

**“We Do Not Talk About Our History Here”: The Department of Indian Affairs,
Musqueam-Settler Relations, and Memory in a Vancouver Neighbourhood**

by

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ABSTRACT

The Musqueam Indian Reserve is one of the few in North America located within the boundaries of a major city. Although historical narratives have long silenced the experiences of urban Aboriginal people, this case study draws attention to the many contexts in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people interacted across legal boundaries that supposedly kept reserve space and urban space separate. This thesis argues that the Department of Indian Affairs was the principal actor in both facilitating and constraining Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations in early-twentieth-century Vancouver through its control of land, resources, and the consumer economy. Furthermore, this thesis argues that the policies and practices of the state were so pervasive that they have come to dominate any memory of those relations today. Using an extensive collection of oral histories recently carried out for a local community history project in Vancouver, this study explores the processes through which the history of Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions have been both remembered and erased. In doing so, this thesis makes clear the relationship of social history to social memory, and contributes to recent scholarly work in documenting how Aboriginal histories are necessarily urban histories.

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Prologue

Peter Nabokov identifies two lessons on Aboriginal history and historicity that have stayed with me over the course of this research project. The first is to “take nobody’s word for their non-existence, and take the time to find them for yourself.” The second is that “they’re often personal and ever present.”¹ At times I felt I was grasping at stories that were not there. As is often the case with Aboriginal history, the documentary record academics have traditionally relied upon covers relatively little of this territory. But by looking beyond traces and intimations in oral accounts, a larger story soon emerged. Although I grew up in nearby Dunbar, this was not a history I was familiar with. Like many of the non-Musqueam individuals in this thesis, my early schooling focused mainly on Aboriginal people in distant places and the distant past. It is through the many opportunities provided jointly by the Musqueam Indian Band and UBC that I have come to learn more about the Musqueam community. I was privileged to study hə́nqəmíə́m with Larry Grant as a student in the First Nations Language Program, participate in the Musqueam-UBC Archaeology Field School, and attend several Musqueam 101 lectures. While in some ways, this research project is personal for me, it is even more so for the many people who have been willing to convey some of their history to me. As Deborah Bird Rose maintains: “We are privileged to receive what we receive there is no natural right to be told history.”² In taking on the task of researching and writing about this history, I am conscious of the responsibilities that come with it. I take to heart the principles of responsibility and reciprocity that Rauna Kuokkanen identifies as central to the logic of the gift of Indigenous

¹ Peter Nabokov, *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 2 and 20.

² Bain Attwood, *Telling the Truth about Aboriginal History* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005): 180.

epistemes.³ I am grateful to the members of the Musqueam community who have shared their time, energy, and resources. They deserve much in return.

³ Rauna Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University: Responsibility, Indigenous Epistemes, and the Logic of the Gift* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007): 3.

Introduction

Despite heavy cloud cover and the threat of rain, four thousand people showed up at the old Point Grey municipal hall on July 9, 1936 to celebrate Vancouver's fiftieth anniversary. The Golden Jubilee program was jam packed with activity: a community parade of decorated automobiles, a model aircraft exhibition, and a lacrosse game pitting the Locarno Juvenile "B" Boys against the Point Grey Juvenile "B" Boys. The real entertainment, however, began in the evening. After rousing choral renditions of "Land of Hope and Glory" and "Vancouver, Favored City," the open-air stage performance culminated with a four-part historical re-enactment of the founding of Vancouver. Brought to life by a large cast of characters, the story opened with Simon Fraser of the North West Company making his way down the river that today bears his name toward the place that would become Vancouver. The program published for the event recounted how "after untold hardships, Fraser and his Voyageurs arrive at Musqueam—the mouth of the river—much surprised to see a few old men and women, the others having fled. The tide beaches the canoes whereupon the Indians, howling like so many wolves, appear in every direction—a close call." This was the first and the last time Musqueam people made an appearance in the pageant. Subsequent episodes celebrated the arrival of the pioneers, the railroad, and the military, depicting what was hailed as a rapid transformation "from a tangled wilderness to a prosperous and outstandingly beautiful community within the space of a quarter century." Finally, the show culminated with a "salute to youth," represented by twenty Point Grey Junior High School boys in pyramid formation, bringing the historical spectacle to a close.⁴

⁴ This event is documented in "Gala Community Day in Kerrisdale," *The Vancouver Sun*, July 10, 1936: 5; "Kerrisdale Show Draws Thousands," *The Vancouver Province*, July 10, 1936: 9; and Kerrisdale Day Committee, *Kerrisdale Day, Thursday July 9, 1936: Kerrisdale's Contribution to Vancouver Golden Jubilee* (Vancouver: Point Grey News-Gazette Limited, 1936), UBC Rare Books & Special Collections, Vancouver. The quotation in the program describing Simon Fraser's voyage was evidently taken word for word from his diary of the event.



Photo 1: Four blocks in length, a parade of 44 decorated automobiles and floats for Kerrisdale's Golden Jubilee was held prior to the historical pageant. *The Vancouver Sun*, July 10, 1936: 5, Pacific Newspaper Group

Kerrisdale's Golden Jubilee pageant exemplified the long Western tradition of casting Aboriginal people as the archaic, traditional, and uncivilized "other" against which Whites defined themselves.⁵ While the performance honoured Simon Fraser as a founding father of Vancouver, the people of Musqueam were dismissed as hostile, animal-like, and, ultimately, an obstacle to urban development. Judging from their brief appearance early on in the historical narrative and their complete absence in the acts that followed, the pageant suggested that Musqueam people eventually succumbed to the pressures of settlement. In their place, settlers were simultaneously proclaimed both founders and inheritors of a land assumed unoccupied: "Let us hope that our children, deriving inspiration from our rugged mountains and girding seas, will add to our achievements as the present generation has added to the work of our grand old

⁵ For example, see S. Elizabeth Bird, ed., *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996); Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992); and Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). With regards to terminology, I use the term "Aboriginal people" to refer to groups or individuals of Indigenous descent in Canada. I use the term "White" as a collective term for people of European descent despite the heterogeneous nature of settler society. And I have chosen to capitalize the term to indicate I am not referring to a static racial group. I use the term "non-Musqueam" and "non-Aboriginal" when referring to groups that may include individuals who are not of European descent.

Pioneers.” Clearly, Aboriginal people symbolized the past, while White explorers, settlers, and suburban youth represented the future in this version of the story. As a result, Musqueam presence was conveniently erased from the imagining of contemporary Vancouver, making way for modern-day roads and houses of which Aboriginal people could not possibly be a part. Except they were. In fact, the main actor representing the “Indians” in the historical pageant was none other than Musqueam Chief Jack Stogan ʔsəmlənəx^w, and he lived just down the street.⁶

Chief Jack Stogan ʔsəmlənəx^w made his home on Musqueam Indian Reserve No. 2 located on the banks of the river where Simon Fraser had first sighted Musqueam settlements over one hundred years earlier. A hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əm̓ speaking people, the Musqueam First Nation once occupied numerous sites throughout their traditional territory and was estimated to number in the thousands.⁷ Due to pressure from settlers wanting to pre-empt land for agricultural purposes and by timber companies looking to harvest forest resources, the colonial government began to set aside a number of reserves for Aboriginal people in British Columbia (BC) in the late nineteenth century.⁸ By 1864, government surveyors had laid out what would become Musqueam Indian Reserve No. 2 at the site of the main Musqueam winter village of x^wməθk^wəy̓əm.⁹ Many Musqueam people made their livelihood hunting, fishing, and harvesting local food sources. Some took on seasonal wage labour when the opportunity arose, primarily in the fishing, canning, agricultural, logging, and longshoring sectors.¹⁰ But the ability of

⁶ Kerrisdale Day Committee, *Kerrisdale Day, Thursday July 9, 1936*, UBC Rare Books & Special Collections, Vancouver. For her insights about Musqueam motivations in participating in public celebrations, see Susan Roy, “Performing Musqueam Culture and History at British Columbia’s 1966 Centennial Celebrations,” *BC Studies* no. 135 (Autumn 2002).

