

ROUTLEDGE GUIDES TO USING HISTORICAL SOURCES

SOURCES AND METHODS IN INDIGENOUS STUDIES

Edited by
CHRIS ANDERSEN and **JEAN M. O'BRIEN**

Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies

Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies is a synthesis of changes and innovations in methodologies in Indigenous Studies, focusing on sources over a broad chronological and geographical range. Written by a group of highly respected Indigenous Studies scholars from across an array of disciplines, this collection offers insight into the methodological approaches contributors take to research, and how these methods have developed in recent years.

The book has a two-part structure that looks, firstly, at the theoretical and disciplinary movement of Indigenous Studies within history, literature, anthropology, and the social sciences. Chapters in this section reveal that, while engaging with other disciplines, Indigenous Studies has forged its own intellectual path by borrowing and innovating from other fields. In the second part, the book examines the many different areas with which sources for Indigenous history have been engaged, including the importance of family, gender, feminism, and sexuality, as well as various elements of expressive culture such as material culture, literature, and museums. Together, the chapters offer readers an overview of the dynamic state of the field in Indigenous Studies.

This book shines a spotlight on the ways in which scholarship is transforming Indigenous Studies in methodologically innovative and exciting ways, and will be essential reading for students and scholars in the field.

Chris Andersen (Michif) is Professor and Interim Dean of the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta. He is the author of *“Métis”: Race, Recognition and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood* (2014).

Jean M. O’Brien (White Earth Ojibwe) is Distinguished McKnight University Professor of History at the University of Minnesota. She has authored five books, including *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (2010).

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Introduction

Indigenous Studies: An appeal for methodological promiscuity

Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien

What *isn't* Indigenous Studies? A question such as this, its grammatical irregularity notwithstanding, tends to bedevil most new or emerging fields, especially those that seek the lofty status of discipline. More than fifty years of thinking, writing, presenting and publishing by committed scholars on Indigenous Studies have tended to focus not so much on what it is or is not, but rather on what it should aspire to be. Emerging from the social and intellectual flux of the 1960s, early Indigenous Studies scholarship initially ruminated on the importance of new theoretical or methodological frameworks and Indigenous Studies' relationship to Indigenous sovereignty. Despite the formulation of journals purporting to speak to Indigenous Studies that began to publish scholarship under its aegis, little sustained effort has been exerted to reflect on the field's origins, boundaries or current trajectories.

Were we to understand Indigenous Studies in all its various iterations – Native American studies, American Indian studies, Native studies, and so forth – as a discipline (by no means a foregone conclusion), what does that mean in practice? That is to say, what elements are important or even central to rendering otherwise diverse fields of interest and knowledge production, well, disciplinary? Much of the literature on disciplines in the academy focuses on them as a constitutive and governing force in producing bodies of knowledge. Bryan Turner (2006: 183) argues, for example, that “[d]isciplina were instructions to disciples, and hence a branch of instruction or department of knowledge. This religious context provided the modern educational notion of a ‘body of knowledge’, or a discipline such as sociology or economics.”

As bodies of knowledge, disciplines thus possess important epistemological prescriptions. Tony Becher (1981), for example, argues that disciplinary boundaries are based on different intellectual clusters that include debates about distinctive concepts, methods and fundamental aims. More specifically, he suggests that since “research is a rule governed system of inquiry”, disciplines produce and govern particular rules for debate and analysis (Bridges 2006). Following Krishnan's (2009) discussion, we might then present a number of defining characteristics of the intellectual aspect of disciplines: they focus on a specific object of research that, over time, produces an accumulated body of specialized knowledge through distinctive theories, concepts, terminologies and,

of particular relevance here, methodologies. We delve into the importance of this volume as a methodological contribution in further detail below. We wish to flag here, however, the fact that as Indigenous Studies continues to emerge, it continues to draw on a huge array of disciplines and methodological debates to inform our perspectives and work, and it has tended to do so in a context with little collective strategy or long-term planning – hence our use of “promiscuity” in the title (referring to its original Latin use, meaning “mixed, indiscriminate, in common, without discussion”) to modify “methodology”.

