

# **ANTHROPOLOGY *IN PRACTICE***

News from the Society for Applied Anthropology in Manitoba (Inc.) S.A.A.M. INC.

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/saam/>

Volume 6, #2 January 2001

## **President's Report**

It is my pleasure, as your new President, to extend a welcome to the continued activities of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Manitoba. Challenge is before us, in part as a normal expectation of the change in administration. Our changeover came at an awkward time to achieve smooth and uninterrupted continuity, hence, there has been some delay in formulating a new year's program and in launching a slate of activities and manageable communication operations. As former President Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz pointed out in the last newsletter, new administrations often find it appropriate to look critically at the objectives of an organization. I am pleased to report that your Executive has been hard at work in this respect. The lengthy first meeting of the Executive in late October was encouraging and inspiring; it reinforced SAAM commitment to a broad range of issues and objectives, many of which are sketched by members of the Executive in this newsletter. The range of issues before us reflects a vibrant

academic and practising resource base in the region as well as a commitment to address a considerable range of issues affecting people in the region—from livelihood sustainability and housing to questions of health and health care access, from ecological and economic impacts of change to political processes of community engagement, and from concerns about equity and justice to active strategies for monitoring and critiquing public policy.

The tradition of drawing upon the first hand experiences of local researchers and practitioners in the form of invited presentations continues to have strong support. And there are visions of future conferences on the scale of those so successfully organized by SAAM on the Northern Flood Agreement and on Globalization and Community, but not necessarily as annual events. Interest is also expressed in alternative forms of discourse, including discussion forums and occasional focussed workshops. As a result of our rich discussion, we have

decided to use the current year to sample a variety of formats and foci. One thing for sure – in a single year we will be able to address only a portion of the interesting possibilities already proposed in our planning meeting.

(cont'd page 2)

---

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- **President's report**
- **Editor's Corner**
- **Summary of S.A.A.M. presentation**
- **Book Review**
- **Hot off the Press**
- **S.A.A.M. Follow-up of Past Presentations**
- **New Ideas, Future Directions**
- **Poetry and More...**

The November 25 meeting of SAAM focussed on research ethics. The organization was rather unorthodox for SAAM, but a resounding success in terms of issue probing and participant involvement. It also brought SAAM concerns and activities to the attention of a broader audience through the welcome participation of First Nations students in Native Studies, Natural Resources Institute, and Social Work at the University of Manitoba. What better can be achieved than to generate a strong desire to continue the discussion. Consequently, the next meeting, to be held January 27, 2001, will draw from the thoughtful research and action engagement of several of these students, and others, to assess effectiveness of a number of institutionalized research ethics guidelines.

While the intent behind such guidelines is protection of researched communities and individuals, the political reality is an emphasis on legal protection of institutions from which such work is launched. Situational and/or cultural differences are too often given only token attention. For example, "informed consent" is far more complicated than expressing to potential informants or consultants one's research objectives and possible dangers or benefits of any proposed work, and then recording "consent" in some fashion recognized in our society. These concerns go far beyond the community of practising anthropologists to a broad multidisciplinary audience. It bodes well for SAAM to spearhead local coordination of expressed interest and assembled wisdom.

Our meeting venue changed out of November necessity, so we desire further opportunity to explore options. Our November 25 meeting was held in a lecture hall of the University of Winnipeg. Our next meeting will be across Spence Street in Menno Simons College, and may become our stable new home. This venue offers the warmth, light, and "roundtable" atmosphere offered by the

Pembina Trails Library, and the price is very right! Whatever the venue, we are trying to offer interesting and relatively "light and healthy" lunch items for those with a noon-time appetite. Contributions towards lunch will continue to be welcomed.

Several practical matters must be faced by SAAM. Attendance at meetings is quite variable, and membership renewals are low enough to threaten Society continuity. On a limited budget, how do we remain in touch with the membership? Why is the well-designed and effectively-managed website so infrequently visited? What is the role of what has become a quality newsletter? Who is reading it, and why is the pool of contributors so small? How can we sustain newsletter production with input limited to such a small group of participants? Based on my own administrative experience involving foundation of and explicit initiatives to "institutionalize" another newsletter, I have recommended fewer newsletters per year. Accordingly, this year we aim to produce three issues – one in early Fall, one in mid Winter, and one in late Spring. The current issue is the second in this volume; a third one is to appear in late Spring 2001.

Any association's survival is dependent upon engagement of its membership. Association vibrancy can be the product of particular office-holders for a time (and to Jean-Luc goes much credit for the last several successful years!), but is not likely sustainable if heavily dependent upon regular individualized persuasion or reminders. Our greatest challenge is to create an organization whose expertise and service generates an ongoing expectation in the community. To all those who desire SAAM to have continuity, I urge some form of regular participation in SAAM events and initiatives – through attendance and participation in meetings, through regular response to open invitations to contribute to your regional newsletter

discussion forum, or through service on the Executive, but hopefully through some combination of all these channels.

