiTomaso, "Symbolic Media and Social Solidarity: The Foundations of Corporate Culture," *Research on the Sociology of Organizations* 5 (1987): 105-134; Stephen R. Barley, "Semiotics and the Study of Occupational and Organizational Cultures," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (1983): 393-413.

- 59 See, for example, Gladys L. Symons, "Coping with the Corporate Tribe: How Women in Different Cultures Experience the Managerial Role," *Journal of Management* 12, no. 3 (1986): 379-90; Harrison M. Trice, "Rites and Ceremonies in Organizational Cultures," *Research on the Sociology of Organizations* 4 (1985): 221-70.
- 60 Clark Molstad, "Control Strategies Used by Industrial Brewery Workers: Work Avoidance, Impression Management and Solidarity," *Human Organization* 47, no. 4 (1988): 354-60; David A. Schrier and F. David Mulcahy, "Middle Management and Union Realities: Coercion and Anti-Structure in a Public Corporation," *Human Organization* 47, no. 2 (1988): 146-51.
- 61 This was the same program that sponsored Fay Cohen's study on the politics of the fishing-rights struggle: *Treaties on Trial*.
- 62 Morisset, *Les chiens s'entre-devorent*, p. 251, found the same to be true in the Canadian North.
- 63 Samir Amin, "Democracy and National Strategy in the Periphery," *Third World Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (1987): 1129-56.
- 64 Russel L. Barsh, "Progressive-Era Bureaucrats and the Unity of Twentieth-Century Indian Policy," *American Indian Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1991): 1-14; Russel L. Barsh, "The BIA Reorganization Follies of 1978: A Lesson in Bureaucratic Self-Defense," *American Indian Law Review* 7, no. 1 (1979): 1-50.
- 65 Judy M. Torrance, *Public Violence in Canada, 1867-1982* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986).
- 66 Russel L. Barsh, *The Washington Fishing Rights Controversy: An Economic Critique* (Seattle: University of Washington BAFP Monographs, 2nd ed., 1979), p. 30.
- 67 Carmen Michaud, "De l'exotisme au reel: le racisme," *Recherches amerindiennes au Québec* 21, nos. 1 & 2 (1991): 111-17 (1991).
- 68 Jeffrey L. Klaiber, "Prophets and Populists: Liberation Theology, 1968-1988," *The Americas* 46, no. 1 (1989): 1-15.
- 69 Lois M. Wilson, "The Imperative of Justice: The Rise of Contextual Theologies," *Ecumenical Review* 40, nos. 3 & 4 (1988): 407-411.
- 70 Richard O. Clemmer, "Resistance and the Revitalization of Anthropologists: A New Perspective on Cultural Change and Resistance," in *Reinventing Anthropology*, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 213-47.