Perhaps more than any other national context, US-based Native American or American Indian Studies scholars have reflected on the state of Indigenous Studies as a discipline. For example, a number of “state-of-the-discipline” pieces written under the auspices of a flagship journal of American-based Indigenous Studies – *American Indian Quarterly* – touch on various elements central to this endeavour. We will briefly discuss aspects of these arguments because we believe that the marketplace of ideas at play in an American context possesses significant resonance outside of its geo-political context. In her state-of-the-discipline piece, scholar Clara Sue Kidwell (White Earth Ojibwe and Choctaw) argues for American Indian studies as a “legitimate field of intellectual inquiry” with five central components: the central relationship between Indigenous culture and land (or place); that historical relations between Indigenous societies and settler communities were just that – relational – and as such, have to be told from both sides (which includes according agency to Indigenous history); that sovereignty is an inherent right of Indian nations; that language is the essential key to understanding culture and that therefore requires preservation; and finally, that “contemporary Indian music, dance, art, and literature express long-standing values of tribal cultures while adapting them to modern media” (Kidwell 2009: 4).

Similarly, Indigenous Studies doyen Jace Weaver (2007) argues that debates in Indigenous Studies have tended to produce more heat than light. In this context, he suggests a number of intellectual features to which the discipline should aspire: interdisciplinarity; comparativity; privileging an Indigenous perspective; demonstrating a commitment to Native American community; employing a “borderless” discourse that seeks to link the local with national and international Indigenous issues and peoples. In his state-of-the-discipline piece, Duane Champagne argued that

American Indian cultural emphasis on retaining culture, identity, self-government, and stewardship of land and resulting contestations with the U.S. government and society forms a body of empirical social action that constitutes the subject matter of American Indian studies as an academic discipline.

(2007: 353)

Champagne notes that American Indian studies can be extended internationally in the form of Indigenous Studies. We note here that Weaver and Champagne are less hopeful than Kidwell. Weaver characterized current American Indigenous

Studies as “a mess”, while Champagne suggested that “relatively little conceptual progress has been made toward defining American Indian Studies as a discipline and toward developing theory and research that presents a coherent theoretical and methodological approach to the study of indigenous peoples” (2007: 354).

Elizabeth Cook-Lynn argues that part of the mandate of Indigenous Studies (what she terms “Indian Studies”) lies in “exposing the lies of the self-serving colonial academic institutions of America, bolster[ing] the rights and obligation to disobedience, and resist[ing] the tyranny of the U.S. fantasies concerning history and justice and morality” (Cook-Lynn 1999: 16) – in other words, the hard work of decolonization. In this context, she suggests the importance of Indian Studies scholars engaging wide and public audiences and doing so in the context of our tribal nations and territories (1999: 20). More specifically, she argues that we work not for our students, our faculties or our universities, but in the interests of creating “a mechanism in defense of the Indigenous principles of sovereignty and nationhood” (1999: 20), and one that is undertaken in an explicitly endogamous fashion (1997: 11).

Despite the sophistication of these scholars’ labours, relatively little space has been set aside for exploring the *methodological* prescriptions of Indigenous Studies. We should pause here to note that our understanding of Indigenous Studies methodologies is that, although they might include these, they are not (necessarily) the same as the manner in which Indigenous methodologies have been framed academically, a growing subfield of inquiry arguably most widely associated with Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999). Nor, as we will explain below, is Indigenous Studies necessarily the same thing as Indigenous knowledge – at least, as it is normally conceived. Instead, our understanding underscores the importance of the approach of Innes (2010), who has contributed a chapter to this volume). In his introduction to a special issue of *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, Innes (2010: 3) presents three central intellectual goals for Indigenous Studies: to access, understand and convey Native cultural perspective(s); to conduct research that benefits Native people and/or communities; *and to employ research methods and theories that will achieve these goals*.

Finally, Innes argues that Indigenous Studies must practice methodological diversity. He suggests that Native studies ought to be broadly multi-disciplinary insofar as the issues we examine should dictate the methods and theories used. For Innes, the *ethical* relationship to the community with whom the research problem is being formulated, rather than the specific theories and methods used, is part of what distinguishes Native studies from other disciplines: “Developing an ethical research relationship is more important than how the data is collected” (Innes 2010: 6). The central importance of methodological diversity – or, without putting too fine a point on it, interdisciplinary – has also been pointed to by scholar Jace Weaver, who makes a compelling case for the necessity of interdisciplinarity in both pedagogical and scholarly knowledge generation contexts.

One of the complications that arises from this principle, Innes suggests, is the realization that Native studies is not the same thing as Indigenous knowledge, although in any given instance it may incorporate Indigenous knowledge as part of its explanatory framework. Distinguishing between the two and not losing sight

of their key differences is, we suggest, important to building the legitimacy of Indigenous Studies in the academy *and* in Indigenous communities, both theoretically and, more importantly here, methodologically. Indigenous Studies entered into academic histories under particular conditions and these early conditions have since shaped the kind of training its progenitors undertook and the kind of knowledge it produced. This means that Indigenous Studies is different from – but in certain cases and under the right conditions can be broadly allied with – Indigenous knowledge, particularly as situated and practised outside of the academy. Acknowledging their difference without pronouncing their ontological discreteness is far more effective than swallowing traditional pieties offered by academics with little respect given to the complexity of the social relations that animate them. Nowhere is the successful negotiation of this creative tension more apparent than the recent and overwhelming achievement of NAISA, the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association.