Raymond Wiest  
President, S.A.A.M.

---

## Editor's Corner

The flurry of debate, denial, anger and embarrassment surrounding the details of Patrick Tierney's book, *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon* comes at a time in which anthropology, and of course other social sciences, are attempting to become increasingly reflexive and sensitive to the limitations of truth and objectivity and the politics of presentation and representation of people involved in research. The revelations in *El Dorado* have placed anthropology in the media limelight, causing many professionals to wring their hands and imagine the disreputation of the discipline. Others may perceive this contention as an opportunity for further reflection and re-analysis of the expectations, poetics and politics of research into order to reevaluate and rework the ways in which anthropologists pursue, implement, and write about their research. Who is funding the research? Who benefits?

At issue is also researchers' perceptions about project 'subjects' or 'participants' and the role they play in the research project. Perceptions and behaviour, which affect the nature of methodology and the way in which researchers relate to individuals involved in a study, are shaped and guided by a set of ethical principles, established by a sponsoring institution. Very frequently, these ethical principles are protective measure for the researcher and institution rather than being particularly relevant or protective for those being studied.

The revealed incidences in 'El Dorado'

prompted the American Anthropological Association to create an Ad Hoc Committee to review its statements on ethics and human rights, consult other sources (documents and individuals) and coordinate with other organizations potentially pursuing investigations, including those in Venezuela and Brazil (for a complete and detailed list, see <http://www.ameranthassn.org/committees/ethics/ethics.htm>). The motivation to review and reflect not only comes from within the discipline but also from those who have been or are being studied. By working with such groups to create a code of ethics that is open, respectful and aware, the possibility for informed, humanistically oriented research becomes all the more achievable. Notwithstanding this optimistic prognosis, as Ray Wiest remarked, "guidelines for ethics in research cannot be construed as a recipe for successful fieldwork or participatory action; research ethics is about awareness of bias and value differences, and about respect, understanding, and implications of power" (S.A.A.M. executive meeting, December, 2000).

Monica Wiest

---

## S.A.A.M. Presentation Summary November 25, 2000

On November 25, 2000 the Society for Applied Anthropology in Manitoba held the first of two meetings to be devoted to the discussion of the ethics of doing research in Aboriginal communities. The first meeting, prompted by concerns voiced to SAAM members by a number of Aboriginal graduate students from various departments at the University of Manitoba, focussed on identifying ethical issues raised in doing research in Aboriginal communities.

Earl Stevenson, a graduate student at the Natural Resources Institute, began the meeting by introducing himself and reflecting on his own

experience of the ethics review process at the University of Manitoba. Stevenson expressed his concern that the Ethics Review Guidelines in place at the University of Manitoba (modelled on the current Tri-Council Guidelines pertaining to Research on Human Subjects) are written in a strongly academic and legal jargon which is inaccessible to most people in First Nations communities. He commented that the ethics guidelines do not incorporate Aboriginal ways of knowing and fail to articulate culturally appropriate ways to conduct research in First Nations communities. Stevenson noted the general failure of non-Native social scientists to carefully transcribe and cite the words of their Aboriginal collaborators and questioned the validity of (re)interpreting information from such collaborators when it was not thoroughly documented. He also lamented the lack of scholarship on research methodologies written from an Indigenous perspective, citing Maori scholar Linda Smith's book *Decolonizing Methodologies* as an exemplary work in this genre.

Many of the speakers following Stevenson echoed his concerns about the inadequacies of the Tri-Council Ethics Guidelines. One recurring theme was the lack of indigenous perspectives in much current social science literature pertaining to First Nations. Kathryn Irvine, a graduate student in Social Work, commented on how impersonal depictions of Aboriginal people as "victims of the system" overlook the personal achievements of many individuals, thereby perpetuating negative stereotypes. Alison Edmunds, who is doing a thesis in Native Studies on Inuit artists in Labrador, remarked how much literature on Inuit artists is market-driven and ignores what the artists themselves actually think about their work.

An atmosphere of mutual respect and calm characterized the meeting. Nevertheless, some participants voiced strong and at times opposing

viewpoints. Native Studies student Alison Dubois confessed her misgivings about anthropological research in First Nations communities. She observed that as an Aboriginal person she did not want to be studied. On the issue of note-taking (raised by the Secretary of SAAM, whose job it is to record all meetings), Dubois questioned the practice of paraphrasing individuals rather than carefully quoting them, which she observed often contributed to the promotion of negative and racist stereotypes. Dubois also criticized the practice of anthropologists being paid royalties for ethnographies which they have written with help from largely unpaid Aboriginal collaborators. On this point Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz (Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Manitoba) voiced his disagreement. While recognizing that many anthropologists have not fully appreciated the impact of their characterizations of First Nations communities in the ethnographies which they have written, Chodkiewicz stated that some anthropologists have made considerable personal and professional sacrifices in order to undertake research in First Nations communities.