⁷ Leona Sparrow, personal communication.

⁸ R. Cole Harris, *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002): 30-44.

⁹ *Ibid.*: 75.

¹⁰ See Canada, Annual Reports of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1897-1911; and John Edward Michael Kew, “Coast Salish Ceremonial Life: Status and Identity in a Modern Village” (PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1970): 51. For discussion of Aboriginal participation in longshoring, see Andrew Parnaby, “The Best

Musqueam people to survive was increasingly threatened by urban development, government regulations, and conflicts over resource access.¹¹ While the Musqueam population was decimated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by smallpox, measles, tuberculosis, and typhoid fever, band membership had increased from a low of 92 in 1900 to just over 160 by the time the Golden Jubilee pageant took place.¹²



Photo 2: The Musqueam Indian Reserve in 1936 showing Chinese agricultural plots on the left, St. Michael's Catholic Church, and Musqueam houses in the background. *Vancouver Public Library, VPL 19489*

Men that Ever Worked the Lumber': Aboriginal Longshoremen on Burrard Inlet, BC, 1863-1939," *Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (March 2006): 53-78.

¹¹ *Ibid.*: 32-33.

¹² Leona Sparrow, personal communication; and Michelle Poulsen, "Making Choices: Examining Musqueam Agency at Stselax Village during the Post-Contact Period" (Master's thesis, UBC, 2005): 40.

The first non-Aboriginal settlers in the area were farmers from England and Ireland who arrived in the early 1860s, eager to take possession of the lands surrounding x^wməθk^wəy̓əm. At first these farming families numbered just a few. But as the population of Vancouver swelled in the early twentieth century, real estate magnates like Charles Trott Dunbar bought up nearby tracts of land with the intent of developing large residential communities. In 1906, this area was included in the newly established Municipality of Point Grey on the outskirts of the City of Vancouver. Hoping to attract Vancouver's wealthy elite, developers mounted aggressive marketing campaigns.¹³ "Government Plans Have Already Caused Great Advance in Property Values—Locality Will Be Site of Many Elegant Residences," announced one newspaper headline.¹⁴ Like other North American cities at the time, the most important catalyst for suburban growth in Vancouver was the development of a light rail system.¹⁵ With construction beginning in 1912, streetcar service soon connected Point Grey's planned residential sections of Dunbar and Kerrisdale to Vancouver. An influx of homebuyers followed, and the population of Point Grey tripled to 13,000 between 1911 and 1921.¹⁶ While several of Vancouver's more affluent families chose to build large homes in Kerrisdale, Dunbar was decidedly middle class. In 1929, one third of male residents were employed in management or sales, one quarter in trades, and one fifth as clerks. The majority worked in downtown Vancouver; almost all had Anglo-European roots.¹⁷

Despite the best efforts of local government and business officials, the Musqueam First Nation was one of the few urban Aboriginal communities to escape forced relocation in the early

¹³ Robert A. J. McDonald, "Chapter 5: Incurable Optimists," in *Making Vancouver: Class, Status, and Social Boundaries, 1863-1913* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996), especially 128-139.

¹⁴ "Splendid Prospects for Point Grey," *The Vancouver Province*, April 20, 1907: 26.

¹⁵ Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).

¹⁶ Bruce Macdonald, *Vancouver: A Visual History* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1992): 34-36.

¹⁷ Graham Wynn and Timothy Oke, eds., *Vancouver and Its Region* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992): 98.

twentieth century. Those reserves occupying prime real estate lands like the Kitsilano Indian Reserve near downtown Vancouver and the Songhees Indian Reserve in Victoria were quickly appropriated.¹⁸ Although the city planners did campaign to relocate the Musqueam Indian Reserve in the 1920s, they were ultimately unsuccessful.¹⁹ As the population of the suburbs grew, new residential sections soon pushed up against the border of the reserve. That made those Golden Jubilee revellers who hailed from Kerrisdale and Dunbar practically next-door neighbours with Chief Jack Stogan ʔsəm̓lənəx^w and other Musqueam band members. But despite the physical proximity of Musqueam and non-Musqueam communities, the historical pageant honouring the founding of Vancouver illustrated a pronounced distance between the two. Tangled up in the symbolic performance was the contradiction of contemporary Aboriginal people acting in a historical narrative that relegated them to the remote past. That Musqueam people were at once present and absent in this figurative display conveyed much about the way they were positioned in the larger community.

The Golden Jubilee pageant of 1936 represented many of the paradoxes inherent in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations in BC. It highlighted the dual existence of intimacy and separation in social relationships, and it drew attention to the uncomfortable ways Aboriginal people were both commemorated and erased in historical narratives of those interactions.²⁰ These contradictions have by no means disappeared in contemporary times. A recent local history project on one of Point Grey's residential sections provides a chance to better understand how

¹⁸ For discussion of the Songhees Indian Reserve, see John Lutz, "Relating to the Country: The Lekwammen and the Extension of Settlement," in ed. Ruth Sandwall, *Beyond the City Limits: Rural History in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press 1999): 17-32. For discussion of the Kitsilano Indian Reserve, see Jean Barman, "Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver," *BC Studies* no. 155 (Autumn 2007): 3-31.

¹⁹ For discussion of Vancouver's City Plan, see Jordan Stanger-Ross, "Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver: City Planning and the Conflict over Indian Reserves, 1928-1950s," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (December 2008), especially 550-557.

²⁰ For her discussion of the commemoration and erasure of Aboriginal people in historical narratives of Vancouver, see Barman, "Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver."

the Golden Jubilee performance fit within the larger context of urban Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations. Through an initiative instigated by Peggy Schofield in 1999, called Documenting Dunbar, project members carried out more than 250 oral history interviews with residents over a period of several years. The goal was to gather enough material for a local history book, which was eventually published in 2007, called *The Story of Dunbar: Voices of a Vancouver Neighbourhood*.²¹ As a product of the extensive research that went into the book, the Dunbar Oral History collection presents two courses of investigation that are entirely related. The first is to reflect on the rich social world of Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions in Point Grey, from 1900-1950. The second is to explore how these social relations were remembered—and forgotten—in the oral histories of residents who were alive during that period.

