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Interview 4

Regna Darnell, “These are the chains of connections that link my work in history of anthropology, my writing, and my fieldwork”

Interview recorded by Zoom on 11 June, 2022.

Chloé Laplantine – Hello and welcome in this new Interview of History and philosophy of the language sciences. I am Chloé Laplantine. Today we are joined by Regna Darnell, who is a Distinguished Professor at the department of anthropology of the University of Western Ontario.

Hello Regna. thank you very much for accepting my invitation.

By way of introduction, I would say that you are both an anthropologist and a historian of anthropology

Some of your books and contributions are standard works for the historian of anthropology but also for the historian of linguistics, such as your book on Brinton, your numerous articles on Boas’s work and legacy, your biography of Sapir, and many articles on different aspects of what we usually call the Boasian tradition, which is often defined as a linguistic anthropology. We can find some of your articles collected in two recent volumes published by the University of Nebraska Press, *The History of Anthropology. A Critical Window on the Discipline in North America* in 2021, and *History of Theory and Method in Anthropology* in 2022.

Could you tell us how you first became interested in the history of anthropology? And also, about the people you have encountered or collaborated with during your career, like Frederica de Laguna, “Pete” Hallowell, George Stocking, Dell Hymes, William Labov, or Erving Goffman?

Regna Darnell – I would like to start by saying that I am both anthropologist and historian of anthropology. I do not see them as separate. The two volumes of my selected writings (Darnell 2021, 2022) are more than collected versions of my articles. The language is rewritten to reflect contemporary language and to be intelligible to a contemporary audience. These versions supersede the originals. It is not simply a reprinting of past work. The reflexive commentary on the emergence of each piece as it worked until it appeared in a book is the reason that I have done these volumes and I envision a third one coming forward soon. I would say that this is a *palimpsest* – a word I love, for mindful reflexivity – that is that it gives us a chance in these two volumes to think about how things get from being an article to being a book. That’s somewhat different from a book like *Invisible Genealogies* (Darnell 2001), which identified key Boasian figures and revisited each. That was a less reflexive project in some ways, but it has been the basis for what I have learned about these various folks. There has been a pattern, which I’m sure you’ve noticed, throughout my work of co-editing. I treasure co-editing because it makes the work that one does a collaboration or a conversation. And that keeps me from getting stuck in a rut where I see my own starting position as the only possible one. And it rarely is. So, I changed my mind a lot after I listened to what people tell me in response. And working with co-editors is one way of doing that effectively, one that I have enjoyed immensely.

You will note two volumes of the collected works of Edward Sapir (Darnell *et al*, ed. 1994, Darnell *et al*, ed. 1999) that I did with Judith Irvine, a fellow graduate student at Penn, so I call her Judy, but she doesn’t do that formally anymore. She was part of the linguistic

anthropology cohort around Hymes. She too is an editor. The ambiguous authorship of her reconstruction of Sapir class notes by different students (Sapir 1994) caused us all sorts of reference problems when I was doing the two Nebraska History of Anthropology volumes recently, because they didn't know whether to list it under Irvine or Sapir. I think we decided to list it under Irvine, because it is in fact her work. What she did was to take all of the remaining class notes by students of Sapir in his classes and try to reconstruct from them what the volume he never got around to writing might have looked like. And that I think would be his statement of what he wanted to say about culture and language. It's a brilliant piece of work which I think puts her in the category of significant editors. That hasn't been the major thrust of her work, but that is a terribly important contribution. And we work together effectively and continue to on the grounds that she comes from a very different background. She's an Africanist, she is a social anthropologist with interests in music and various other things that are just not my thing. And much more social anthropology than my cultural anthropology. So, it has been a give and take relationship over decades.

I'm going to note as I speak in general about the intersectionality of my connections and how they put me in contact with others. This is cumulative. Those connections also become my own connections and lead me to new collaborations and networks. So, I find myself with a huge spread across disciplines and institutions and national traditions that I find really fun. And I think *fun* is an important word to keep in mind.

My early connections for obvious reasons are largely through the University of Pennsylvania. Now, the University of Pennsylvania for me has become the American Philosophical Society archives as my home base rather than the University of Pennsylvania as such. I have no reason to really be on a continuing engagement with them. But I do with the APS library because I remain very active in their archival work and in the various ways that they fund scholarship.