Reflecting on the many changes he has seen over the past 30 years in attitudes towards conducting research among Indigenous peoples, SAAM President Ray Wiest noted that social science can contribute to solving serious problems around the world. As a cogent example he cited his own research on Bengali garment workers. Through participatory methods such as discussion groups and action research, Wiest's Bengali research team, together with their collaborators in the garment trade, have the opportunity to gain a new understanding of the position of garment workers in a repressive society that is drawn into globalized exploitation. Wiest and his graduate students are attempting to facilitate garment worker connections with each other and also with international labour organizations, thereby

contributing to the possibility of changing local and international labour standards.

The importance of conducting ethical research in diverse communities was repeatedly emphasized throughout the meeting and it was agreed by the SAAM Executive to host a second meeting to further explore this issue at Menno Simons College on January 27, 2001. General issues to be considered at our next meeting will include: (1) the structure of ethics review boards; (2) the best means of instilling responsible attitudes in social science researchers conducting research in Aboriginal and other diverse communities; (3) acknowledging mistakes and forming a basis for mutual understanding and respect among social science researchers, their students and research collaborators.

---

## **Book Review**

*Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People*, by Linda Tuhiwai Smith.  
New York: Zed Books, 1999

*Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People* is, firstly, a book written for Indigenous researchers by a Maori researcher. Non-Indigenous researchers are not excluded from this project; there is an implicit invitation to participate in the transformation of research processes and the broader social contexts in which research is conducted. However, the centering discourse of this book is the repositioning of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge systems and the development of research methodologies, methods, and ethical guidelines that are inherently Indigenous.

Tuhiwai Smith designed her approach as a series of essays that challenge the historical and contemporary epistemology of Western knowledge. Smith explores the intersections of imperialism, knowledge and research, and the

territory in which alternative knowledge systems and ways of knowing articulate. Smith likens imperialism to a virus that finds new ways to re-form and re-create itself, resistant to antibodies. Colonialism, as an outpost of imperialism, drawn from imperialist imaginations, becomes an image of an imperialist future self.

Research, from the perspective of this Indigenous writer, is bound by Western ideology; knowledge has been colonized, and researchers are the experts who all too often perpetuate this process. Indigenous views of history are negated because of the inherent challenge and resistance to the mission of colonization. Post-colonial discourse presumes that the lessons of colonization have been learned; Tuhiwai Smith argues that colonization is a layered process that continues to have a profound impact on Indigenous peoples. Decolonization is a process of centering Indigenous experience in historical and contemporary discourse, firstly by re-creating and re-claiming alternative Indigenous histories and knowledges, and secondly, by developing Indigenous projects that contribute to the multi-layered processes of self-determination.

Self-determination in this context becomes more than a political agenda or outcome—rather, it is a goal of social justice, within local, regional and global communities. Decolonization, healing, transformation, and mobilization are processes through which communities move in complex and non-linear ways. The challenge for Indigenous researchers is equally complex. Meeting the demands of academic communities based on Western traditions that have deeply ruptured the trust of Indigenous peoples in research and researchers is only one part. Developing ethically respectful methodologies and methods that address these issues, and that incorporate the values of the Indigenous communities involved, is another part.

Indigenous researchers are also confronted with the shift in relationship that comes with the role of researcher, often in a home community. Indigenous peoples are still forced to defend their knowledge systems and their home territories from the ongoing Western agendas that destroy rainforests, mine resources, flood territories, patent genetic material and tribal medicine, commodify spirituality, and otherwise direct, classify, and interpret Indigenous peoples ways of knowing within Western paradigms. Indigenous researchers are faced with the challenge of overcoming a distrust that they had little to do with creating.

The scope of Tuhiwai Smith's critique is wide-ranging, carefully wrought, and tightly woven. The underlying project seeks to reclaim control over Indigenous ways of knowing and being; the author addresses the complex dimensions of this task in theoretical and pragmatic ways. Her critique moves beyond the deconstruction of Western knowledge systems to articulate Indigenous projects which developed out of the pursuit of social justice. Claiming, testimonies, storytelling, remembering, indigenizing, revitalizing, envisioning, discovering, and reclaiming are a few of the projects that are being undertaken by Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and organizations in global, regional, and local communities.

The methodologies and methods that she proposes include non-Indigenous researchers as collaborative partners in academic settings and in community research projects. The challenge, to non-Indigenous researchers is to participate in the transformation inherent in the process of decolonization of Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. Loss of privilege, and the power that is assumed with privilege, is both the consequence and the gift of that process. It is also a challenge for institutional change, for shifting of the paradigms that exclude other-than-Western

ways of knowing, learning, teaching, and being. For disciplines such as Anthropology—which have, to a great degree, been developed from Indigenous peoples knowledge systems—the debt is enormous, the gratitude so far expressed minimal, and the challenge to transform is both great, and imperative.

Kimberley Wilde

---

## Hot off the Press

*Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon*, by Patrick Tierney. Norton, 2000.