In the first section of this thesis, I examine the prominent role of the state, namely the far-reaching bureaucratic machine that was the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) and its legion of Indian agents, in influencing Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations in Point Grey. Confined to living on a reserve, streamlined into specific resource sectors, and barred from attending public schools, Musqueam people were, for the most part, shut out from urban life. To a large extent, the mechanisms of government that tried to keep Musqueam and non-Musqueam people separate succeeded in different ways, not the least of which was in making segregation seem inevitable. However, while the position of the DIA as intermediary may have worked to create distance between Musqueam and non-Musqueam groups in some respects, it drew them closer together in others. To make this case, I focus specifically on how government efforts to control land, resources, and the consumer economy influenced their relationship with non-Musqueam people in Point Grey. Furthermore, I suggest the policies and practices of the DIA were so pervasive

²¹ Peggy Schofield, ed., *The Story of Dunbar: Voices of a Vancouver Neighbourhood* (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2007).

that they have come to dominate any memory of Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions. The effects of a long history of state mediation are clearly reflected in the many Documenting Dunbar oral histories that remain mute on the subject. This point is taken up in the second section of this thesis in which I investigate how individual memories and community narratives continue to perpetuate silences about Musqueam and non-Musqueam history. Thus, in making the link between social history and the social memory of that history, I argue that the DIA in particular acted as a forceful agent in mediating both.

“Two Parties Are Holding on to Each End of My Boat”: The Department of Indian Affairs and Musqueam-Settler Relations in Point Grey, 1900-1950

The false dichotomy of Aboriginal and urban made manifest in the pageantry of Kerrisdale’s Golden Jubilee celebration is far from remarkable. It is a concept that has been reinforced by a field of historical scholarship that tends to locate Aboriginal peoples in distant rural landscapes.²² Until very recently, documenting the experiences of urban Aboriginal people has been largely limited to sociological studies of the recent past or to the history of postwar migration to cities.²³ But as historians like Coll Thrush and Penelope Edmonds have

²² For a survey of recent scholarship on Canadian Aboriginal history in which the terms “city” or “urban” almost never figure, see Keith Thor Carlson, Melinda Jette, and Kenichi Matsui, “An Annotated Bibliography of Major Writings in Aboriginal History (1990-2000),” *Canadian Historical Review* 82, no. 1 (March 2001): 122-171.

²³ For sociological studies, see Bonita Lawrence, *‘Real’ Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004); David Newhouse and Evelyn Peters, eds., *Not Strangers in these Parts: Urban Aboriginal Peoples* (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2003) http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/AboriginalBook_e.pdf; Dara Culhane, “Their Spirits Live within Us: Aboriginal Women in Downtown Eastside Vancouver Emerging into Visibility,” *American Indian Quarterly* 27, no. 3 & 4 (2003): 593-606; Larry Krotz, *Urban Indians: The Strangers in Canadian Cities* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1980); Edgar J. Dosman, *Indians: The Urban Dilemma* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972); and Mark Nagler, *Indians in the City: A Study of the Urbanization of Indians in Toronto* (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Anthropology, Saint Paul University, 1970). For studies of postwar urban Aboriginal history, see Donald Lee Fixico, *The Urban Indian Experience in America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000); James LeGrand, *Indian Metropolis: Native Americans in Chicago, 1945-75* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002); and Meghan Longstaffe, “The Death and Life of Aboriginal Women in Postwar Vancouver” (Master’s thesis, UBC, 2009).

convincingly demonstrated, Aboriginal people have always been active participants in the urban life of the Pacific Northwest.²⁴ In Canada, a number of historical studies on Aboriginal people in cities have been produced in the last few years that look specifically at urban development as a dimension of colonialism in the early twentieth century.²⁵ This recent literature is important in documenting how the displacement of Aboriginal peoples in urban environments continued long after original dispossession. This thesis aims to contribute to these new understandings of how “present-day cities are sites shaped by settler colonialism” and how “Aboriginal histories are necessarily urban histories.”²⁶

The position of the Musqueam First Nation within the city limits of Vancouver has derived from a slightly different set of historical circumstances than those faced by Aboriginal communities who were relocated from urban areas or who migrated to cities from their home territories. Given that Musqueam people have always lived in the region that became Vancouver, their perspective has been firmly rooted in their own traditional Aboriginal space as the city has grown around them. Some scholars of Musqueam history and culture have touched on this dimension, most notably Susan Roy.²⁷ In the effort to better understand how Musqueam and non-Musqueam individuals engaged in social relationships in early-twentieth-century Point Grey, one is faced with a problem common to the study of urban Aboriginal history. The powerful effects of settler city origin stories that exclude minorities have long overshadowed other versions of this history, including those of Aboriginal peoples. As a result, civic archives and public history projects in Vancouver have often ignored or concealed evidence of Musqueam and non-

²⁴ Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); Penelope Edmonds, *Urbanizing Frontiers: Indigenous Peoples and Settlers in 19th-Century Pacific Rim Cities* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).

²⁵ Renisa Mawani, *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009); and Stanger-Ross, “Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver.”

²⁶ Edmonds, *Urbanizing Frontiers*: 238.

²⁷ Susan Roy, *These Mysterious People: Shaping History and Archaeology in a Northwest Coast Community* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); and Roy, “Performing Musqueam Culture and History.”

Musqueam interactions.²⁸ However, enough fragments exist in these records to suggest a larger story of social relations that might not be immediately obvious. Piecing these instances together can create what Ronald Takaki calls “a community of a larger memory,” which can help facilitate a greater understanding of the processes at work in these interactions.²⁹

One such series of fragments tells the story of the Jim family of the Musqueam First Nation. Not long after Jack Stogan *čsəm̓lənəx*^w became chief in 1914, Musqueam Jim made a deal with a South Asian man named Gunga Singh that turned sour.³⁰ Gunga Singh was a labourer who had come to Canada in 1906 along with hundreds of other Sikh immigrants from the Punjab region of India. Allegedly, Gunga Singh paid Musqueam Jim \$47 for the right to remove three trees from the Musqueam Indian Reserve. However, the business arrangement fell through and the timber was never removed. When Gunga Singh later accused Musqueam Jim of failing to reimburse the considerable sum he had paid for the trees—which the Musqueam man denied—Major J.R. Tite was called upon to intercede in the matter. J.R. Tite was an English broker with the British Columbia Land and Investment Company as well as the commander of the 23rd Infantry Brigade of Vancouver. A bachelor in his early fifties, he lived in Point Grey with two lodgers, including a labourer from India called Natta Singh.³¹ While he was certainly an advocate for the Indian plaintiff, it is not exactly clear what stake Tite held in the case—whether the failed transaction was related to his business dealings or whether he personally knew Gunga Singh through his lodger. Either way, the matter eventually ended up in the hands of Dominion

²⁸ Antoinette Burton, “Introduction: Archive Fever, Archive Stories,” in *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, ed. Burton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005): 7. Burton maintains that “archives are not just sources or repositories as such, but constitute full-fledged historical actors as well.”

²⁹ Ronald Takaki, *A Larger Memory: A History of Our Diversity, with Voices* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1998): 5.

³⁰ For the Jim family, see Canada, Nominal Census 1911, District 11 (New Westminster), Enumeration District No. 1 (Musqueam Indian Reserve): 2. For Gunga Singh, see Canada, Nominal Census 1911, District 11 (New Westminster), Enumeration District No. 8 (Burnaby Municipality): 15.

³¹ For Major J.R. Tite, see Canada, Nominal Census 1911, District 12 (Vancouver), Enumeration District No. 3 (Point Grey): 14; and John Reynolds Tite fonds, Add. MSS 50, City of Vancouver (CVA).