I did the American Anthropological Association, that is the flagship journal, obituaries of Frederica de Laguna, (Darnell 2005), A. F. C. Wallace (Darnell 2017), and George Stocking (Darnell 2014), which I will discuss below. Maybe I'll start with Wallace because he's the one who is not well known, and that's one of the places where I really think there is work of retrieval to be done. There are a couple of reasons for that. Tony Wallace was a very quiet man and self-contained. He doesn't volunteer personal information, he doesn't volunteer much of anything unless you ask him a direct question, actually. It's a style. He is an interdisciplinary scholar, which I think has diluted his potential audience. He works across history, Canada-US border, anthropology, history, and various other things. His father, Paul Wallace, was a historian. And I think Tony's continuing loyalty to the tradition of his father is extremely important. When Tony prepared his papers to donate to the American Philosophical Library, he prepared a Wallace's collection, which included his father's papers. And I think that's a critical connection. Wallace's papers were edited in two volumes (Wallace 2003, 2004) for a Nebraska series by Robert S. Grumet. And I think Grumet goes in our, again, collection of editors who have done Yeoman's labor in making things available and on the record long term. I also met Tony later in his life after his retirement and the death of his wife Betty at the Iroquois conference, because he returned to Tuscarora where he had done his first fieldwork or to the outskirts of the reserve in Winston, Pennsylvania and was from there able to be involved again with things like the annual Iroquois Conference, for which I picked him up and drove him to Philadelphia for those meetings a number of times. So, we chatted on those occasions as well as others. It's a long complicated kind of trajectory, which I think most of these stories are.

Turning to Pete Hallowell. I had a lot of trouble learning to call him "Pete" because I was raised to say, "Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So" or "Dr. and Mrs. So-and-So", just, you know, that was what you did in my generation. But he made it very clear to me that that made him feel

old. And he didn't like that. So, he became "Pete" to me ever thereafter. When I was at Bryn Mawr as an undergraduate, I took courses with Freddie de Laguna and with Pete Hallowell in my last year. I took "Culture and personality", I think it was called, and I took "History of anthropology" with Freddie. Now, you would think that it would be the other way around, that is, that Pete would teach the history of anthropology course, and Freddie would teach the culture and personality course. But it didn't work that way for a number of crazy reasons. And the fact that it didn't meant that there was a synergy between the two of them on the way in which they put together their ideas. And I think that that was a terribly important kind of thing. I will return to talking about Freddie a bit later, because there are a number of other things I would like to say about her, but that is an important starting point and her connection with Pete, the history of anthropology, is significant for me.

Turning to Stocking, George Stocking was on the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania for one semester in the last year of my MA and the first year of my PhD and thus served on the examining committee. He is a self-appointed gatekeeper for the history of anthropology, and as I have said on various occasions, he is a master of the vignette. That is not the whole book, but here's a piece from which we can read the history of something much larger. I have always seen George in some sense as my nemesis and foil. In some sense, I've had to define my career as independent of his, and to mean something different when I say "history of anthropology" than he does. And the volume *History of Theory and Method in Anthropology* spends a lot of time talking about that because I have presented both what I said about him in the flagship obituary (Darnell 2014), which should not be critical, in my opinion. That's not the place of the flagship obituary, but I also reviewed it, and I reviewed it expressing much more of this ambiguity. I will say about George that he did not take criticism well on any possible kind of front. It had to be his road or not at all. I think that he spent a lot of time trying to make sure that I was not direct competition for him and his role as the gatekeeper of history of anthropology. He was a chauvinist, although it doesn't sound that way on the surface and he would say he wasn't. But come on. There just haven't been any women that he has put forward seriously. And I think that's a real flaw in the way he proceeds. When I talk about my role as a gatekeeper for the history of anthropology, I do it in a very different sense. What I mean by that is that I have an inclusive approach to that gatekeeper role at Nebraska and I will come back to that.