Reviewed by Michael Lambek in *The Globe and Mail*, December 23, 2000.

## Announcing a New Journal

A new journal has made its appearance: *Social Justice: Anthropology, Peace and Human Rights*. The first issue arrived in December 2000: Winter/Spring 2000, Volume 1, Numbers 1 - 4, ISSN 1563-1036. Issues will appear twice each year. The following is drawn from an opening statement by Robert A. Rubinstein, editor (p. 1): “*Social Justice* is the official journal of the Commission on Peace and Human Rights, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Science (IUAES). Through its members, the Commission encourages empirical and theoretical work on the full range of topics relating to human rights and collective security. These efforts focus on many critically important contemporary aspects of the social and cultural dynamics of peace and conflict, including among many others: the social and cultural consequences of militarism; forced migration; genocide; the continuing threat of nuclear disaster; inter-state rivalries and intra-state violence; the nature ... [of] international interventions; the exploitation of

individuals and groups in the service of politics; and the violation of human rights through processes of globalization. The publication of *Social Justice* marks a new phase in the work of the IUAES in the areas of peace and human rights.”

“... [T]he IUAES Commission on Urgent Anthropology has for decades brought together anthropologists from around the globe to respond to threats posed by colonialism and its heritage to the livelihoods and lifeways of indigenous peoples.” The Commission began its focus on peace in 1983. Specific interest in conflict and conflict resolution led to an interest in human rights. This new journal is in part an outgrowth of the IUAES news journal *Human Peace* edited by Professor Paul Doughty, University of Florida, a well-known active applied anthropologist.

This first issue contains nineteen original essays. A few examples must suffice: “Witchcraft and the Cold War” by Paul R. Turner; “The Defense of Daily Life” by Lise Peattie; “Conflict is a Western Worldview” by Alice B. Kehoe; “On Dominant Ideological Rivalry, War and Peace” by Oladijo O. Okediji; “The Mutual Relevance of Anthropology and Peace Studies” by Leslie E. Sponsel; “Desires for Peace vs. the Cultures of Violence in Colombia” by Paul L. Doughty; and “Peacekeeping Under Fire: Understanding the Social Construction of the Legitimacy of Multinational Intervention” by Robert A. Rubinstein.

---

## **New Ideas, Future Directions**

S.A.A.M., in its attempt to address pertinent issues and the interests of its membership (and to attract new members), has identified several significant themes that it hopes to pursue in the future. This list is not exhaustive of entertained ideas (for example, health/ medical anthropology,

and S.A.A.M. as a social and legal monitor). Bear in mind, not all these ideas will transpire into presentations or meeting in this current year! Given that insight, forethought and contacts are needed to effectively promote these issues, S.A.A.M. eagerly invites feedback and specific suggestions. Talk to a member of the executive, go to our website to contact us, or e-mail Monica at [umwiestm@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:umwiestm@cc.umanitoba.ca).

---

When asked to submit a piece dealing with "environmental issues," suggesting new directions which might be of interest or relevance to the future activities of S. A. A. M. Roy C. Dudgeon instead submitted a piece on "ecology". He explains the distinction between the two terms, the rationale for 'confusion', and the necessity for clarification.

### **Seeing Green: Ecology & Applied Anthropology**

Quite simply, the two terms, “environment” and “ecology” are not synonymous. Technically, "environment" refers merely to our inorganic surroundings or, more generally, is a synonym for "context." This is, of course, the term of choice of the transnational corporate media, which has also been picked up by political leaders and by much recent scholarship dealing with what are better described as ecological problems. There are political reasons for this, since an ecological approach carries implications which might challenge both the dominant world view and the patterns of social organization currently referred to as "globalization," which the transnational capitalist class continue to promote.

The first is that ecology primarily implies the study of *living* systems, and only secondarily their links to inorganic systems (the "environment"). Such a view challenges both the ideology and

practices of capitalist science and culture, which have long both thought about, and acted upon nature as though it were dead, inert, inorganic material. Ecology argues that this is part of the problem: nature must be treated with more respect and thoughtfulness precisely because organic systems can be irreparably harmed.

Secondly, an emphasis upon the "environment," or "environmentalism" leaves out any explicit reference to the relational or holistic approach to understanding such complex organic systems which ecology proposes. Such an approach, for example, studies the linkages between the values, patterns of social organization, and technologies which are currently promoted and pursued by transnational capitalism, and argues that its goals and techniques are maladaptive at all three levels. This is why the word "ecology" is seldom mentioned in the transnational corporate media.

Such a relational approach is also ecology's greatest strength and, to the extent that it pursues an holistic approach, anthropology's as well. It would allow us, as both applied anthropologists and as members of S. A. A. M., to understand the linkages between most if not all of the major issues which we have pursued in recent years. Mega-projects such as hydro-electric development in northern Manitoba, for example, are obviously linked to issues of social justice regarding the peoples of Cross Lake and other northern communities. They also perfectly reflect the centralized patterns of development currently promoted by capitalist culture, and therefore the links between large centralized development planning and the ongoing processes of globalization in terms of how we organize our production. Consequently, they are also linked to our interest in NGOs and their attempts to challenge or modify current patterns and paradigms of "development."