Constable Grant, who often attended to issues on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, though the exact details of how he dealt with this one remain a mystery.³²

While we do not know much more about Gunga Singh, we do know that Musqueam Jim was born in 1882. He married Elizabeth, four years his junior, and they had three children. The local business dealings of the Jim family were not limited to buying wood. They also dealt with neighbouring merchants on a regular basis. One day in the spring of 1931, Elizabeth Jim made the short trip from the Musqueam Indian Reserve to Fleming's Grocery about two kilometres away. The owner, James P. Fleming, was a businessman of Scottish descent.³³ For the last several years, he had operated a small shop at Forty First Avenue and Dunbar Street, selling smoked and cooked meats, fresh fruit and vegetables, confectionary, and tobacco. Elizabeth Jim was not the only Musqueam band member to frequent Fleming's Grocery. Frank Charlie, James Point, and Tom Peter among others made regular trips as well. On the day Elizabeth Jim visited the store, she purchased flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, and other basics for a total of \$5.78. In lieu of cash, she signed her mark, witnessed by a McDalson and an S. McKay who wrote their names on the receipt. At the time, the Jim family earned about \$143.50 annually from the rental of their reserve allotment. Like many other Musqueam band members, they leased their land to Chinese farming families. It seems the money these band members received was either distributed to them directly or applied to their accounts at local stores like Kerrisdale Lumber, the Red & White, and, of course, Fleming's.³⁴

³² This event is documented in Peter Byrne to Major J.R. Tite, 20 June 1917, RG10, vol. 1486, Library and Archives Canada (LAC); and Peter Byrne to Major J.R. Tite, 14 July 1917, RG10, vol. 1486, LAC.

³³ For James P. Fleming, see Canada, Nominal Census 1911, District 12 (Vancouver), Enumeration District No. 39 (Vancouver): 22.

³⁴ These events are documented in Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1927-1930 and 1930-1932, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

Clearly, Musqueam people were connected to the burgeoning suburbs around them in complex ways. Although this account of the Jim family's interactions with non-Musqueam individuals in Point Grey is just one example, it hints at many others that might have gone unrecorded. This story speaks to the diversity of Musqueam, Chinese, South Asian, and White groups who lived in the area. And it suggests some of the many contexts in which Musqueam and non-Musqueam people interacted across legal boundaries that supposedly kept reserve space and city space separate. As Edmonds maintains, settler cities were not as white as many wished and imagined. Despite "a vision of contiguous cartographic, legal, and white urban space," these city spaces were indeed transcultural sites.³⁵ In the case of Vancouver, and Point Grey in particular, it was the DIA that was the principle actor in both facilitating and constraining social interactions between Musqueam and non-Musqueam people.

In terms of the power wielded by the DIA over the lives of Aboriginal people, Cole Harris argues that the most essential discipline imposed was the management of movement.³⁶ Government surveys delineated spaces where Musqueam people could live and where they would become trespassers in the eyes of colonial law. From the first pre-emption claims in the 1860s to the early twentieth century, settlers like George Tranfield, William Smith, Isabella Magee, Henry Mole, and the Fitzgerald McCleery frequently called upon government agents to reprimand Musqueam people for "encroaching" on what was traditional Musqueam territory.³⁷

³⁵ Edmonds, *Urbanizing Frontiers*: 17.

³⁶ Harris, *Making Native Space*: 271.

³⁷ Tranfield File 1715, Colonial Correspondence, British Columbia, GR-1372, Provincial Archives of BC; Smith to Powell, 22 May 1875, RG10, vol.1001, LAC as quoted in Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992): 196; R.C. MacDonald to Mrs.

By the late nineteenth century, Musqueam people were participating in a wage-based resource economy that required spending time on the north coast, in the Fraser River valley, or across the border in Washington State. But the DIA frowned upon extended trips away from the reserve and away from the direct authority of Indian agents who had the power to mete out severe consequences. When Musqueam band member Ed Sparrow and his family tried to prolong their stay in the Fraser Valley where opportunities for work were more plentiful, the Indian agent threatened to remove them from the band list if they did not return to the reserve.³⁸ The mobility of Musqueam women in particular was carefully managed by the DIA. Numerous cases in the correspondence of New Westminster Indian agents document how Aboriginal women were tracked down and sent back to their “proper” reserves.³⁹ Furthermore, those who might have considered marrying non-Musqueam men and moving off the reserve were deterred from doing so since it meant losing their Indian status.⁴⁰

In limiting their movements away from the reserve, the DIA forced Musqueam people to seek out economic opportunities closer to home. But the ability to survive solely on a subsistence-based economy in Point Grey was becoming more and more difficult. While seasonal fishing was certainly the mainstay of the Musqueam First Nation until World War II, mounting pressure on the environment as well as government regulations affected their ability to

Hugh Magee, 12 May 1904, RG10, vol. 1461, LAC; Diary of Fitzgerald McCleery, McCleery Family fonds, Add. MSS. 114, CVA; and Leona Sparrow, personal communication. While settler complaints were common, there is some question as to the effectiveness of the DIA in acting on them. In this last case, for example, it seemed Indian agent R.C. MacDonald simply raised the matter with Musqueam band members without taking any action.

³⁸ Leona Sparrow, “Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple” (Master’s thesis, UBC, 1976): 137.

³⁹ Although I did not come across specific cases of Musqueam women being returned to their reserve, enough examples of non-Musqueam Aboriginal women being sent away from the Musqueam Indian Reserve exist in the records to suggest it would have been common practice. See, for example, R.C. McDonald to Mary Ann, 1 July 1904, RG10, vol. 1461, LAC; and R.C. McDonald, Travelling Diary, July 1910, RG10, vol. 1472, LAC.

⁴⁰ For discussion of the Indian Act and gender discrimination, see Lawrence, *Real Indians and Others*: 50-56.

harvest local food sources.⁴¹ In 1913, Chief Johnnie of the Musqueam Indian Band objected to the increasing role government played in land and resource management in his testimony to the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of BC: “Just like as if I am between two persons, one person is on my right and one person is on my left saying ‘I have a share of your reserve’ and I want those two persons to let my hands go and give me the control of my own land... When I want to go fishing, the two parties are also holding on to each end of my boat. There are initials and numbers on the bow and initials and numbers on the stern, and I know that I own the water.”⁴² While employment further afield in the fishing, canning, and hop picking sectors was available for a few months of the year, many Musqueam people turned to other kinds of work near the reserve to help make ends meet. By the early twentieth century, Indian agent R.C. MacDonald reported that the Musqueam were “engaged for the most part in fishing, mixed farming, logging and working as farm-hands for white settlers.”⁴³ Musqueam men were not the only ones working in the vicinity of the reserve for cash and in kind. Some Musqueam women found part-time employment as washerwomen and nursemaids for middle-class families in Point Grey. Others collected seaweed and cascara bark to sell to Chinese merchants, or made cedar root baskets to peddle door-to-door in Kerrisdale.⁴⁴ While Musqueam people were more or less confined to living on the reserve, mobility restrictions compelled Musqueam people to engage

⁴¹ For general discussion of how environmental pressures and government regulations affected Aboriginal people in BC, see Harris, *Making Native Space*: 273-289. For discussion of how these pressures affected the Musqueam Indian Band in particular, see Kew, “Coast Salish Ceremonial Life”: 32-36.