Begun in the spring of 2007, with the first organizing meeting held at the University of Oklahoma, NAISA has grown into the largest Indigenous Studies association in the world, now regularly attracting more than a thousand scholars – most of them Indigenous – to locales across the United States and Canada. A perusal of any of the programmes over its past near-decade of existence evidences the astounding range of methodological approaches employed by scholars who, through their participation in the annual meetings, shore up and build on the intellectual richness of Indigenous Studies. While various scholars have noted the limitations and boundaries of NAISA's knowledge-production tendencies (see TallBear, forthcoming), it nevertheless constitutes a crucial fork in the road of Indigenous Studies' growth as/into a discipline. And its methodological richness and diversity are equally undeniable.

It is within this animus of acknowledging our methodological complexity that this current volume, *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, took shape. We have, through our own long-standing networks, brought together a disciplinarily extensive and geographically expansive group of Indigenous Studies scholars who have, regardless of their formal disciplinary affiliation and training, signalled a commitment to Indigenous Studies as a growing field – perhaps – discipline. Our invitation to participate made clear that participation would not require a “toeing the line” in terms of what we wanted the contribution to look like. Instead, we left the shape of the argument nearly solely up to the authors, limited only by word count (about 4,000 words) and animated by a single question: “What is your methodological approach to the way you undertake research, and how does it differ from past research in your field or discipline?”

As you will see, contributors responded with an astonishing array of sophisticated, subtle and above all *useful* chapters that offer academics at all levels – from Master's-level students to senior scholars – much grist for the mill as they undertake research in their varied fields of inquiry. One of the reasons for this approach is that “literature review” essays – while invaluable – have a quality that fixes them in time and, almost by definition, dates them, given production schedules and the passing of time. Given the vibrancy of Indigenous Studies at

this moment, we wanted to capture a hybrid approach that both looks back at important touchstones for the field and looks to the exciting work being undertaken now and aimed for in the future.

The volume has been organized into two major parts (“Emerging from the past” and “Alternative sources and methodological reorientations”), the second of which comprises five main sections: Reframing Indigenous Studies; All in the family; Feminism, gender and sexuality; Indigenous literature and expressive culture; and Indigenous peoples in and beyond the state. Part I, “Emerging from the past”, is meant to take on the various ways in which, while engaging with more venerable disciplines, Indigenous Studies scholarship has harnessed its central concepts, but also moved beyond them. White Earth Ojibwe scholar Jean M. O’Brien begins with a discussion of historical sources and methodologies, laying out how American Indian history in particular has fared within those methodological boundaries, then moving to a discussion of what Indigenous Studies’ historical methods looks like. Then, Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) reflects on and explores the intersection of Indigenous Studies with English literature, in particular focusing on the complex rise of “Indigenous literary nationalism” through a consideration of three works considered central to that subfield.

Following Justice’s piece, Pauline Turner Strong speaks to the roots of Indigenous Studies in history and anthropology, tracing its genealogy through the emergence, in the postwar period, of ethnohistory, and the interdisciplinary manner in which Indigenous Studies builds upon those complex roots. Finally, Michif (Métis) scholar Chris Andersen and Maori scholar Tahu Kukutai speak to the ways that quantitative information, particularly through official data like the census, has constructed Indigenous communities statistically, the manner in which this has produced simplistic and stereotypical depictions, and how Indigenous Studies scholars have more recently made creative use of official datasets to “speak back” against these conversations.

As mentioned above, Part II contains five sections, the first of which is titled “Reframing Indigenous Studies”. This section’s first chapter, by Kelly McDonough (White Earth Ojibwe descent), uses a case study of the Nahuas to outline how and why Indigenous intellectualism and alphabetic writing have been obscured and ignored by scholars until relatively recently. It documents current efforts to recover both the memory and textual evidence of nearly 500 years of Nahua knowledge production and dissemination as it relates to the written word. The myriad ways in which Nahuas have engaged the world and the word through a diverse array of written forms and genres are discussed, as are the cultural and linguistic revitalization projects that aim to reconnect Nahuas today with these recovered writings. Following McDonough, Mvskoke/Creek Nation scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima offers an affective understanding of historical methodology based in Deloria’s principle of relativity, asking us to think broadly not only about what historical subjects might have written (or had written about them), but about how they thought, did and felt, and the affective relationship of those elements to archival contents.