Besides their social impacts, of course, such

centralized planning and patterns of organization also have ecological impacts. A relational approach allows us to examine such detrimental social and ecological impacts as an inherent part of the functioning of a larger, self-consistent cultural system: that of transnational capitalism. Only if we understand the way in which the technologies, patterns of social organization, and ideology which this system promotes are mutually supportive aspects of a larger system, however, can we begin to tackle the detrimental social and ecological effects which it promotes. In other words, various problems and issues must not be considered in isolation from one another, but always with an eye to the linkages between them. Only then can we begin to understand the true scope of the various interconnected crises which confront us as we enter the new millennium.

### **Globalization**

Continued interest in analysis of globalization phenomena and global processes follows easily upon the success of the Globalization and Community conference organized by SAAM last year. Ongoing concern with societal impacts, both locally and elsewhere in the world, encourages more attention to this important theme. Among a variety of possible follow-ups, there is prospect for a close look at the garment industry in Bangladesh as it relates to the changing lives of women and the families they relate to through supportive relationships and/or efforts to distance themselves. Several dimensions of this research are likely to be of interest to SAAM members, including implications for: 1) sustainable livelihoods of disenfranchised rural peoples who seek urban alternatives, 2) social relation shifts, 3) realization of worker rights, protections, and health, and 4) the role of researchers in facilitating social solidarity and access to knowledge. Ray Wiest and Helal Mohiuddin are prepared to offer a presentation to

SAAM members sometime prior to the departure of Helal for further fieldwork in June 2001. Hopefully, there will be word in the near future of publisher acceptance and a publication plan for last year's Globalization and Community conference.

### **Non-Governmental Organizations: Comparative Analysis and Collaboration**

The presentation by Jerry Buckland in September 2000 set the stage for an engaging focus within SAAM on the comparative operations and impacts of various NGOs, particularly those with a prominent local presence. Representatives of selected NGOs (e.g., Mennonite Central Committee, Oxfam, Save the Children, World Vision) might be invited to speak at SAAM meetings. SAAM may be able to contribute constructively by acting as a monitor of different NGO philosophies, approaches and strategies. Partnering with some NGO initiatives may be a realistic and exciting option for SAAM.

### **Peace in Anthropological Perspective**

There has been a broadly-based interest in peace among anthropologists around the globe, and now this interest has coalesced in a new journal: *Social Justice: Anthropology, Peace and Human Rights*, official journal of the Commission on Peace and Human Rights, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Science (see review in this newsletter). SAAM members are likely to find this a provocative and positive focus of attention in the near future, and one likely to lead to important linkages for action. SAAM might build upon the well-established academic and applied focus on peace in our community in the Menno Simons College program.

### **Mentoring for Students**

As noted in the President's report, S.A.A.M. is re-examining its objectives and exploring ways

in which it can develop, improve, and better serve its members. Accordingly, the April 2000 newsletter raised this issue and offered several future directions for S.A.A.M. Along with the suggestion of the formation of temporary or permanent partnerships with local organizations, professional development sessions to facilitate training to effectively write proposals, access funding, and work with the press, lawyers, government, etc., and focussed discussions which revolve around job experience, problems, successes, limitations, learning experiences, new techniques, the idea of a mentorship program for students or newly practising anthropologists was also suggested. The following is presented as a step towards the creation of an organized mentorship program.

An informal 'mentoring program' could occur via occasional focussed workshops. While all graduate students have their advisor and committee members as academic support to their projects, it would nonetheless be useful for students to have the opportunity to present their work and to have the feedback of practitioners, community members, professors, and other project stakeholders. Such an exercise would give students guidance with their projects and research, enhance brainstorming and communication between stakeholders, experienced practitioners and aspiring applied anthropologists. In order to open the dialogue beyond academia, 'green' practitioners / researchers could also be incorporated into these discussions. These sessions might occur in the form of regular S.A.A.M. presentations, in which 4-5 people would have the opportunity to present their projects. Alternatively, an annual half-day or day workshop would afford opportunity to more individuals to share ideas, knowledge, and experience.

---

## **S.A.A.M. Follow-up**

Exploring new issues and addressing ‘breaking news’ is important for S.A.A.M. as is evidenced in the nature of our presentations and conferences. To resist following only the bandwagon, it is also important to revisit subjects that (despite our media-oriented world would have people believe) are ongoing, unfolding, and evolving. S.A.A.M. presentations are interactive events, sometimes with real consequences – and those consequences should be communicated to the membership at large. In this spirit, S.A.A.M. has revisited two significant items presented in the last two years: The Northern Flood Agreement: Cross Lake and ‘The Habitat Inner City Millennium Project’: Habitat for Humanity.

