Introduction

Respectful research involves more than a good methodology and a pleasant demeanour. I think of respect in that sense where by one refrains from violating, harassing, or obstructing. Put in an affirmative light it is to treat with consideration. Ultimately respect, as an active process, means to value. In terms of research respect leads us to place value in the integrity of our process, to honour and not cause harm to those with whom are research involves, and to be honest with our intentions.

This book is an Indigenous guide to respectful research. My examples are drawn from my own research within, and in collaboration with members of, my home community of Gitxaała. That this book is based upon an Indigenous experience with research in no way should be understood to restrict the utility of respectful research only to Indigenous settings. In fact, I am certain that I am not alone in advocating respectful research across the domains of social science research. As an Indigenous anthropologist my emphasis may well place more attention on ensuring community engagement than might normally be anticipated. That being said, this is also the way in

which my ongoing research in western Europe is also conducted (Menzies 2011).

Social science researchers have long been concerned with research methodology. This concern originally was restricted to ensure appropriate and robust methodologies (Boas 1920; Malinowski 1922). Only late in the history of social science research did matters of the ethnical treatment of research participants become part of the discourse. The implications of Nazi experiments on unwilling prisoners during World War II and the horror felt once the full enormity of their actions where revealed created the conditions for more humane and ethical treatment of human research subjects. Sadly, the atrocities committed by the Nazis were not unique examples of political authorities conducting medical and psychological experiments upon unwilling subjects.

Canada's own history of residential schooling includes the same type of cruel and inhumane medical experiments being carried out on young children. While the oral history of residential schools has consistently documented wide ranging and systemic physical and sexual abuse recent historical research indicates that government sanctioned medical experiments were also being conducted on aboriginal children who had been forcibly removed from their homes and

placed into residential schools run by Christian church authorities (Mosby 2013). Medical research into nutritional supplements was conducted in the 1940s and 1950s by researchers who appear to have had little regard for the individuals they were experimenting upon. Even with awareness of the Nazi medical experiments this type of research increased, rather than decreased, following World War II (Mosby 2013:166).

In 1966 Henry Beecher, MD published a ground breaking study in the New England Journal of Medicine. In a clear, clinical tone Beecher documents a detailed history of North American medical research that is clearly unethical and unconcerned with the implications for the individual research participants. Nutritional health experiments, like the ones conducted on aboriginal children in Canadian residential schools, coexisted with studies in which known effective treatments were withheld. In all of the cases Beecher documents researchers deliberated obscured the risks and did not attempt to solicit informed consent. In several cases the research subjects had no effective capacity (legally and/or cognitively) to resist the medical experimentations. The ethical convictions of people like Beecher were instrumental in changing the foundation of research practices. By the late 1970s most research in

North America and Western Europe operated under a set of ethical guidelines that prioritized the capacity to grant informed consent of all research participants without fear of coercion or undue influence on the part of the researcher or some governing agency.

Concern with issues of deception and ethics in anthropology centered around the role of anthropologists assisting military forces. This issue was brought to a head in the early 1970s by revelations within American anthropology. Joseph Jorgenson and Eric Wolf, then members of the American Association of Anthropologists committee on ethics (Wolf was the committee chair), released a public statement condemning a group of American anthropologists who had used their research to support American counterinsurgency tactics in Thailand (Jorgenson and Wolf 1970). The resulting public controversy resulted in a reformulated ethics policy that placed informed consent at the heart of the research endeavour and laid down an injunction against causing harm to research subjects. In this formulation using anthropology to mask espionage was deemed unethical.

These debates were not new to anthropology though. Anthropological luminary Fran Boas was publicly sanctioned by the American Anthropological Association during World

War I for his criticism of anthropologists who engaged in espionage while pretending to conduct anthropological research (Price 2000). By the 1970s most anthropologists would agree that using the cover of research in a covert war was unethical. This change of heart occurred in the context of the decolonization of primary fieldsites of anthropology: Africa, Latin America, Asia (Gough 1968).