⁴² British Columbia, Royal Commission on Indian Affairs, *Evidence (New Westminster Agency)* (Victoria: 1916): 65.

⁴³ Canada, Parliament, Sessional Papers, 1907, Paper no. 27, Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended March 31st 1907: 211. For further evidence of Musqueam people working on nearby farms, see Diary of Fitzgerald McCleery, McCleery Family fonds, Add. MSS. 114, CVA. Also, Musqueam band member John Sparrow was listed as a labourer residing on the Magee farm in the 1901 census. Canada, Nominal Census 1901, District 2 (New Westminster), Sub-district E, Polling subdivision No. 2 (South Vancouver): 12.

⁴⁴ Kew, “Coast Salish Ceremonial Life”: p. 31-32; and Sparrow, “Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple”: 137.

with non-Musqueam groups in Point Grey through a diversity of means, such as timber sales, the leasing of reserve lands, and the local consumer economy.



Photo 3: Mary and Fitzgerald McCleery (standing in doorway) and their family employed Musqueam men and women to work on their farm, which was located upriver from the reserve, c. 1891. *City of Vancouver Archives, CVA Bu P161.1*

Musqueam people had occupied the land that became Musqueam Indian Reserve No. 2 for thousands of years. But by the late nineteenth century it was the DIA that attempted to control every aspect of its management. As the Crown held title to reserve land in trust for Aboriginal people, all requests regarding land use had to first pass through the Indian agent in charge of the district. This included the cutting and selling of timber on the reserve. The DIA

deducted a large percentage of the sale price as “timber dues” and placed the money in band trust funds. Since stumpage dues could amount to hundreds of dollars, the DIA stood to gain from regulating this kind of activity, giving Indian agents further cause to insert themselves into every aspect of transactions.⁴⁵ Thus, when some Musqueam band members requested in November 1911 to cut and sell 700,000 feet of dead timber on the reserve after a particularly poor fishing season, Indian agent Peter Byrne responded by calling for a community meeting to determine if the majority of members were in favour. In January 1912, he submitted a formal petition of their request to the Secretary of the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa. After the Musqueam Indian Band was finally granted permission to cut the timber two weeks later, he personally negotiated its sale to a T.W. Cardinell, the owner of a sawmill in nearby Kitsilano.⁴⁶ Chief Johnnie reported the following year: “The Indians had sold the logs and the Indian agent took \$500 discount for stumpage and said that it was the will of the Ottawa Government to charge the Indians stumpage.”⁴⁷ The frequency of Musqueam requests to cut and sell reserve timber indicate that it remained a worthwhile endeavour despite losing a certain percentage of the final sale to stumpage fees.⁴⁸ But since it was the Indian agent who usually acted as intermediary between Musqueam individuals, lumber companies, and private buyers, the DIA ultimately limited Musqueam people in forming working relationships with local buyers. Or did it?

Although Indian agents supposedly monitored all timber sales on the reserve, smaller transactions often went unnoticed. On April 1, 1916, Indian agent Peter Byrne wrote a letter to

⁴⁵ See, for example, Peter Byrne to McPhee, 12 March 1913, RG10, vol. 1477, LAC. For further discussion of the DIA and timber dues, see Chris Roine, “The Squamish Aboriginal Economy, 1860-1940” (Master’s thesis, SFU 1996): 61; and Harris, *Making Native Space*: 227-228.

⁴⁶ Peter Byrne, *Traveling Diary* November 1911, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC; Peter Byrne to Chief Johnnie, 30 December 1911, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC; Peter Byrne to Secretary, Department of Indian Affairs, 11 January 1912, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC; Peter Byrne to T.W. Cardinall, 26 January 1912, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC; and Peter Byrne to Chief Johnny, 26 January 1912, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC.

⁴⁷ British Columbia, *Evidence (New Westminster Agency)*: 69.

⁴⁸ For example, see A.W. Vowell to Frank Devlin, 28 March 1903, RG10, vol. 1458, LAC; and R.C. McDonald to Chief Johnny, 21 February 1905, RG10, vol. 1462, LAC.

H. Beeman admitting that a Musqueam band member had sold timber to a South Asian man named Naran without his knowledge.⁴⁹ While it is difficult to tell from the records whether this kind of business deal was a rare case, it seems more likely that these cases were simply rarely caught.⁵⁰ Stationed in New Westminster, the Indian agent for the district was obliged to cover great distances to reach the many Aboriginal communities under his jurisdiction—from Yale all the way to Powell River. According to their travelling diaries, Indian agents rarely visited the Musqueam Indian Reserve more than once a month.⁵¹ Thus, cutting cordwood in the off season was a regular occupation for many Musqueam band members.⁵² They sometimes sold this timber to South Asian wood buyers who arrived by horse and wagon, or to Chinese farmers on the reserve who needed fuel for their greenhouses.⁵³ Musqueam band member Ed Sparrow started his own business cutting shingle bolts just outside the reserve, going to Kerrisdale every day to feed and harness a team of horses to haul wood.⁵⁴ While the DIA might have negotiated major timber sales between the Musqueam Indian Band and lumber companies, it seemed some Musqueam individuals did form business relationships with local buyers, though on a smaller scale.

In addition to controlling forest resources, the DIA oversaw the management of reserve allotments leased out to non-Musqueam farmers. Initially, Musqueam band members invited

⁴⁹ Peter Byrne to H. Beeman, 1 April 1916, RG10, vol. 1483, LAC.

⁵⁰ For another example of Musqueam band members getting “caught” harvesting timber by the Indian Agent, see R.C. McDonald to Chief Johnny, 1 February 1905, RG10, vol. 1464, LAC.

⁵¹ For frequency of visits to the Musqueam Indian Reserve see, for example, Peter Byrne, *Traveling Diary* November 1911, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC. To get to the reserve Indian Agent Peter Byrne would take the Interurban line to McGee Station and then had to walk four miles.

⁵² For documentation of hand logging around the reserve see Ed Sparrow’s work chronology in Sparrow, “Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple”: 259-264.

⁵³ For examples of South Asian men buying wood from Musqueam people, see Arnold Guerin. “One West Coast Indian [sound recording],” interview by Mike Windjack, 1983, UBC Rare Books & Special Collections, Vancouver. For examples of Musqueam people selling or trading wood to Chinese farmers on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, see Sparrow, “Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple”: 125 and 193; and Larry Grant, interview by author, February 23, 2010, Musqueam Oral History collection, Musqueam Indian Band Archives. For discussion of South Asian men buying wood from residents of the Kitsilano Reserve, see Stanger-Ross, “Municipal Colonialism”: 561.

⁵⁴ Sparrow, “Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple”: 33-34 and 118.