We invite further reflections on these topics and / or current information!

### **The Twenty-third Anniversary of the Signing of the Northern Flood Agreement**

When Manitoba Hydro commenced construction of the Churchill-Nelson Hydroelectric Project of the early 1970's, they did so without the consent of five Cree communities to be substantially affected. As it turns out, the traditional lands, their economy and ways of life are even more seriously affected than anticipated.

With construction of the project already well underway, the governments of Canada, Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro signed the Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) with the five Cree nations, including Pimicikamak Cree Nation (PCN) at Cross Lake. That moment in time held the bold possibility that hydro development would include impacted Aboriginal peoples as beneficiaries of the development and prosperity of the province. Even so, the NFA was not the choice of PCN. They entered it under extreme duress, and only after their historically occupied lands were devastated

by the flooding. Although four of the five Cree communities in the Nelson River network have recently opted for an alternative implementation agreement, the Cross Lake people are holding the government to the original NFA of 1977.

Twenty three years later, Manitoba and the rest of Canada have risen to the global pinnacle of socio-economic status. Yet, Aboriginal peoples, as noted by the United Nations human rights monitoring bodies, have been left far behind. Despite treaty guarantees for protection of traditional lands, the negative impact on hunting, trapping and fishing territories has been substantial. If hydro development has proven to be basic to Manitoba's economic health, the resulting benefits have not flowed to the people most affected by the hydro project. The principle of Cross Lake's access to its own resources with current technological means for attaining culturally and economically viable industries belongs to the heart of the agreement. Yet it is the sidestepping of the principle that prevents resolution to this twenty-three-year-old conflict.

Although the clause, “eradication of mass poverty and mass unemployment” appears prominently in the NFA, such eradication has not materialized. Rather, the hydro mega-project conscripted the bounty of the province's two largest rivers to serve the “greater economic good”, while treating the PCN as a “necessary casualty of the modernization process.”<sup>1</sup> Benefits flow south while a disproportionate share of environmental and human costs are borne in the north. Circumstances of despair and deprivation prevail at Cross Lake comparable or worse to situations in so-called third world countries. Due to the dams, thousands of miles of shoreline habitat

---

<sup>1</sup>Alex Netherton. Untitled Ph.D. dissertation in progress, Carleton University, Ottawa.

are eroding and collapsing into waterways, islands are disappearing right off the map, ecological balance has been disrupted, and the traditional economy of hunting, trapping and fishing has been sharply undermined. The corrosive effect this has had on the economic, social and cultural fabric of PCN has contributed to mass unemployment, suicide epidemics, and desperate social conditions. PCN insists on a broad and concerted implementation of central NFA provisions that would be ecologically defensible and culturally viable. Such implementation would benefit the province as a whole. In the end, nobody benefits from the endemic unemployment in the north and from ongoing environmental and social destruction.

Meanwhile, the Canadian economy is booming, unemployment elsewhere is lower than it has been in decades and Manitoba Hydro is performing better financially than ever before. When comparing living conditions in southern Manitoba with those in Cross Lake, there is no evidence that affected, aboriginal peoples have been "dealt with fairly and equitably" as promised in the 1977 NFA. Though governments and Hydro have made efforts to fulfill certain NFA obligations, a situation of unacceptable disparity persists. If our governments and the publicly-owned utility would fully honour the NFA, the PCN would have a share in the ongoing benefits flowing from the project.

Over the past two years or so, SAAM has increasingly taken on the role of societal monitor. The need for monitoring has become apparent with the boom of northern industrial development; the mix of component actors surrounding hydro development in Manitoba's Nelson River project is a case in point. Providing an opportunity to hear many of the actors involved speak about this issue during a 1999 conference on the Status of the Northern Flood Agreement, SAAM participated in revealing vested interests in the goals of the

project. If pressure for production of more kilowatts and generation of more employment are the political priorities, then SAAM's public discussions demonstrated that such benefits do not accrue to the five Cree communities directly implicated. Furthermore, the impact of SAAM's publication, *First Nations and Hydroelectric Development in Northern Manitoba. The Northern Flood Agreement: Issues and Implications* is evident from Manitoba Hydro's reflexive reading of this book and its readiness to discuss more openly the situation at hand.

Menno Wiebe

Two publications are very relevant to this topic: Y. G. Lithman, R. R. Riewe, R. E. Wiest, R. E. Wrigley (eds). 1992. *People and Land in Northern Manitoba: 1990 Conference at the University of Manitoba*, and Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz and Jennifer Brown (eds). 1999. *First Nations and Hydroelectric Development in Northern Manitoba: The Northern Flood Agreement: Issues and Implications*.