Dell Hymes. The most recent and pending issue is that Hymes is now under sexual harassment charges from the University of Virginia where he moved after his retirement from Penn and they have removed him from their website and from various other links. I was completely unaware of these events because what I knew about Hymes's contributions to the discipline were about events that occurred before I left the University of Pennsylvania in 1969 to move to Canada. I would not have written that obituary today, but given that I did write it, I think that it belongs on the record with the disclaimer that this is a problem and that it's a problem I take very seriously. And I think that there is one thing to be said for having something on the record and another thing I realize that it may cause some distress to some of the people who see it in North America, given the contemporary climate here. But I think that they have fair warning that they might not want to read it and that's okay with me. The other thing I wanted to say about Dell is that his roommate at Reed College as an undergraduate in Oregon was Gary Snyder, who is a poet of the Northwest. And they both went from Oregon, graduating from Reed as roommates, to Indiana. Indiana University has programs which combine folklore, linguistics, and anthropology. And by way of those series of links, I got involved with a number of folklorists and a number of linguists, again, in addition to the other connections I already had. I haven't had any particular direct connection with Gary Snyder, except that he spoke at a session at the AAA once that I participated in, and all the anthropologists were reading their poetry, and then he read his, and I want to say it was clear

who was the professional poet. But the fact that some anthropologists write poetry is, I think, something that we need to see as an important commitment on their part. The linguists who write poetry do not seem to write about the process of their making poetry. They just write about the poetry. It's commentary on it. The anthropologists will have all sorts of complicated intersections with the material as they go through it. And again, I think that's the characteristic style of the two disciplines.

Moving to William Labov, who I know married Gillian Sankoff, a colleague of mine from Canadian anthropology, who was active in establishing various associations, the Canadian Association of Sociology and Anthropology, versus the Canadian Ethnology Society. The Canadian Ethnology Society was renamed the Canadian Anthropological Society, cast up, years later, under the presidency of Michael Asch. But that took a long time to come around. The anthropologists do not so easily identify with the term ethnology. And I think that made it extremely difficult to expect that there would be use of these materials. So that's an interesting process.

Now William Labov, Erving Goffman and Dell Hymes were colleagues at the Graduate School of Education Center for Urban Ethnography. And I'll say some more about that under Goffman. But I think that that connection was an important one.

Turning to Goffman, Gillian is an important link here too. Her ex-husband, David Sankoff, has a different network in Canada to which I have had access moving between Montreal and Ottawa. So, it's a kind of poster child for Canadian bilingualism and how it works or doesn't work. They would sign up for a session and you never knew who would turn up to actually read the paper until someone showed up at the conference. And that meant you couldn't tell whether to expect that it would be read in French or English. Erving Goffman interviewed at Penn before he moved to Penn. I remember the reception at the Hymes home for Goffman, in which he was standing in a group with several of us, which I walked up to, and he had just made the announcement that it was a rule of our society that one cannot drink out of someone else's glass. And being the contankerous soul that I am, I decided to demonstrate that that wasn't actually true in the context of relationships, as opposed to general rules. On one side of me was George Stocking, and on the other was Ray Fogelsen, as I recall. George was a klutz, so you got used to rescuing him. And nobody'd be surprised if you sort of, you know, he's gonna miss the step when he moves down from the museum to the main floor of the museum. So, to take his glass so we wouldn't spill it was entirely reasonable. George just muttered about – I took the glass from him and had a sip of it – and muttered about how I don't like scotch and soda, which is his libation of choice. And he didn't object. So, I think that was leaving Goffman wondering what just happened here. I then audited a Goffman seminar where we analyzed small behavior. And the piece that he chose to analyze was one which was as simple as possible. Rather than one that had all sorts of neat things one would like to pursue. And his point of course was that you could see the variables if it was a limited case. I think that's sort of like the logic that Durkheim used when he wanted to talk about a small number of cases rather than everything under the sun. So, the variables and that kind of seminar link led me to the Annenberg School of Communication and Connections with Saul Worth, who got me involved with film in the Southwest somewhat later, and with John F. Szwed, who wasn't there long, but went on to Yale and various other kinds of things. So, it was a brief moment at which those people were together at Penn and various interesting things came of it.

Now, turning to my interest in history of anthropology for my Penn MA, I wanted to make a contribution to scholarship, not to write a book review as literary critics mostly did in those days. And that seemed to take me, as I chose to do the piece on Brinton (Darnell 1987), that took me to a place where I was working in the American Philosophical Society archives on the documentary editing, and was in fact, I think, a major contribution. That would not have

happened had I picked something where I could just write a book review, I think. The contrasting expectations for English, as it was in those days of my double major, where that you would be restricted to text. And there are some in English departments in Canada who still take that kind of narrow position, whereas there are others who will go out into the community and talk to people about the things that they are doing in a way that I would be much more comfortable with. But in those days, that wasn't an open possibility. I have more recently gone back to connections that I made initially through the Faculty Association at the University of Western Ontario with a colleague on the same wavelength in the English department who put me in touch with a number of links to documentary editing as it is now. She got me involved in a webinar with some people where I expected them to approach the matter as they had done 30 years before and found that they actually were pretty much the same wave like I was. So, it was startling. And I would now find it harder to make a choice of where I ought to land, which I think is an interesting set of problematics.