Then, Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson's chapter presents *relationality* as an Indigenous research paradigm that can shape Indigenous social research. She explores how this paradigm sits in marked contrast to Western methodologies, which operationalize being disconnected from the world as a presupposition of its application. She illustrates the value and utility of this paradigm through an analysis of the research methodologies literature produced by Indigenous scholars in Canada, the United States, Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand.

Following Moreton-Robinson, Kim TallBear (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate and Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma) explores how the reciprocity or "giving back" that forms the basis of critical research communities is actually predicated on a binary between those who inquire and those whose lives are studied. In this chapter and in the specific context of science and technology studies, she instead articulates overlapping intellectual, ethical and institution-building projects – to share goals while staying engaged in critical conversation through which new knowledge and insights are articulated together.

Next, Pohnpeian-Filipino Vicente Diaz's chapter is based around a provocative question of method: "Just how do we smell our histories?" In an invitation to think through what a possible answer to this question might look like, Diaz considers olfaction's ontologies and their epistemological possibilities, that is, olfaction's various states of being in the interest of studying their analytical (and other) possibilities in general, and in the context of Indigenous pasts in particular. Methodologically, Diaz encourages us to embrace total bodily immersion in the most visceral of activities that are central to projects of political and cultural reclamation and nation re-building.

Following Diaz, Osage scholar Robert Warrior argues that intellectual history has played a large role in the development of Indigenous Studies over the past two decades, and he offers two contexts for understanding the relationship between the two: 1) the articulation of traditional Indigenous knowledges in the academic field; and 2) the integration of theorizing and knowledge creation created in antagonistic social and cultural concepts of Euro-American intellectual practices. Warrior explores some of the methodological tensions in writing Indigenous intellectual histories in the midst of these two tensions and offers methodological insights that Indigenous intellectual history makes available in our attempts to grapple with these tensions.

Next, Kanaka Maoli scholar Noenoe K. Silva reviews the advent and development of critical Hawaiian studies from the 1980s to the present day. She focuses mainly on the work of Kanaka scholars who broke the ground (or cleared the path) for Kanaka-centred study, making use of the large and long-standing archives of writing in 'ōlelo Hawai'i (the Hawaiian language). Finally, Coll Thrush's chapter argues that although urban and Indigenous histories are often framed as though they are mutually exclusive, treating them instead as mutually constitutive offers opportunities for new research and writing at the intersection of those two fields of history. Focusing on the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, Thrush offers three lenses of urban Indigenous history: the presence of local peoples in whose territories settler cities have been built; the migration of

diverse Indigenous peoples to urban places; and the use of Indigenous images in the urban imaginary.

The second section of Part II, “All in the family”, contains chapters by Indigenous authors who speak to the central importance of family in the construction of their scholarly methodologies. We start with Maori scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville, who explodes our notions of what is – or counts as – an archive, and within that context, makes use of two Pacific texts relating to the interconnectedness across time and space, and makes an appeal to understanding geographical disparity in terms of presence rather than absence. Next, Maori scholar Aroha Harris speaks to the complexity of oral history and its relationship to Maori tellings of their own histories. More specifically, she addresses questions about subjectivity and ethics, and provides an example of oral life histories as illuminating source, well-suited to reading with and against the archives and manuscripts on which historians typically depend.

Following Harris, Cree scholar Robert Innes explores how researchers have begun to employ stories as theoretical frameworks to explain Indigenous peoples’ views, thoughts and motivations to gain a better understanding of their historic and contemporary realities. His chapter outlines how traditional stories such as “Elder Brother” can assist in exploring the connection between the beliefs, insights, concepts, ideals, values, attitudes and codes of conduct and the interactions of contemporary members of First Nations. Next, Amy Den Ouden explores ways to understand and engage in histories with communities. Her chapters offers insights into the process of community-based historical production, and discusses examples of Indigenous historical knowledges that illuminate the complexities, and transformational possibilities, of history-making as an intellectual, social and political endeavour.

Following Den Ouden, Sweden-based Sámi scholar May-Britt Öhman presents what she refers to as a “supradisciplinary methodology”, through which she addresses her scholarly work in the context of Sámi history and present time from her own perspective, that of a Forest Sámi of the Lule River Valley. Within the (colonial) academic context, she makes personal use of supradisciplinary methodology to assist in recovering her own personal hidden Sámi history, but also, more broadly, to fight the amnesia regarding Sámi history in general, and then more particularly in her work with allies to promote Sámi rights to lands and waters, defending and struggling for the survival of diverse Sámi cultures within an aggressively colonial Sweden.