### **The Habitat Inner City Millennium Project: Habitat for Humanity**

Last Spring Mary Williams' outlined Habitat for Humanity's (Winnipeg affiliate) "Inner City Millennium Project" in the William Whyte neighbourhood in North Winnipeg. This project, to be carried out over the next three to five years, will build over fifty houses and, in the process, relocate over fifty families. In this S.A.A.M. presentation, Habitat for Humanity expressed the need for the documentation of the urban renewal process. This resulted in the partnership of three graduate students with Habitat for Humanity. While answering to Habitat for Humanity's needs, their research activities will also fulfill the participating students' course work or thesis requirements.

**Allan Suchan's** current work in applied anthropology is a project investigating the perceptions and understandings of incoming homeowners at Winnipeg Habitat for Humanity concerning sexism, racism, and sexual harassment. He will conduct interviews and a focus group with incoming Habitat homeowners to assess their understanding of these important social matters. After, He will provide information to the respondents about how sexism, racism, and sexual harassment are defined in Winnipeg. A written report of his findings will be presented to Winnipeg Habitat. This report will be used to sensitize future incoming homeowners about these oppressive behaviours. This project is part of a graduate seminar in applied anthropology at the University of Manitoba.

**Doug Watson's** M.A. thesis research involves exploring the effects of relocation on the neighbourhood's sense of community and neighbourliness. The aim of this research is to provide a partial before and after picture of the neighbourhood blocks to be affected by the construction of fourteen houses on Manitoba, Pritchard and Alfred Avenues in Winnipeg's North End. Part of this process is to define the current and future residents' concepts of *neighbour* and *neighbourhood* by exploring their ideas and behaviours with regard to this concepts. Through the use of a questionnaire that is census-data oriented, semi-structured interviews that explore the feelings, perceptions, and thoughts of the residents regarding their neighbourhood and neighbours, and participant observation during the week of house construction in July 2001, an understanding is hoped to be reached regarding the nature of the relationships between neighbours in the William Whyte area of north Winnipeg. He aims to determine some of the effects of the renewal project on area itself. For example, how

does it affect the dynamics between the people living on a block and their sense of cohesion (or lack of)? How do these dynamics contribute to an environment where people and families will want to not only stay, but thrive? In other words, what makes people remain in a neighbourhood?

**Monica Wiest's** M.A. thesis project, tentatively titled *Re-Presenting Youth. An exploration of young people's experiences in urban renewal efforts: a visual documentation project*, involves listening to youth's voices and seeing their images of their neighbourhood and the William Whyte area through photography. In using a visual anthropology project to apply the principles of participatory research, she seeks to meet with youth involved in the renewal process (current residents, future homeowners, and 'volunteer' youth). These individuals are provided with cameras to take pictures of the William Whyte area as well as the neighbourhood in which they most identify as 'home'. Of interest is what meanings the images in the pictures have for the participants, what do they tell about their neighbourhood and their participants experiences and attitudes about where they live? How does my interpretation of their pictures differ from the participants'? How does the experience of picture taking alter their ideas about the inner city? Through several informal discussions and interviews with the participants and their families and by participating in the building of their homes in July 2001, The goal is to better understand how the participants perceive their lives in their neighbourhood, how they feel about themselves, and the extent of command they feel they have over their lives, their sense of agency. What do they think about Habitat's Revitalization Project? How do they think they have been involved? (How) could they have been better involved? How / What do they see as improvements to their

neighbourhood?

Through an exploration of theories and realities of youth and neighbourhood revitalization, the aim is to challenge and broaden understandings of youth and their role in society. This entails a discussion of the structures which create knowledge and shape experience, as well as an exploration of ideas about the social construction of youth / adolescence. It will be productive to examine how well these models reflect the reality of inner city youth who are from different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds.

---

### **Contributions:**

The following contributions are a demonstration of our interest and desire include many voices in this newsletter. If you wish to put forth a new idea, a response to S.A.A.M.'s activities, or if you have interesting insights or a story to share, contact us!

Poems, like stories, narratives, and other forms of creative writing, are not only creative but serve to communicate thoughts, ideas, circumstances of places on time and place, promoting cross-cultural awareness. This recognition has prompted some social scientists to increasingly incorporate such forms into ethnographic research writing.

---

### **The Salvation Army hostel for the Homeless in Winnipeg: a closer look at the Booth Centre**, by Dorothy Wise

This fall I received a collect phone call from "Bob". Depressed and considering suicide, he called me from a reserve in Northern Manitoba.

### **Under the Willows**

by Heather Unger, a student in Introduction to Anthropology, Menno Simons College

I long for a patch of grass  
A piece of common ground,  
A place made sacred by willow bows.

A place of work  
A place of rest  
A place of knowing

Where bannock bakes  
And quilts are sewn  
Where roots are ground  
And tapestries are woven.

Where sunshine warms  
And breezes rush  
Where silence speaks  
An laughter floats

Where stories rise  
And music dances  
Where I meet you  
On a patch of grass...

...and willows weep for joy.