Chloé Laplantine – In 1998, in your book *And Along Came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in Americanist Anthropology*, you tried to give a more complex picture of the history of American anthropology, to go beyond the simplified representation that it was all invented by Franz Boas. In 2001, in *Invisible Genealogies: A History of American Anthropology*, you tried to make the anthropologist more aware of his or her origins, to show the importance of history for understanding his or her own practice, and so the need for reflexivity. I would also like to emphasize the way you have contributed to making the history of anthropology a recognized field of studies, through your work as an editor. You co-founded and are now a co-editor of the series “Critical studies in the history of anthropology” and of the journal “Histories of Anthropology Annual”, both published by the University of Nebraska Press. To draw a parallel with the history of linguistics, people like Konrad Koerner or Sylvain Auroux, among others, worked hard to establish book series, journals, international conferences, international networks, and even research teams. According to you, does the history of anthropology, as a field of study, get enough attention? Is it a field that needs to be defended, like the history of linguistics?

Regna Darnell – Turning to the simplified interdisciplinary invention by Boas of the history of anthropology and such things, my work in 1998 was a trilogy. I started with the (Darnell 1998) publication that you cite. I then went on to get some other people to intersect with it and talk about what they meant by those issues in Valentine and Darnell 1999. And that was the kind of thing that I'm talking about for setting up a conversation already implicitly. And in *Invisible Genealogies* in 2021, that's the sort of third piece of how things came together. I think that it's quite parallel to the way in which I have set up the two volumes of my selected writings, talking about Boas in terms of his German connections and in terms of his shifting disciplinary alliances. It seems to me that history is something which needs to be reflexive in order for us to understand our own practice.

You asked if we need to defend history of anthropology as a field. Yes, probably. And that's one of the reasons that I have insisted that we do not distinguish the history of anthropology from the practice of anthropology. I knew that that was restricting my audience. And so, I found a way to try and make it possible to not do that. And it's a question of what happens when you Google search things. At the moment, if you search “History of Anthropology”, you get “George W. Stocking Jr.”, because those are the most recent. The stuff that's starting to come out under my author and editorship with “History of Anthropology” and the title is going to give us a different set of links that are much more contemporary. And that I think is the biggest reason that Nebraska has been so eager to support this series that I'm doing. It is really a question of audience and of keeping institutions afloat.

Konrad Koerner, I knew Konrad first in Canada, where he was one of those people that crossed the boundary between Québec and Ontario. And that seemed to me an important kind of thing. It seems to me that Konrad's own scholarship has been minimal, but his work as an editor and the way that he has sponsored edited publications is astronomically important. I was the one that nominated Konrad for the Royal Society of Canada at his request and I said, "Well, okay, why not". It wouldn't have occurred to me to do that otherwise, but I did and he was elected.

I also nominated Michael Asch for the Royal Society of Canada. I can't remember if that was of his request or not. But one of the people I wanted a letter from was someone I had known as Steve Greymorning when he was at the University of Victoria in the IGov [= Indigenous Governance] interdisciplinary program. And when he surfaced again at the University of Montana as S. Neyooxet Greymorning, I did not realize this was the same person. That of course being his traditional name in his own language. And I have since found that connection incredibly important and have been doing a great deal of collaborative work with him because he runs something called the Rivas Conference¹, which is a way of trying to give Indigenous scholars a chance to give papers foregrounding their work and to make them available on the internet. And in order to get that to be widely accessible, we have needed to have donations and logos and things on the bottom. It's hard to get people to sign up for things because we all get invitations. I mean, I get 50 emails a day, which are just, "Wouldn't you like to do this?". "And I can't". In a simpler world, I would have done some of them, but you've got to be kidding. I just can't.

I think that there has been less work in the history of anthropology in recent years and that it's really important that we defended in that kind of sense. One of the biggest issues in that is where to publish or where to find the links. You say "even research teams" with a critical kind of engagement. Research teams are critical. Those are the collaborations that make it possible for networks to expand and people to interact and I'll talk about that.