Finally, William Bauer (Wailacki and Concow of the Round Valley Indian Tribes) explores the complex importance of oral histories to Indigenous Studies. He argues that oral histories are vital for understanding American Indian history because they provide information on the everyday experiences of American Indian people (women in particular), and stitch together a collective memory of the American Indian past. Most importantly, Bauer argues, oral histories allow us to express our sovereignty.

In the third section of Part II, the volume turns to dynamics relating to feminism, gender and sexuality in Indigenous Studies. Jacki Thompson Rand (Choctaw

Nation of Oklahoma) argues that scholars ought to actively reconsider their reliance on the “status” of women as an analytical frame, subject to criticism as inconsistent with Indigenous perspectives, and consider sustainability as a way to capture women’s economic, social and political roles in modern tribal communities and the challenges women face from without and from within. Scholars of native women’s studies work with limited primary sources, making the collection of oral histories and their careful analysis crucial to the field, conducive to community collaboration, and amenable to public humanities platforms. Then, Chickasaw Nation scholar Shannon Speed explores the issues involved in telling the stories of Indigenous women migrants from Mexico and Central America. She unpacks some of the ethical and practical issues involved in an Indigenous feminist anthropologist retelling of stories marked by extreme violence. She argues that while the dilemmas and contradictions of anthropological representation are never fully resolvable, using Indigenous feminist oral history practice allows both for sustained attention to the avoidance of perpetuating further violence through the representational process, and potentially for representations that challenge hegemonic hierarchies of knowledge and truth in the colonized world.

Following Speed, Tonawanda Band of Seneca scholar Mishuana Goeman’s chapter examines feminism and its relationship to colonialism, social justice and Indigenous Studies. The chapter first explores and critiques the historic approach to feminism, then presents an alternative genealogy, breaking down the problems with the three waves of feminism, and presenting Indigenous women’s engagement and relationship to mainstream and women-of-color feminism. Indigenous feminism’s goals support self-determination, sovereignty, healthy Indigenous communities and a thriving planet. Next, Maori scholar Brendan Hokowhitu explores how, unlike the typical ahistorical treatment of masculinity within the general field, Indigenous masculinity scholarship is linked to the tenets of Indigenous Studies more broadly. That is, a common method that has developed within this nexus has characteristically been “genealogical” in nature in that most scholars have tended to locate the production of contemporary Indigenous male bodies within the broader frames of settler colonialism and colonial history.

Finally, Mark Rifkin explains how, as a concept, “Indigenous” provides a means of challenging settler political and social norms. He goes on to explain, however, that it can also allow certain formulations of indigeneity to become the norm through which the concept implicitly is defined. Rifkin suggests that although similar tension operates within the term *queer*, queer studies’ unpacking and tracing of the implicit normalizations enacted through its use can aid Indigenous Studies in thinking about what is at stake in the ways the notion of Indigenous/indigeneity circulates.

Following a discussion of these dynamics, the fourth section of Part II focuses on Indigenous Studies practitioners’ engagement with various elements of expressive culture. In K’iche’ Maya Emilio del Valle Escalante’s chapter, he uses literary text to explore the “poetics of survival” through which displaced Mayan survivors of massacres by the Guatemalan state narrate experiences of violence, pain and chaos not only to disclose the operations of settler colonialism, but also

to “re-member” the Maya social body by confronting the past. In doing so, he rewrites or re-rights history in order to inscribe the historical memory of Maya survivors of the armed conflict. Sherry Farrell Racette (Timiskaming First Nation) then explores material culture considerations of objects as witnesses, archival documents, storytellers and teachers. Beginning with a brief historical context of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and museums, she reflects on twenty years of museum- and community-based research centred on objects, archives and story. She shares a conversation initiated with two fellow scholars, asking the basic question, “Is there something fundamentally different about the way Indigenous scholars engage with material culture?”

Resonating with Farrell Racette’s work, Piscataway Gabrielle Tayac’s chapter presents a concept for curatorial practice that inscribes the place of museums and exhibits as sites of indigenized three-dimensional authorship. Museum-based sources are situated to overturn colonial legacies. Indigenous Studies students and scholars are encouraged to exercise three-dimensional authorship as a complement to publication. Museum-based scholarship and curation should be elevated to parity with published products across fields beyond fine arts disciplines. The National Museum of the American Indian provides a current example of work that utilizes three-dimensional authorship. Finally, we turn to film, through the chapter of Michelle Raheja (Seneca heritage), which analyzes Indigenous film history through the lens of settler colonialism, arguing that, since film’s inception, motion picture companies have participated in a “logic of elimination” (Wolfe 2006) designed to erase Indigenous people visually. The chapter contrasts these desires by demonstrating the success of contemporary Indigenous science fiction filmmakers in drawing from both Indigenous speculative oral narrative as well as colonial literary and visual culture representations of “first contact” to institute new modes of thinking about Indigenous futurity.