After suggesting to him that leaving the reserve might be a good idea to through this bad period, I started to investigate his accommodation opportunities should he choose to move to Winnipeg. The only place I found for him to stay while he applied for welfare and/or looked for work in Winnipeg was the Booth Centre, the

Salvation Army multi-story hostel for the homeless, off Main Street near Higgins. The Booth Centre exists in a void where there are few other institutional alternatives for accommodation and support for Manitobans like Bob, who arrive in Winnipeg with no money. Unfortunately, the methods of operation do not fully address the needs of people like Bob. For instance, because the Booth Centre does not turn anybody away if they are over 18 and under 65, "economic migrants" who are coming from reserves or rural areas of Manitoba to Winnipeg in search of work are lumped together and tacitly treated as though they were alcoholics, drug addicts, or people in need of rehabilitation. Furthermore, under the current system, it is impossible to accumulate enough savings to tide one over during the first few weeks in Winnipeg when one comes from a reserve with over 80 percent unemployment.

While exploring options for Bob, the questions I had when I started this search came directly out of my own experience of homelessness in London. They were simple: does the Booth Centre require its residents to leave its premises for several hours each day? Are residents allowed to return to their mat on the floor, or bed in a dormitory / room at will during the day? How much money per month does the Booth Centre receive from Manitoba Income and Economic Assistance (welfare) for each client it accommodates? How much money does the client receive per month?

I learned from the director of residential accommodation, Captain Heather Darrach, the Booth Centre has room for 150 men in its residence with accommodations ranging from temporary mats in the day lounge to dormitory rooms and single rooms. There are also another 34 private rooms on a separate floor of the hostel for women and their children. I was informed that the men sleeping on mats and in dormitories do have to be off the premises from 7:30 a.m. (after

breakfast) until 12:00 noon (on very cold days, people are allowed to stand between the double entrance doors). The men with single rooms have to vacate them for cleaning for only an hour or so once a week. The women and their children in private rooms do not have to vacate the centre.

According to Captain Karen Oldfield, the Booth Centre also runs other programs, such as the Anorage Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation program, Crisis Stabilization Unit, and they have services for people with mental health problems and a day room for homeless people in which they can warm up and obtain the use of showers, as telephone, washing machines and dryers.

When I visited the Booth Centre, I noticed that many of its residents were of First Nations ancestry, as Bob is. Perhaps some of the residents are making a transition from life on a reserve or rural Manitoba to a life in Winnipeg, as Bob may do at some time. Could the province not provide more appropriate transitions programs for First Nations people than the Booth Centre? It seems to me that the federal and provincial governments are helping refugees from other countries adjust to Canadian society better than they are helping people like Bob adjust to life in Winnipeg.

Perhaps the province of Manitoba could provide hostel accommodation for Manitobans who come to Winnipeg in search of work. An orientation program on the job market in Winnipeg and a work-experience program could be run alongside the hostel. When people start to receive their welfare cheques, the hostel could then charge them the rental portion of their cheque of \$271 per month, leaving them money to spend on their food and other needs. Accommodations could be self-contained units, so people could shop and cook for themselves. This would differ from the current situation in which rent, food and social service costs are automatically deducted from client's welfare cheque, leaving clients \$46.50 a month as

spending money, and little choice.

Through my own encounters with homelessness and rehabilitation, I learned that having one's own cubicle or room from which one can come and go at will helps one feel in control of one's life. Welfare recipients (as well as myself) would just like to have a one-bedroom apartment, a bus pass and a phone. We want to be able to socialize with our friends in coffee shops or fast-food restaurants, and to be able to pay for a cup of coffee or tea. I do not believe that having only \$46.50 per month to spend is very rehabilitative.

Brian Barton, program specialist for Manitoba Employment and Income Assistance, told me the people at the Booth Centre "need to be there", but I wonder whether his department is screening potential residents properly to find out if the Booth Centre is the best option to fit their needs. There are a lot of people for whom these offered accommodations are not the best solution imaginable. To the best of my knowledge, alternative accommodation for Manitoba provincial internal economic migrants, who are temporarily penniless, does not exist in Winnipeg.

---

**S.A.A.M. members and any other interested persons**

are invited to our next meeting, to be held on

**Saturday, January 27, 2001 at 11:00 a.m.**

On this occasion our meeting will be held at

**Menno Simons College, 380 Spence St.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Fl., Room 3Mc02N, University of Winnipeg**

The topic of this session will be

**Institutional Research Ethics Guidelines:  
Critical Assessment through Application Experiences**

Continuing from our November 25, 2000 discussion, this session will probe several specific sets of research ethics guidelines: the new Canadian Tri-Council guidelines; guidelines previously used in the Department of Anthropology, University of Manitoba; guidelines distributed by the Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba; and *Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North*, prepared by the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies. New participants will join several of our November 25 invited participants to assess these guidelines in relation to their own field research experiences. A set of principles for endorsement by the Society of Applied Anthropology in Manitoba is one objective.

Lunch munchies, coffee, and other beverages will be available.

Donations will be accepted from those who consume.

Please attend and bring a friend.