Chloé Laplantine – Now I would like to talk about the relations between your work as an anthropologist and your work as a historian. Frederica de Laguna was not a historian of archeology or anthropology, but if one looks into her books, for example *Under Mount Saint Elias* where she tries to give an account of the history and culture of the Yakutat Tlingit, one would immediately say "oh this work is thoroughly Boasian", especially in the way it is written, in the way you can feel that she is in a real relation with the people she wants to talk about. It's not even a talking about, it is a talking with other individuals.

Could you tell us about your own experience? Are you conscious of an interaction between your work as a historian of anthropology and your practice of anthropology, your anthropological writing and your fieldwork?

Regna Darnell – Freddie's *Under Mount Saint Elias* (de Laguna 1972). You note that she was not a historian of anthropology, but that she frames her argument through time. It seems to me that most of us do that in all of our work. It's not unique. It is a skill that all anthropologists need, particularly in the classroom, because if you're teaching and your students don't have any place to start, you have to be able to show them how this has evolved over time. It's not going to make any sense otherwise.

I always found Freddie the quintessential Boasian, when I was a student and I still do and I said that in my flagship obituary of her (Darnell 2005). She does not like Franz Boas. She does not state her conclusion but leaves the reader to draw the point. And I think it's precisely that strategy of communication with a hopefully critically responding public, that is the issue

¹ <https://www.umt.edu/natives-strengthening-indigenous-languages-cultures/basepage.php>

at stake. What you say about Freddie and her relation to the people she wants to talk about is really important, I think. I remember one occasion on which she was trying to explain to her introductory class, the 8-class Arunta system of kinship, which is complicated. And the entire class put down their pens and gave up, trying to follow what she was doing. She noticed that being the kind of teacher that she is. And she put down her glasses and began to talk to us and to tell us stories about her time with the Tlingit. And that, I think, was the moment at which I decided to be an anthropologist. I wanted to do that kind of work. And I did not think that I could do it in an English department, although I had seen myself as primarily an English scholar until then. I also love that Freddie wrote novels to finance her fieldwork. Women had a very difficult time getting funding for anything in those days. And she resented throughout her life the fact that she was never elected to the American Philosophical Society. Recently, Northern Books under her executor, Marie-François Guédon, also a Tlingit scholar, has undertaken to publish her material and that of others using the fund that remains from Freddie's estate. And that I think is going to be a really important kind of editorship through which to keep things in print long term because it has the funding not to end when Marie Françoise is either gone or seriously retired.

These are the chains of connections that link my work in history of anthropology, my writing, and my fieldwork. I haven't said much about how the writing reveals that. I think that by writing about this process of the relationship between HOA and my fieldwork, I am able to reveal the process of things getting to the way they are now to a larger audience. And that's my goal.

Another important recent connection that I mentioned before was to [Bérose](#) encyclopedia for the history of anthropology. Interestingly, Christine Laurière and Frederico Delgado Rosa asked my permission to use the plural "histories of anthropology", seeing it as proprietary from the way that I had used it in my publications at Nebraska. I was delighted to tell them I would be delighted to have them do so! And I think that's one more place where one can find this sort of request for a new kind of paradigm in which we do see things as changing and evolving and going on.

It has two separate kinds of publication links. I have drafts in progress of both of them and have for a long time. So, one is a biography of Franz Boas and the other is a book based on my research into Franz Boas. And I think I've used the phrase "protein complexity" to describe that one as a title. And I like that very much. So, you can perhaps see that I really like titles because I think if you get the right thing to catch a reader's attention with the title or with some term that appears in it, you have a much better chance that they will actually look at what was said about it. And so, I spend a lot of time trying to come up with catchy phrases that can be used for such purposes, not always successfully, but often I think I have been. But I might also cite Lawrence Straus and his contributions as an editor to the *Journal of Anthropological Research, JAR*. He is an archeologist working in the Southwest and there has been a grand continuity of his editorship over decades leading to alternatives to conventional presses. I think online open access platforms like Bérose are extremely important. And in the long run, I think they're going to be what we have and that conventional presses will have to buy into that also. But at the moment, it is important that we find ways of preserving the traditional presses in their conventional form. And the reason for that is that I get a lot of requests for references, for promotion, for graduate students applying for things and so on. And when they list a publication that appears only online, it is not taken as seriously by evaluation committees as it would be otherwise. And for that reason, I continue to think that a lot of things – I just persuaded a colleague on something we're working on that we need to do it first and primarily in the hard copy format. And I continue to think that's right, although it won't always be. That's a way of keeping the University of Nebraska Press afloat.