Chinese men to clear land and start agricultural plots sometime around 1909.⁵⁵ But within a few years, the DIA assumed the administration of those agreements despite the loud objections of Musqueam people. Since the late nineteenth century, changes to the Indian Act had granted increasing powers to the Indian Agent in controlling reserve lands. By the early 1900s, it was not uncommon for the DIA to lease reserve land to non-Aboriginal individuals as well as corporations. However, the issue of leasing reserve land to non-Aboriginal people for agricultural purposes proved more problematic since the DIA was intent on “turning Aboriginal fishermen into farmers.” Before the decision in 1917 to allow Chinese farmers to stay on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, there was much debate between Indian agent Peter Byrne, the Inspector of Indian Agencies in Victoria, and the DIA in Ottawa. In the end, the DIA consented to the practice because officials believed the Chinese could clear land that Musqueam people would later be able to farm; it would provide Musqueam band members with a good model of farming practices; and finally, and perhaps most importantly, it would bring in revenues that could go toward supporting the “old and destitute” on the reserve—thereby relieving some of the financial burden of the DIA.⁵⁶

In 1917, Indian agent Peter Byrne made a list of the existing eighteen leases between Musqueam individuals and Chinese farmers. Over the course of that summer, he met several times with Won Alexander Cumyow, who represented four of the Chinese men in their bid to

⁵⁵ In 1913, Chief Johnny testified that: “We have brought in the Chinese to improve our land... they have been here about 4 years.” British Columbia, *Evidence (New Westminster Agency)*: 63-64

⁵⁶ For specific discussion of the DIA, leases, and Chinese farmers on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, see Kew, “Coast Salish Ceremonial Life”: 30-31 and 57-58. For the only other example I could find of Chinese farmers leasing reserve land in Canada, see John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008): 111. For discussion of agricultural schemes and leasing reserve lands to non-Aboriginals, see Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1986): 38-43. For historical background on location tickets, land allotments, and leases, see John L. Tobias, “Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada’s Indian Policy,” in *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada*, ed. J.R. Miller (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991): 132-135.

continue farming on the reserve.⁵⁷ In the end, the Chinese businessman successfully negotiated contracts between Jung Chong, Kea Yick and Bob Peter; Choo Lai and Joe Gabriel; Young Jim and Tom; Young Jim and Chief Jack Stogan ʔsəm̓lənəxʷ; and Young Jim and Frank Charley.⁵⁸ These initial contracts amounted to \$127.50 due annually for roughly 26 acres of reserve land.⁵⁹ Rent monies were to be submitted directly to the Indian agent for New Westminster who was to then pay the individual band member. Musqueam people were all but eliminated from the process of administering these contracts, which brought in hundreds, even thousands, of dollars in revenue, and continued into the 1970s.⁶⁰

While the interference of the DIA distanced Musqueam renters from Chinese lessees in some ways, the fact that those farmers lived and worked in the community resulted in closer ties between Musqueam and non-Musqueam groups both on and off the reserve. Many Chinese farmers drove Model T Fords delivering vegetables door to door to families living in Dunbar and Kerrisdale as well as to local stores. A small number established their own shops like Mayfair Produce and So Hoy Produce at 41st Avenue and Dunbar Street. Not only did Musqueam people cut and sell wood to the farmers as fuel, but many provided agricultural labour. Some spent ten-hour days weeding and hoeing for cash or vegetables; others traded fish for fresh produce.⁶¹ Although non-Musqueam people were officially prohibited from living on the reserve without the permission of the DIA, many Chinese farmers did so, giving a business address in Chinatown

⁵⁷ Won Alexander Cumyow was an official Court Interpreter for the Vancouver City Police. He was born in Port Douglas, BC in 1861 and spoke English, Cantonese, and Chinook. Won Alexander Cumyow fonds, UBC Special Collections & Rare Books, Vancouver.

⁵⁸ With the exception of Chief Jack Stogan ʔsəm̓lənəxʷ, these names are written here as they appear in the DIA correspondence.

⁵⁹ Peter Byrne to Assistant Deputy & Secretary, DIA, 5 April 1917, RG10, vol. 1485, LAC; and Peter Byrne to W.A. Cumyow, 29 October 1917, RG10, vol. 1486, LAC.

⁶⁰ Totals soon amounted to thousands of dollars. See, for example, F.J.C. Ball, Bank Draft No. 6581 for the months of April 1, 1932 to October 1, 1932, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1930-1932, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

⁶¹ For more examples, see Arnold Guerin, “One West Coast Indian”; Sparrow, “Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple”: 125 and 193; and Larry Grant, interview by author.

to put off the Indian agent in charge.⁶² Sometimes these Chinese men were invited to attend Musqueam cultural ceremonies and celebrations, and some formed close bonds with Musqueam band members. In the 1930s, Hong Tim Hing and Musqueam band member Agnes Grant had four children together. They first met after his father started leasing land from her father, Seymour Grant. The children were not sent to Indian Residential Schools since their father was Chinese, attending instead public schools in Vancouver neighbourhoods, including Point Grey.⁶³



Photo 4: Hong Tim Hing's father's farm on the Musqueam Indian Reserve in 1936. *Philip Timms photo. Vancouver Public Library, VPL 19489*

⁶² See Lawrence, *“Real” Indians and Others*, especially 45-63.

⁶³ Larry Grant, interview by author.

Not only did the DIA carry out negotiations of significant contracts between the Musqueam Indian Band, leaseholders, and lumber companies, it also exerted its power through the micromanagement of Musqueam band funds. Income from timber dues, for example, was deposited into an account of communally owned monies that were held in trust by the federal government.⁶⁴ Musqueam requests to spend this money were first submitted to the Indian agent for New Westminster, who then passed them on to his superior along with his recommendations. The influence of Indian agents in these matters was significant since it was essentially he who decided who could benefit from band funds and for what purposes.⁶⁵ Those who held favour with the Indian agent in charge were more likely to gain access to financial support. “Good behaviour” in the eyes of the DIA, such as the construction of a new church or cemetery repairs, was rewarded with funding.⁶⁶ Individuals who did not conform to the expectations of Indian agents suffered as a result.⁶⁷ While Musqueam band members might purchase goods from nearby stores with these funds, it was the DIA who followed up with payment. By holding the purse strings to band funds, Indian agents enforced a certain distance between Musqueam would-be consumers and local shopkeepers in formal transactions. Indeed, merchants in Point Grey quickly learned to conduct their business through the DIA. In 1927, the owner of Kerrisdale

⁶⁴ For historical background on band funds and trust accounts, see Dean Neu and Richard Therrien, *Accounting for Genocide: Canada's Bureaucratic Assault on Aboriginal People* (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2003), especially 82-98.

⁶⁵ For discussion of Indian agents and bureaucratic power in the context of Ontario, see Robin Jarvis Brownlee, *A Fatherly Eye: Indian Agents, Government Power, and Aboriginal Resistance in Ontario, 1918-1939* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁶⁶ Funding for church construction is documented in Frank Devlin to Johnny Musqueam, 11 December 1902, RG10, vol. 1458, LAC; Frank Devlin to A.W. Vowell, 10 January 1903, RG10, vol. 1458, LAC; Frank Devlin to A.W. Vowell, 18 January 1903, RG10, vol. 1458, LAC; Frank Devlin to Johnny Musqueam, 14 February 1903, RG10, vol. 1458, LAC; and Frank Devlin to Chief Johnny Musqueam, 30 March 1903, RG10, vol. 1458, LAC. Funding for cemetery construction is documented in Peter Byrne to W.E. Ditchburn, 24 October 1913, RG10, vol. 1478, LAC; Peter Byrne to Secretary, DIA, 24 October 1913, RG10, vol. 1478, LAC; Peter Byrne to Chief Johnny, 18 November 1913, RG10, vol. 1478, LAC; Peter Byrne to Secretary, DIA, 25 November 1913, RG10, vol. 1478, LAC; and Peter Byrne to Chief Johnny, 27 November 1913, RG10, vol. 1478, LAC.