The fifth section of Part II is titled “Indigenous peoples in and beyond the state”. The section begins with Turtle Mountain Anishinaabe scholar Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, who makes the methodological argument that understanding story as law not only unearths a rich body of Indigenous thought, it also dispels the notion of the inviolability of the law, demonstrating that law is likewise a set of stories. In examining the creation stories of the state, she explores how Western law took form and functions to legitimate the settler nation-state through Indigenous dispossession. The study of Indigenous law, in presenting alternative frameworks for the restoration of Indigenous–state relations, not only contains the potential to produce new methodological approaches, but may also unearth alternate methods for living together differently. Following Stark, Métis scholars Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge examine how the 49th parallel effectively created a historical myth by attributing American and Canadian national identities to Indigenous populations. They argue, however, that designating Indigenous populations as either Canadian or American has obscured the historical reality that the Northern Plains was an Indigenous space shaped by these populations’ diplomatic protocols and internal frameworks for belonging. During this era, the Métis in particular used the borderland to advance their own

sense of rights and ownership as they operationalized networks, connections and webs of exchange via the systems of mobility necessitated by their trade economy.

Next, Margaret Jacobs explores how the study of Indigenous education challenges the progressive narratives of education in American history and adds new dimensions to studies of colonialism worldwide. The sources that scholars use to examine Indigenous education have influenced their approaches and interpretations. Those using government records and the papers of missionary and reform groups have emphasized the oppressive nature of Indigenous education as a weapon of colonialism. Scholars who prioritize the use of Indigenous-authored sources have given more weight to the ambivalent experiences of Indigenous survivors and how Indigenous communities have sought to gain control of education as a key means of asserting sovereignty.

Following Jacobs, Mary Jane Logan McCallum discusses some of the procedures historians undergo when researching modern institutional records pertaining to Indigenous people—in particular, medical records to which public access is restricted because they contain personal health information. After describing the records and some early encounters with them, she discusses the complicated nexus of ethics codes and the research agreement that has come to regulate her research, and she delineates some of the methods used to research Indigenous institutional archives both in the presence and in the absence of such regulations.

Following McCallum, Jeffrey Ostler draws on recent trends in the overlapping fields of settler colonial and genocide studies to propose possibilities for the development of an alternative approach to the study of the history of genocide in North America. Taking examples from recent literature, the chapter discusses new approaches to disease and its intersection with other forces of destruction, patterns of violence, state policy toward Indigenous people, and demography. Throughout, the chapter emphasizes the methodological importance of a sustained analysis of native agency and survival.

Finally, Anishinaabe scholar Sheryl Lightfoot (Lake Superior Band/Keweenaw Bay Indian Community) positions the importance of Indigenous Studies in the context of the recent spate of reconciliation projects engaged in by various nation-states. Such projects are charged with improving relationships between Indigenous peoples and the governments that have caused them harm. This chapter argues that scholarship and political activism can be effectively and ethically bridged through research that engages active Indigenous–state reconciliation projects in three “R” ways: Revealing, Reporting and Reflecting – the “past–present–future” concept of researching social change.

It is our hope that this volume will provide readers with a sense of this particularly dynamic moment in the emergence of Indigenous Studies. Following more than five decades of scholarship tilling new fields and searching for approaches to capture Indigenous perspectives on the long history of settler colonialism globally, Indigenous Studies seems to have arrived at a moment of incredible synergy and unprecedented engagement on a global stage. We hope this volume shines a spotlight on some of the ways in which scholarship is transforming Indigenous Studies in innovative and exciting ways.

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Part I

Emerging from the past

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1 Historical sources and methods in Indigenous Studies

Touching on the past, looking to the future

Jean M. O'Brien

Indigenous histories have always existed. Indigenous notions of the past that connect people to places, events, peoples, and memories help Indigenous peoples define their place in the created world and explain its shape, wonders, and human relations (like other kinds of history). Indigenous peoples have their own ways of reckoning and remembering histories, including over the past several decades incorporating historical methodologies associated with western European traditions (Nabokov 2002). Even though Indigenous peoples have always understood their place within the created world according to narratives (many rooted in oral transmission supplemented with other memory technologies, such as winter counts, wampum belts, memory piles, pictographs, and more), Indigenous voices and agency in producing historical narratives have rarely been accorded a place of legitimacy in the formal discipline of history and have instead been dismissed as “myth,” “legend,” “folklore,” or “saga” (Nabokov 2002; Basso 1996).