At home in North America new political movements in aboriginal communities combined with longstanding grievances against colonial governance models. In these contexts social science researchers found their research plans coming under greater community-based scrutiny. Canadian anthropologist John Cove describes how his planned grant funded research with the Gitksan was rejected by the community in there early 1980s. Cove had wanted to study famine and mythology (Cove 1987[1]). The community leadership accused him of playing games with their community and suggested he work with them on a project that fit with the community interests instead of his investigator-lead project. At the end of the day he gave up his grant and worked with the community as they prepared the reports and field studies that became a critical part of the ground

[1] Cove, John J. (1987) *Shattered Images: Dialogues and Meditations on Tsimshian Narratives.* Ottawa: Carleton University Press.

breaking aboriginal rights court case referred to now as Delgam Uukw.[2]

Cove was not alone among social scientists who faced greater scrutiny in the late 1970s and 1980s. For some, the scrutiny seemed to undermine rigours social science and contributed to a form of aboriginal official ethnography (Dyck 1993). Many others, however, found a way to conduct respectful research that values the communities of study without compromising the integrity of the research process. This book arises out of the experience of being a respectful researcher who is commitment to the integrity of the research process. Our job, as one of my colleagues says, is to give an honest, factual account that expresses our informed opinion: not to parrot back what we think is wanted.

This book presents a series of methodological case studies. This is a guide to research; not a cookbook. For specific recipes I would direct the reader to any of the many detailed how-to manuals that can be easily found in the libraries and bookshops around us. For the reader looking for a fieldguide on respect in research I trust that this will prove useful in your research journey. What follows are five chapters, each of which focuses on a

[2] Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw (1992) *The Spirit in the Land: The Opening Statement of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs in the Supreme Court of British Columbia, 1987-1990.* Gabriola, B.C.: Reflections.

particular aspect for of respectful research. I draw from my own research with and an behalf of my indigenous home, Gitxaała. Over the course of more than twenty years I have been an active anthropological researcher. Throughout this time I have been involved in projects as varied as producing expert opinions on the aboriginal right to harvest fish and films that document research methods and Gitxaała lifeways; writing papers and books about Gitxaała, the industrial fishery, and traditional fish harvesting practices, and; being involved in community directed research as part of ongoing environmental assessment processes that infringe upon Gtixaała rights and title. This experience has shown me that respect and rigorous methods are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are essential.

Gitxaała is an Indigenous community on the north coast of British Columbia, Canada. We are a marine community who has for millennia made our livelihood from the waters and lands of our coastal territory. Today nearly 2/3rds of us live away from the home territory in urban centres of British Columbia. Nonetheless, this place, laxyuup Gitxaała, remains a central and pivotal place and home to us. As a contemporary people we have many needs and concerns. Some are needs and concerns that we have

initiated, others have been forced upon us. In this context social science research is one of the tools that we employ to ensure our ability to continue as a people. Just as we might use an excavator to dig a foundation for our village roads, so to we find a use for social science methods. This field guide presents the ways in which social science research can be used in a respectful manner. I make no claim to a unique Indigenous approach to methodology — in fact I am highly sceptical of such endeavours. What I am arguing here is that rigorous social science methods can be used with respect with and on behalf of Indigenous peoples.

Chapter one challenges social scientists to stop using Indigenous communities as mere sources of data or laboratories within which to conduct experiments. Our communities have intellectual traditions and ways of knowing that should be honoured through research. Our own encounters with new comers has unleashed Indigenous attempts to make sense of the change. Our oral histories documents encounters with newcomers and articulates a history of interpretation. This experience of encounter has created what one might call an Indigenous anthropology and in this chapter I set out process of rapprochement with mainstream anthropology.