⁶⁷ See the example of Casimer Johnny in C.C. Perry to Secretary, DIA, 17 October 1928, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1927-1930, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

Grocery hired lawyer Harry Richmond to act on an outstanding grocery bill accrued by a Musqueam band member. Instead of contacting the Musqueam individual involved, the lawyer chose to write to Indian agent C.C. Perry: “The object of me writing direct to you is that you are in a better position to put it up to the debtor that he should pay his just debts, than I am.”⁶⁸ Other local stores in Point Grey, such as W.H. Walsh Grocery, McLellan and McCarter, and Kerrisdale Lumber, followed suit, sending invoices for supplies sold to Musqueam band members directly to the Indian agent for New Westminster.⁶⁹

This triangular relationship may have largely cut Musqueam people out of consumer transactions, but in many ways it facilitated further face-to-face contact with their non-Musqueam neighbours, especially with the influx of lease land revenue. Since Chinese farmers rented sections of allotments held by particular band members, payments were to go to those individuals in theory. However, there is still some question today as to how those funds were disbursed in practice. In Indian agent Peter Byrne’s initial annual reports, rent monies received were shown to equal rent monies distributed.⁷⁰ But other evidence strongly suggests the DIA withheld a certain percentage of these amounts.⁷¹ Either way, it is clear that at least some of the money went to pay off debts incurred at shops in Dunbar and Kerrisdale or was issued as credit against future purchases.⁷² This system was not unfamiliar to Musqueam people at the time. It

⁶⁸ Harry Richmond to C.C. Perry, 13 October 1927, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1927-1930, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

⁶⁹ Indian Agent to W.H. Walsh, 14 July 1911, RG10, vol. 1474; F.J.C. Ball to McLellan and McCarter, 2 May 1931, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1930-1932, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC; and Kerrisdale Lumber Co. Purchase Order, April 13 1931, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1930-1932, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Canada, Parliament, Sessional Papers, 1917, Paper no. 27, Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended March 31st 1917: H 102.

⁷¹ For example, in a 1942 lawsuit involving a Chinese farmer and a Musqueam band member, it was stated that “rent is received by the Department [of Indian Affairs], and after deducting a certain percentage is sent to Andrew Charlie.” *City of Vancouver vs. Chow Chee*, 57 B.C.R. 104 (also reported: [1942] 1 W.W.R. 72), (1941), <http://library2.usask.ca/native/cnlc/vol05/046.html>. Musqueam oral histories also indicate that the DIA deducted a large percentage of rents. See, for example, Larry Grant, interview by author.

⁷² See, for example, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1927-1930 and 1930-1932, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

was common practice for the DIA to distribute relief through local stores.⁷³ Indian agents for New Westminster had arranged for “elderly and destitute” Musqueam band members to collect relief supplies from shops in Vancouver since at least as far back as 1905.⁷⁴ The urban location of the Musqueam Indian Reserve only facilitated this kind of arrangement. A nearby burgeoning commercial district meant Indian agents could count on local stores to provide a place where Musqueam spending could be controlled.⁷⁵ The DIA was very much intent on dictating where Musqueam people could and could not do business as Indian agent Peter Byrne made clear in a 1912 letter to a colleague: “Since Chief Johnny started to attend Potlatches he seems to have become useless and the bad example he sets to those other people is having a visible effect for the worse... While the clearing of the land by the Chinamen may be all right I am afraid that the moneys paid on to the Indians by them does them more harm than good. They live too close to the saloon to have much ready money.”⁷⁶ The solution for the DIA was to involve local establishments in a system that ensured Musqueam people were regular customers for decades.

⁷³ The earliest reports of relief distribution to Aboriginal people in BC date from the early 1870s. Whenever possible, relief was paid from band funds held by the DIA or from fees collected by Indian agents. Liam Haggarty, “‘I’m Going to Call It Spirit Money’: A History of Social Welfare among the Stó:lō,” *University of the Fraser Valley Research Review* 2, no. 2 (spring 2009): 77. For a historical overview of the DIA and relief, see Hugh Shewell, *Enough to Keep Them Alive: Indian Welfare in Canada, 1873-1965* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

⁷⁴ See, for example, R.C. McDonald to Chief Johnny, 21 February 1905, RG10, vol. 1462, LAC.

⁷⁵ Distributing relief to rural Aboriginal communities, on the other hand, proved more challenging. See Shewell, *Enough to Keep Them Alive*: 44.

⁷⁶ Peter Byrne to T. Wilson, 6 February 1912, RG10, vol. 1475, LAC.



Photo 5: Hong Tim Hing and Agnes Grant's son, Larry Grant, holding a tin from the Red & White store at the home of Chief Jack Stogan ɕsəm̓lənəx^w on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, c. 1940. *Courtesy of the Musqueam Indian Band on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Dan*

Point Grey shops also stood to gain from a steady stream of local clientele.⁷⁷ The question of which stores were selected to take part in the arrangement remains of interest. Some shopkeepers were known to enjoy friendly relations with Indian agents that went beyond regular business dealings. At least one source suggests that the owner of a local business who supplied the Musqueam Indian Band with lumber used to entertain the Indian agent for New Westminster at Vancouver's Terminal City Club.⁷⁸ Storeowners also relied on Indian agents to help manage the tabs of Musqueam band members. In 1932, James P. Fleming asked Indian agent F.J.C. Ball to follow up on a number of small debts owed to him. He ended his letter with the telling

⁷⁷ Shewell also makes the observation that non-Aboriginal communities benefited when Aboriginal people relied on government purchases of supplies from local stores. See Shewell, *Enough to Keep Them Alive*: 49.

⁷⁸ Tremayne Perry, personal communication, January 31, 2010.

valediction: “Thanking you, therefore, for your kind cooperation in the matter and ever mindful of your many favors in the past.”⁷⁹ While the DIA forced Musqueam people to contribute to the local consumer economy in specific ways, it also affected the commercial landscape of neighbouring communities.

Evidently, Musqueam people were very much present in early-twentieth-century Point Grey. In addition to engaging in the local timber trade, the leasing of reserve lands, and the suburban consumer economy, they visited the post office in Kerrisdale, picked berries at the foot of King Edward Avenue, and took the streetcar to Dunbar.⁸⁰ But in many ways the actions of the DIA left Musqueam people disconnected from the communities around them. That said, the division was not absolute and many did find ways of engaging with non-Musqueam groups across certain structural boundaries. Despite attempts to keep Musqueam and non-Musqueam people separate, Indian agents in effect enabled contact between groups at times. As a result, the DIA exerted influence not only over the lives of Musqueam people, but of non-Musqueam urbanites as well. The power of the DIA in shaping Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions in the early twentieth century becomes even clearer when it comes to examining oral histories about that time period.