Philip Deloria periodizes ways of thinking about the history of American Indian history into four broad approaches: (1) Frontier imaginings, characterized by spatial reckonings of encounters that moved from conflict to conquest (beginning in the “contact” era); (2) Racial/developmental hierarchies as a way of accounting for peoples, encounters, and difference (dating from the late eighteenth century); (3) Modernist approaches that focused on the notion of fixed social boundaries between peoples, but also the possibility of their transcendence (beginning in the late nineteenth century); and (4) Postmodern/postcolonial ways of thinking about Indian history, which focus on “the tension between the liberating discussion of boundaries and the constant reshaping of them as political memories of the colonial past” (roughly World War II to the present) (Deloria 2002).

Deloria’s synthesis is remarkable in what it captures, including the easily overlooked fact that certain traces (or even larger elements) of each of these approaches continue to shape narratives about Indigenous peoples. Monographs continue to promote a narrative arc of an epic clash between Euro-American and Indigenous foes, which ends in the defeat of the admirable Indigenous nations, their struggles ultimately futile as they inevitably fade into insignificance, with no acknowledgment of the continuation of their political existence. The historical literature continues its fixation on “mixed bloods” as somehow racially and

culturally “deficient” compared to their supposedly “pure” forebears, frequently purporting to “measure” the degree of “assimilation.” In these formulations, “racial” change via “mixing” with other races (via discredited nineteenth-century notions of racial science predicated on “pure,” distinct races) or cultural change supposedly diminishes the indigeneity of the person/peoples, and greases the slide into “assimilation.” These deeply held and often unconscious assumptions presume that Indigenous peoples can only be the victims of change, never its agents. Indigenous peoples, then, can never be a part of modernity, but instead stand in as modernity’s polar opposite, thus robbing them of the possibility of being historical actors and peoples (O’Brien 2010).

Part of the problem for proponents of Indigenous history is that the discipline of history is deeply wedded to national narratives as the infrastructure that channels analysis and interpretation in particular directions to the exclusion of others. The logical outcome is the rise and triumph of the nation-state in the face of internal and external foes. In the case of the United States and its Indigenous peoples, the standard plot line follows the long history of Indigenous displacement (often figured as “territorial expansion” or “territorial acquisition”) that secures the land base of the nation, a process that in Indigenous Studies is understood as “settler colonialism.” In Patrick Wolfe’s classic formulation, “settler colonialism is an inclusive, land-centred project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan centre to the frontier encampment, with a view to eliminating indigenous societies” (Wolfe 2006).

A standard means of framing the United States as a nation might begin with “pre-contact” Native North America, then proceed through “exploration,” “discovery,” the claiming of Indigenous lands for European nations, and the contest among European nations for mastery of the hemisphere. As Michael Witgen has shown, claims to imperial mastery of Indigenous peoples existed in their own fantasies rather than in actual power relations throughout the upper Great Lakes region into the nineteenth century, depending on where in Native North America you stood (Witgen 2007, 2012). In Latin America, Patricia Seed has demonstrated convincingly the degree to which Spaniards engaged in mere “ceremonies of possession” rather than claims to conquest that could be plausibly defended (Seed 1995). In the case of the United States, a long period of “colonial” history follows these claims of possession (however illusory), with the American Revolution rendered as *the* “post-colonial” moment of the nation (meaning shedding the shackles of English colonialism for the free development of a democratic republic, the United States). After the American Revolution, the nation fends off internal and external threats to become *the* world power. With these framings, the outcome is predetermined (the triumph of the nation), and plot lines lead to “declension narratives” for Indigenous peoples. Many make the leap from “declension” to the “extinction” of Indigenous peoples.

The fundamental problem in national narratives of the United States is that they cannot possibly account for the existence of more than 560 federally recognized tribal nations engaged in continuing nation-to-nation relationships with the US federal government, and they cannot adequately represent even a fraction of

Indigenous historical and contemporary experiences (which include far more complexity than even the basic fact of federally recognized tribal nations standing in diplomatic relationships to the United States, including state-recognized tribes as well as tribal peoples unrecognized by any external political body) (Wilkins and Stark 2011). Accounts that fail to acknowledge the political dimension of Indigenous nationhood typically elect to reckon Indigenous people as racial or ethnic minorities, which cannot capture the unique status of First Peoples in the United States (and elsewhere). Too often, narratives about Indigenous peoples founder when they train their focus too tightly on Indigenous “culture(s)” without probing, for example, the power and prerogative Indigenous nations possess to defend their cultural practices on the political and legal level. Framing Indigenous histories within the rubric of “multiculturalism” distorts their place within the settler colonial state. Indigenous Studies cannot settle for the idea that Indigenous peoples have *culture* in the absence of *politics*.