Now on the question of co-editing synergy, I want to talk about a number of those and the way they come out in my work at Nebraska. First with Matt Bokovoy as the editor for History of Anthropology Borderlands, a number of other things too, but he has certainly been spearheading my History of Anthropology series, all three of them, for a good many years now. And the feedback that I get from him both as an editor, in which case I defer to his judgment about what will sell books and what will not because he has to care about that and I try to live with it or to find ways of satisfying us both. That's a fair division of labor, but he also has a background in labor relations and various kinds of union activities from his PhD work which allows him to comment on some of the manuscript materials in ways that I don't have any other access to, and that's been extremely useful to me over a number of years again. Now if we turn to the three *Theories in History of Anthropology*, I think have a collective impact as well as the one of each particular volume or of its contents. That's particularly the case for [HOAA](#). But I think for all of them, some of the topics may appear to be rather narrow. But when you look at, for example, *HOAA, Histories of Anthropology Annual*, it is not officially a journal on the list anymore, but it is in practice. From my point of view, it gets sold as both a book and a journal. That has been an important occasion to redefine history, to include Indigenous voices. That is, history is something that can be ongoing and oral and emergent, not something which is closed in a box and comes in binary categories. And I think that's exactly what I want to get. I have done that series with Frederic W. Gleach at Cornell University now for a number of years, and we continue to do that, although I think he swamped in ways that make it hard for him to keep up and we're trying to find him some assistance in doing that at present.

In the CSHOA, *Critical Studies in the History of Anthropology*, there are 36 volumes that have actually appeared and several more, including some of my own, that are underway, some of which are really literally moving forward for immediate production. I edited that for a very long time with the late Stephen O. Murray. And if there is one colleague over the course of my career who has been my most constant interlocutor and foil for my own ideas, it is Steve. He's a sociologist by training. And we always seem to disagree about everything because he wants to use sociological standards of evidence in ways that I don't much care about. So, we have always had to negotiate various things. When Steve knew that he was dying, I asked him who he wanted as his replacement, and he chose Robert Oppenheim. And Rob, to me, has been a treasure. He works with Asian materials in a way that we have not had easy contact with previously. And he also has South American connections, because he's based in Texas, in ways that I think have been extremely important. I have recently managed to negotiate an endowment to continue that series from Steve's longtime partner. They established a joint trust fund, which is supporting a number of things besides this project, but it is in fact also supporting an endowment for this series and possibly other things on request. That is with Keelung Hong, whom again I met through Steve. We had many interactions when I visited in San Francisco physically and he's a very special person. Steve has also been my connection to communications through Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz, who was a communications scholar who co-authored a paper with him in a conference that I was participating in and we both published in some years back. And that led to a connection through Wendy with Yves Winkin, who is a French scholar and who has a lot of ties that I do not.

Chloé Laplantine – You are Project Director and General Series Editor of the Franz Boas Papers project. Could you tell us about this important ongoing project? About its aim, and about the new materials that will be published?

In what way will this project shed new light on Franz Boas?

Will it tell us more about his fieldwork and his collection of texts, issues which raise interesting and sometimes controversial questions?

Could you tell us also about the present-day use of Boas's linguistic materials in Indigenous communities in British Columbia?