Chapter two, “Reflections on Research with, for, and among Indigenous Peoples,” arose from my experience in a research workshop over a decade ago. The workshop, focussed upon ecological knowledge, included researchers and practitioners of many types: commercial fishers, fisheries biologists, anthropologists, policy analysts, government fisheries officials. Yet, there were no Indigenous peoples there to specifically speak as Indigenous people. I was there in my guise as anthropologist. However, when the workshop proceeded to speak for and about Indigenous peoples without according us the same privilege to speak on our own behalf I stood up to complain. In this chapter I discuss the challenges of respectful research in terms of the personal, the institutional, and the political. I offer three research solutions from anthropology. Ultimately, this chapter argues for a critical and engaged anthropology that seeks to decolonize research.

Chapter three, “Putting Words into Action,” is a case study in applying a respectful approach to research. Here I outline the process of negotiating research in my own community for a research project that I proposed. This was a collaborative project, but it was primarily a researcher instigated and a research led project. In this chapter I

outline the ways in which access was negotiated in the context of three different situations of community leadership: administrative institutions, such as Tribal Councils and Band Councils; Indigenous Institutions, such as hereditary leadership, and; with individual community members. Each of these situations of community leadership have different domains of authority and differing perspectives on how research should be conducted. There is a messiness to these at times conflicting situations. Nonetheless, navigating them with patience is critical to engaging and fostering respectful research.

Chapter four picks up the idea of collaboration but in the context of a collaborative service learning project. Over the course of my research in Gitxaała I have had a number of opportunities to invite students along with me either as research assistants with me on specific projects, as research interns working on their own projects, or as students in graduate level field schools. In this chapter (co-written with my colleague Caroline Butler) I describe the fieldschool experience and then critically examine the research issues engendered by the fieldschool experience. This is, I believe, a crucial matter. Service learning is a popular and important aspect of many social science training programs. If we are to bring students with us

into the field (and I think that we should) we need to understand the implications of our actions. While we have, for the most part, been pleased with the comportment and output of our students it would be naïve to suggest that running fieldschools in Indigenous communities is unproblematic. Despite all of the good of the fieldschool model I have subsequently abandoned it as I do not feel that it does in fact contribute to a decolonization of research. In its place I now coordinate research internships in which the students work for Gitxaała and, as part of their compensation, are provided with opportunities for guided research.

Chapter five, Process or Position, is a highly critical evaluation of hired gun consultant research. Here I document the ways in which a consulting firm, hired by an industrial developer, deployed the process of what I call respectful research n order to secure access to the community. I realize that I should not have been surprised. Yet, I was completely taken aback by the ways and means the consulting firm (and it's personal) used to secure access to Gitxaała community members on behalf of their client. The approach was one that followed the approaches that I have laid out in chapters two and three. However, the consultant was able to distribute relatively

large sums of money in an extremely cash poor environment. I must be careful to point out that the consulting firm and it's personal did not engage in fraudulent or illegal acts. My critique is more of my own approach than it is of the consultant. That is, I assumed that if one merely followed appropriate methodological procedures respectful research would follow. However, respect involves more than process. We need to consider our social position in the matrix of societal power. Working on behalf of the industrialist, while deploying the most sensitive of anthropological methods, the consultant was in effect selling access to the aboriginal community in a manner that ultimately was not in the best interests of the community itself.

At the end of the day respectful research involves caring about the people one is working with, being honest about one's intentions, and forming a self conscious commitment to cause no harm. This book follows my own journey of Indigenous research. I draw from my personal experiences, moments of thought reflection, and even setbacks. I make no claims to a definitive set of rules or procedures. I do however assert that only through respecting ourselves (by being honest), the people we work with (by valuing them as people), and the process through which we conduct research can we create a truly respectful

research practice. It may be that those who seek profit and privilege over respect will hold us up on our journey. Nonetheless, I am optimistic enough to believe that we can overcome the greed and avarice of those who seek merely to advance their own personal sphere against the wellbeing of the majority. This book is one guide to achieving respect in research.