Published accounts produced by non-Indigenous people until well into the twentieth century followed two basic trajectories. The first was that which plotted the Wars for the West, the military history that eventually dispossessed Indigenous peoples in the service of casting the United States as a national power. The second concerned the proto-ethnology and then anthropology emerging largely from the mid-nineteenth century onward that purported to create a science of man, including Indigenous North Americans, as part of a racial hierarchy and then as a culturally distinct mosaic of peoples whose ways of life faced constant threats in the face of modernity; this was figured as “salvage anthropology”, aimed at producing snapshots of cultures in supposed eclipse.

The tide seemed to turn for Indigenous history at the very end of the 1960s and into the 1970s. No book can claim the massive influence in the United States of Vine Deloria, Jr.’s *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (1969), which boldly called out mainstream America for its treatment of Indian people and Indian history, and signalled a dramatically new direction that many of us trace as the touchstone for the development of Indigenous Studies as a field. This book appeared amidst the Red Power movement, and the emergence of “ethnic studies” units and programs, as well as departments of American Indian Studies. Robert Berkhofer’s 1971 call for a New Indian history looked to interdisciplinarity (especially between history and anthropology, or the emergent approach of ethnohistory) to write dynamic Indian histories that imagined Indians as part of the national “present,” and took Indians seriously as political actors (Berkhofer 1971). Over time, the “New Indian History” took on the notion of placing Indians themselves at the centre of historical analyses.

Indigenous history methodologies

At one time, many mainstream historians regarded Indigenous history as marginal on the basis that rich and thorough archives were sparse or non-existent: What to do in the absence of “real archives” or “reliable documentation” as typically figured by the discipline? How does one confront the demands of the discipline of

history regarding particular kinds of written documentation, and the continued marginalization of particular kinds of sources – oral histories, for example? Who gets to decide what history matters, and what counts as reliable evidence? How does one narrate histories in the absence of documents historians routinely demand? What makes the sources of Indigenous history different (and what *doesn't* make them different)? What kinds of sources *do* exist that are core to the discipline, as traditionally composed? These are crucial questions for the field, and areas of robust critical engagement for scholars of Indigenous history.

In fact, as recent scholarship has amply demonstrated, Indigenous peoples have been producing written documentation of and about their lives for hundreds of years, even if the standard is writing in European languages (let alone the ancient writing technologies in rich evidence across the Americas that pre-date the presence of Europeans in this hemisphere) (see for example Deloria 2002; Jaskoski 1996; O'Connell 1992; Warrior 2005; Round 2010). Beginning with the first Native scholars in the Indian College at Harvard in the 1660s, Indigenous peoples have been writing and publishing at an accelerating rate into the present (Deloria 2002).

The long-standing marginality of the field has produced a situation of rich possibilities for transforming Indigenous histories, and, if there is the will, national narratives as well. An active embrace of the many and diverse archives of Indigenous history, and openness to the methodologies of Indigenous approaches that have been marginalized or disdained, promise the transformation of the field in fruitful directions (as outlined in this volume). From the perspective of Indigenous histories, a couple of overarching notions are vital to bear in mind: First, there is an abundance of documentation to support the pursuit of Indigenous history. No longer can it be claimed that the sources just don't exist to do justice to that history. There are also "unexpected" archives that have been underutilized and unappreciated, many of them stemming directly from the relationship of tribal peoples within settler colonialism. And second, these archives – those longer known and those now being uncovered – must be appreciated from Indigenous perspectives, which have overturned older understandings in countless instances.

Indigenous Studies, Indigenous history, and, increasingly, a move toward global approaches to Indigenous Studies and Indigenous history subsume an expansive embrace of different perspectives on historical actors and events, imaginative approaches to identifying and using source materials, creativity in developing rigorous analytical frames that can transform Indigenous histories and their interventions, and an almost seamless interdisciplinarity that seeks to illuminate historical experiences that have been kept on the margins. Indigenous Studies as currently practised draws on many scholarly traditions, but no one volume captures the preoccupations, ethics, and fundamentally distinct research methodologies better than Linda Tuhiwai Smith's path-breaking book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999). Indigenous Studies requires the acknowledgment of two fundamental commitments in order to gain legitimacy in the view of other practitioners and of the peoples, communities, and/or nations involved: an acknowledgment of the positionality of the researcher/writer in relation to the peoples, communities, and/or nations