Regna Darnell – Turning to the Frans Boas papers documentary edition, which you asked about, and I can understand why because on paper and anything that comes up it says only one volume has been published (Darnell, Smith, Hamilton & Hancock, ed. 2015) and that volume is one reproducing the papers from a conference where we all talked about whether this was feasible and how we would go about it and that is not in fact a normal volume of the documentary edition and the reason that there haven't been further volumes that have come out in print is that we have been delayed by a directive from our governing body, which is the Indigenous Advisory Council. They have required us or have requested us, and I take it as a you will do this, that we do this first online so that it can be shared with each set of editors at their home base. That is that we can send them materials that are held at the American Philosophical Society and have them be able to actually read them in BC where they are located. And the specs necessary to do that have been complicated, shall we say. So, to get back to the print editions, which we are now doing, but slowly, has been a struggle. The example volume, and I will talk about it here, but I think gives us the most important link is Andrea Laforet and her team of two Indigenous and three non-Indigenous authors that have worked together to produce this volume on Boas and James Teit (Laforet, Bain, Haugen, Moritz & Palmer, ed. 2024). And the Indigenous partners are Angie Bain, who is at the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. She's not an academic, which has caused all sorts of problems in getting her access to the American Philosophical Society, we did eventually sort that out. They don't usually want to see people who aren't affiliated. And John Haugen, who is again based on a community and who has all the connections to the people that Boas and Teit interviewed and to the maps that should be included and to all the kind of data that we need to acknowledge. And Andrea as editor has been able to negotiate the collaborations among all of those people. I think absolutely elegantly. John is telling us what the maps encompass and how they lead to stories and how that helps us to understand the roles of Boas and Teit. We are now on the last minute details of submission for production and the last issue appears to be what we're going to use for the the cover design because our specs require us to have a picture of Boas. And there's no picture we can find of Boas and Teit together. We can find pictures of Teit. I proposed a split screen and they produced something in which another photograph of Teit has Boas in the background². Because in order to market it in British Columbia, where there has been some backlash against Boas, spearheaded largely by Wendy Wickwire³ ... That's just awkward. ... So, I think that we have had to work around all of that stuff. And it continues to be really important that we present the material so that when you Google it, it will come up under Teit before it comes up under Boas. Because in the communities, that will mean they're willing to access it. And that's the nature of the contemporary climate. They don't want to hear about Boas. They see him as someone who used them. I do not. And I think I've made the argument that that's not a good way to think about it in various places, including in the history of anthropology volumes. But it's absolutely true that Andrea's volume needs to be worked out in that sense. I don't think they've made a decision on that yet. I haven't been informed if they have. I do not get informed of editorial decisions until they're actually made. However, I think that Andrea is another person. She used to be the director of the Canadian Museum of History as it is now called. It's been through several name changes. I got in touch with her for some reason I don't remember anymore. And she showed some enthusiasm for wanting to take on some of this work. So, I think she has proved her skill as an editor many times her weight in gold, to use a

² Eventually a picture of Teit was chosen for the cover of the volume.

³ Cf. Wickwire 2019.

metaphor that's common on this side of the Atlantic anyway. And her editorial skill has put her in this list of people who really do continue to make things accessible, not just this, but other things as well. She's a very special person.

There are several other volumes of the Franz Boas Papers coming forward. I am trying to complete a revised edition of the *The Mind of Primitive Man* (Boas 1911, 1938), looking at the actually quite minimal changes that Boas made from the 1911 to 1938 editions. And that means using the original as the source text because it's in the public domain and then showing the changes that are made and providing the context to make that intelligible. That's going to be fun. I just haven't had time to get away from this other stuff to return to it. And there are several other volumes that are near completion. I'll spare you the list because we don't know what order they will appear in or when the final versions will be produced. But I would guess that six or seven volumes in the near future are likely. It is a guess, which is why I don't want to commit myself to that in any formal way. Each of these involves different collaborations and different collaborations over time and the people you're working with on the same volume change and their locations change and their openness to being able to work on things changes. So, you get back in touch and say, okay, we're ready to do something about this now. And well, they aren't now. So, it's very complicated. And I'm doing the best I can. We are hoping to get some of the print editions moving in the foreseeable future. Now, one of the wrinkles in that, however, is that Matt Bokovoy has been muttering about the possibility of switching the base of history of anthropology materials, all three series, from anthropology to history. And he has various reasons for that. It makes me nervous given my affiliations to anthropology, but we seem to have six years to get that figured out. So, I am letting that ride for the moment.

Chloé Laplantine – You were already working on the history of American anthropology at the end of the sixties.

Much work has been done since then, in large part thanks to your involvement. As a result, people are still interested in studying Boas or Sapir, their archives, or the texts they collected with the assistance of Indigenous people.

According to you, how has the discipline changed since then? Are there new questions? What work remains to be done?

