

A Framing Introduction¹

REGNA DARNELL

Distinguished University Professor of Anthropology
University of Western Ontario
Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada

This session continues what I hope will become a regular feature of the American Philosophical Society (APS) meetings—an update on the American Indian commitment mandated by the Society’s founders under the rubric of “useful knowledge” and reaffirmed by annual meeting in 2013 and 2014. We have made substantial strides in the 18 months since new member Robert J. Miller, an enrolled member of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe, and I spoke about Society initiatives evolving in response to the aspirations of Native communities for cultural and linguistic revitalization.

In spring 2014, the members who attended the APS council and business meetings officially established the Center for Native American and Indigenous Research (CNAIR) under the auspices of the Library and the directorship of Timothy B. Powell. *The Franz Boas Papers: Documentary Edition*, of which I serve as general editor, proceeds apace. The initial volume of framing essays by editorial contributors, *Franz Boas as Public Intellectual: Theory, Ethnography, Activism*, appeared in August 2015 published by the University of Nebraska Press. The APS completed digitization of the Boas professional papers in November 2014. Both CNAIR and the Boas project have initiated collaborative relationships with the Kwakwaka’wakw (whom Boas called the Kwakiutl) of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, as well as with other indigenous communities among whom Boas did his seminal research.

Anthony F. C. Wallace was unable to attend the meeting due to health concerns. His paper will be read by Martin (Marty) Levitt, retiring Librarian and the moving force behind recent Native American initiatives.² Marty’s commitment and gravitas have brought us to this point.

Martin Levitt earned his doctorate in history in 1990 from Temple

1 Read on 8 November 2014.

2 Martin Levitt retired as of 31 December 2014. Patrick Spero is the current Librarian.

University under the direction of APS member Russell F. Weigley, and he has taught in that department since 1992, attaining the rank of professor in 2000. Marty joined the APS library staff as an information professional in 1986, already well versed in the historic significance of documents held by the Society, especially the Boas papers and related Native American collections. He was elected to the APS in 2013.

He held a Fulbright Fellowship in archives, is a Fellow of the Mary and David Eccles Centre of the British Library, and served as president of the Academy of Certified Archivists. He was a key founder and the first director of the Philadelphia-area Center for the History of Science, a consortium of regional research institutions now housed at the APS and sponsor of 13 fellows this year.³ Marty has spearheaded systematic APS collections on the history of science.

In 2003, Martin Levitt succeeded Edward C. Carter III as Librarian of the APS. Renovation and reorganization under his leadership have emphasized technology, especially digitization, conservation, and cataloging of resources. He developed public services, including the Friends of the Library lecture program. He expanded the multiple publics served by the APS to include indigenous communities whose intellectual property resides under the stewardship of the Society's Library. Priorities include the handling of culturally sensitive materials, digital knowledge sharing with originary communities, and the building of research capacity within those communities. CNAIR, under the leadership of the second speaker in this session (Timothy B. Powell), will implement these initiatives and solidify the leadership of the APS Library in national and international archival innovation. It is therefore more than fitting that Marty joined the speakers for this session.

Anthony F. C. (Tony) Wallace, elected to the APS in 1969, received his Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1950 under the direction of A. Irving "Pete" Hallowell, whose papers are held in the Library and are crucial to current initiatives among the Ojibwe, drawing particularly on the transcripts and photographs donated to the APS by Maureen Matthews in the course of her revisiting Hallowell's fieldwork sites. Wallace's first book, *Teedyuskung: King of the Delaware (1700–1773)*, had appeared the previous year. Building on the work of his father, historian Paul Wallace, Tony emphasized the agency of a charismatic Indian leader struggling against pressures of colonial imposition.

The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca Nation in 1970 moved from individual psychology to collective trauma under conditions of rapid social change. The concept of "revitalization movements" provided a

³ This center is now called the Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine.

prototype that Tony extended beyond indigenous history to disaster and disaster relief, as well as to the effects of the industrial revolution on small towns in Pennsylvania. *Rockdale* (1978) won the Bancroft Prize for American history the following year. His ethnohistoric research for several Native American tribes was presented before the Indian Claims Commission; he wrote about the Black Hawk War and Cherokee Trail of Tears, the disastrous forced removal of the Cherokee from their traditional homelands to Oklahoma. His theoretical work *Culture and Personality* (1961) defined the individual “mazeway” and “the organization of diversity” as ways to understand the interplay of biology and culture, as well as individual variability within cultural pattern. *Religion: An Anthropological View* (1966) emphasized the integration of human experience beyond the cognitive.

Tony Wallace, without flinching, has explored the ethics of public life in mainstream American society as well as within his own discipline of anthropology. In *Thomas Jefferson and the American Indian* (1999), he wondered poignantly how his intellectual hero and an APS founding figure could have reconciled his idea of democracy with the racism, genocide, and land speculation of Indian affairs under his administration. *Tuscarora: A History* (2012) revisits the Reservation where Tony did his first fieldwork over half a century previously and addresses the inherent violence of the methods of anthropology in objectifying the experience of Native Americans and privileging academic voices over their own. The book is his redress and apology, an offering to the community, telling their history in the way that they themselves understand it and chose to share with him.

His paper in this session picks up many of these themes and reflects how far the discipline of anthropology and the APS have come in acknowledging the dark side of Native American history and learning to walk alongside Native Americans as they, and we, move beyond that history.

Timothy B. (Tim) Powell received his Ph.D. in English from Brandeis University and published widely in that field before coming from the University of Georgia to the University of Pennsylvania Department of Religious Studies in 2006. As director of Native American Projects at the APS Library since 2008, Tim has built the systematic groundwork to undergird the new research center. He obtained major research grants from the Mellon Foundation, Getty Foundation, and National Endowment for the Humanities. He developed two websites of digitized images from APS documents. Two successive Mellon Foundation grants digitized 3,000 hours of audio materials from the APS collections. Native American fellows have been invited to the APS for the first time since Thomas Jefferson’s day. These scholars, credentialed as cultural experts by their own communities, aid the APS

in interpretation of materials it holds and return these documents to the communities of their origin. The Mellon project established partnerships with four communities (Tuscarora, Penobscot, White Earth and Leech Lake band of the Ojibwe, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee). Tim Powell has long-term relationships in each of these places. Each community reaches out to the APS in unique, locally significant ways. Participants in these initiatives serve on an advisory board of Native Americans and APS representatives. This group, chaired by Robert J. Miller, developed formal protocols for the dissemination and publication of culturally sensitive materials held at the APS.⁴ Materials of concern include ceremonial and spiritual issues, as well as community-specific protocols for ownership and stewardship of culturally sensitive materials.

In collaboration with the work of the Franz Boas Project, new relationships with indigenous tribes of the North Pacific Coast are being established. The APS is at the forefront of scholarship as affiliated scholars, an increasing number of them Native community members, respond to the priorities of indigenous communities. Archives can no longer exist in isolation. The documents they hold are living things, and we, as their stewards, have an obligation to ensure their use in contemporary society.

4 The "Protocols for the Treatment of Indigenous Materials" were published in the December 2014 issue of the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*.