Regna Darnell – Well, I would no longer separate out the history of American anthropology from the history of anthropology more generally. And I'm not sure I ever did in my own mind. But you do seem to have felt that that's an issue. And I think the way that I'm conceiving it now and have discussed it above, that you will see why I don't think so and why the stuff we're doing now, the material we're working with now does not do that. You ask how much I think has been because of me. I don't know. Others will have to judge that. There are certainly people who are still interested in studying Boas, Sapir, and their archives or texts collected with the help of Indigenous people. But I want to note that that's not *people*, that's *some people*. Other people are utterly oblivious. I think that the best potential audience is among those who teach because they have to explain to their students where all this comes from. And that does mean a review of the past history, as I discussed with Freddie de Laguna in *Under Mount St. Elias*. When I look at current events, I am less sanguine about the immediate impact. I think that we are writing largely for the future. And I note that this is what Boas did with *Anthropology and Modern Life* and other later collections of his work, like the selected papers in *Race, Language, and Culture* edited (Boas 1940). I think that he wanted to be on the record when the short-term attention to his work, particularly at Columbia as his own institution, was really minimal due to various fractionalisms. So, there is that concern with legacy that I think senior scholars properly have. And as I find myself explaining to various

people on various occasions, I'm not trying to do this because I want to blow my own horn. I'm trying to do it because I think that it will increase the possibility of a larger audience for this work in the shorter term and that it will maintain the records in the longer term for use by whoever and that the whoever at some time in the future will be able to go back to those and see what the context was that made them make sense at the time that I wrote about them. Because that context is going to change. It's we're not standing still. And when the underlying logic that I presented and the the volumes I have collected and provided commentaries on are very in this moment, that's going to change. So, we want to have that on the record so that people can go back to it and we'll be able to see what it was like then, but we'll also be able to look at how they want to use it now. One example that's come up recently is the American Ethnological Association where their editorial board has been, shall we say, unfriendly to the history of anthropology. They just really don't care. And Ed Liebow, who moderates the whole mess, has been around for a long time and he does⁴. So, he's been helping us and has helped us to set up a separate network in which historians of anthropology can meet and discuss their stuff, because the editorial comments before you can post something on the AA website in response to something have to be flattering to the AAA and to its authors. And sometimes that's not what one wants to do. There are places where critique is appropriate, I think. Not disrespectful critique, but pointing out of the limitations of the positions that people have taken. And that has been possible on the independent history of anthropology network, which is linked to several organizations and several complicated ways. And I'll spare you that too. It is complicated.

Public engagement is crucial to put the spotlight on an issue because politicians control funding. Politicians are motivated to be unique and contemporary. That's a conflict of interest with any history of anthropology perspective that says, hey, you know, we said that 30 years ago. I said it 30 years ago. How come you look like you invented it? And it always seems to be the case that the person who was doing the commentary thinks they invented something, but they really did not. And going back to the original has a context that changes the accuracy of what can be gotten from contemporary links, which is why I feel so strongly about documentary editing in the first place. On the subject of residential schools in British Columbia, which is a good example, there is a new commissioner this week who is going to look into this issue in British Columbia. And she says she will do her best. And I believe that that's true. It's in her mandate letter from the Prime Minister appointing her to the position. But we have no guarantee that the government will act on her recommendations when she makes them.

The same issue arose and is discussed by Michael Asch in his 2014 *On Being Here to Stay* (Asch 2014). Michael is another facilitator, though not particularly as an editor, but he's certainly someone who puts people in contact with each other. He has ties to a number of institutions, including several in British Columbia. He's going back and forth between UBC and the University of Victoria for years. What he does in being here to stay is to conclude that the result of all of these efforts has not been to revise the residential school position. But the recommendations that were made by the people who wanted to do it, who were in the field were responsible. And he sees the *sincerity*, his term, of these facilitators, of these fieldworking anthropologists or whatever other discipline they may come from. And then they report back to their bosses and no action is taken on it, that's not their fault. And I think it's really important that we notice that.

And I think it's the same kind of problem that Boas ran into interestingly, and I didn't say anything about it, Boas is sensitive to a lot of these issues and to legacy. Sapir is not. Sapir said he wanted to burn his correspondence. There are various go-arounds on that. I have

⁴ Since his retirement, the new team places no priority on disciplinary history.

weighed into that in various ways. I think that what were concerns when he was making those objections had to do with his own unwillingness to face his own past, essentially. He did not want to drag out all the things that happened in his childhood. And that was his decision. But I think today it's not an issue, and I think we should be able to work again with those materials.

All right, now you ask if new questions will continue to arise. I can't predict that. And increasingly, I have to step back and let others work out what's going to happen. It won't be me. In the meantime, I am going to continue doing what I know how to do, which is the kind of commitment that I've been talking to you about for the last few minutes.

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