“I Don’t Know How Much We’re Going to Say About That Kind of Thing”: Documenting Memory in a Vancouver Neighbourhood

Andrew C. Charles: As children we had no contact with the larger community, whether they be White people or Orientals or whomever else. So we grew up here till I was seven, not knowing a White person. Not to any extent, because we did have Nurse Garry from the Department of Indian Affairs come and lecture

⁷⁹ James P. Fleming to F.J.C. Ball, 9 May 1932, Vancouver-Musqueam Leases 1927-1930 and 1930-1932, RG10, vol. 10903, LAC.

⁸⁰ Arnold Guerin, “One West Coast Indian.”

to us about how we should improve our lifestyle. Some authoritarian, right? But as children we had no playmates that were non-Indian.⁸¹

- Peggy Schofield: Did you ever rub elbows with kids from Musqueam?
Frank Zahar: No. Even though I was down there. I can't remember any of them. No personal connections. I've talked to some, but no friends.⁸²
- Betty Galata: We had little communication with the Natives. We heard their drums periodically.⁸³

These excerpts from three separate Documenting Dunbar interviews conducted around 2000—the first with a Musqueam resident and the second two with White residents—convey little about any contact between the two groups. Perhaps this is not surprising given the degree to which government policy constrained their interactions. However, silences around Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations in the Dunbar Oral History collection can be attributed to more than a history of minimal social exchange. In this section, I wish to draw attention to the ways in which silences were also created in the moment interviewees constructed their memories.⁸⁴ For instance, contemporary politics, contradictory goals, and interviewer-interviewee relationships clearly influenced the kinds of stories that emerged through this oral history project as well as the kinds that were left out. Overall, positive accounts of Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions predominated over negative ones. But since these “good news” stories were few and far between, many interviewees remained mute on the topic. Thus, the history of Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations in Point Grey was doubly silenced: first, through the actions of the DIA; and second, through the production of memory.

⁸¹ Andrew C. Charles, interview by Peggy Schofield, August 24, 2000, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

⁸² Frank Zahar, interview by Peggy Schofield, January 3, 2000, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

⁸³ Betty Galata, interview questionnaire, August 13, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

⁸⁴ For another example of scholarly work dealing with the production of historical memory and silences in oral histories in the context of BC, see Leslie A. Robertson, *Imagining Difference: Legend, Curse, and Spectacle in a Canadian Mining Town* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005).

Scholarly work on historical memory has developed significantly in the last thirty years.⁸⁵ In the past, analysis of oral histories focused on assessing their validity as historical evidence. This older model suggested that misremembering was just plain wrong, instead of examining the inner logic behind an individual's view of the past. Alessandro Portelli reasons that it is precisely the subjectivity of oral histories that makes them valuable as sources: "They tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, what they now think they did."⁸⁶ Thus, in the case of Point Grey, determining the "true" nature of interactions between Musqueam and non-Musqueam individuals matters less than investigating the significance people today attribute to those relations. Indeed, the Dunbar Oral History collection represents a diversity of perspectives on shared historical events. Instead of ignoring conflicting testimonies, the goal here is to make those inconsistencies central and explore what makes them so. As Laura Ann Stoler emphasizes, it is not a question of soliciting some kind of subaltern "truth" in oral histories that will speak back to colonial narratives, but an exercise in exploring the distance between differing perceptions of the past.⁸⁷

From 1999 to 2005, Documenting Dunbar project members conducted oral history interviews with over 250 local residents. Of that number, about 75 lived in the Dunbar area during the period of this study, from 1900-1950. It is their interviews that are the subject of analysis for this section. Almost all in that group were Whites of Anglo-European descent, four were Musqueam band members, three were Chinese-Canadians, and one was Japanese-Canadian.⁸⁸ Interviews were largely solicited through friends and acquaintances of project

⁸⁵ For a historiographical summary of this literature, see Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds. *The Oral History Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006): 1-8.

⁸⁶ Alessandro Portelli, "The Peculiarities of Oral History," *History Workshop Journal* 12, no. 1 (1981): 99-100.

⁸⁷ Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002): 164-170.

⁸⁸ I identify "Anglo European" as those descended from people in the UK and Ireland.

members, while most interviews with Musqueam individuals were arranged through the Musqueam Band Council and Administration. The interviewers were all White Dunbar residents, many of whom were in their retirement years.

Most of the interviews were conducted by one person in particular: project leader Peggy Schofield, who later edited *The Story of Dunbar*. Peggy Schofield was a well known community activist and past president of the Dunbar Residents Association (DRA)—a group concerned with promoting a broad range of social, political, and economic interests as they related to the Dunbar community.⁸⁹ But Peggy Schofield's Dunbar roots were not that deep. She was born in 1931 in California and moved to Vancouver in 1960 with her husband. They chose to settle down in Point Grey to raise their family.⁹⁰ The Schofields came to Canada at a time when important changes were taking place in Aboriginal communities. Status Indians gained the right to vote in federal elections the year she arrived, the federal government's Hawthorne Report raised the public profile of Aboriginal groups when it was published in 1966, and the Aboriginal rights movement was gaining momentum.⁹¹ It was also a time when non-Aboriginal people began taking more of an interest in the wellbeing of their Aboriginal neighbours. In Vancouver, the Musqueam Indian Reserve drew the attention of local residents and the press. However, this concern was often couched in patronizing terms that pathologized Musqueam people without referencing the historical events that led to present circumstances.⁹² By the 1960s, many non-Musqueam residents in Point Grey saw Musqueam people as a problem in need of a quick fix.

⁸⁹ Some of these interests include development, traffic, community patrol, history, community events, and seniors housing. Dunbar Residents Association, <http://dunbar-vancouver.org/>.

⁹⁰ Sandra Thomas, "Book Kept Dunbar Historian Busy to the End," *The Vancouver Courier*, February 27, 2005: 16.

⁹¹ J.R. Miller, "The Beginnings of Political Organization," in *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000): 311-335.

⁹² See, for example, Susan Roy, "Making History Visible: Culture and Politics in the Presentation of Musqueam History" (Master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1999): 90-91; Pam Chambers, "Indian Village: Musqueam Reserve Is Inside Vancouver," *The Vancouver Sun*, July 10, 1954: 68; and "Sordid Living Conditions on Musqueam Indian Reserve Scored by Alderman," *The Vancouver Sun*, February 21, 1962: 29.

An anonymous survey of local residents about the Musqueam Indian Band provided a sampling of attitudes at the time. Respondents commented, for example: “They should either live as Aboriginals or participate fully in society”; “Why cannot the Indian advance themselves like the Chinese and Ukrainians? What flaw or flaws in the Indian character prevents them from doing so?”; “We cannot continue to have the Indian use the idea that the White man stole from him as a means of continually seeking government handouts.”⁹³ This disconnect between Aboriginal history and present-day politics had not waned by the time project members of Documenting Dunbar embarked on their goal of recording community memories. And it is apparent that these attitudes informed the understanding of many of the Documenting Dunbar interviewees and interviewers, including Peggy Schofield.

Of the 75 Documenting Dunbar oral history interviews that were examined, most were silent on the subject of Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations. But while all of the Musqueam, Chinese, and Japanese interviewees included stories about their connections with White neighbours and other groups, only a third of White interviewees referred to Musqueam or Chinese residents, and even fewer made reference to Japanese or South Asians groups.⁹⁴ Yet all of the interviewees had the opportunity to reflect on their interactions with minorities. The interview script included a specific question about contact with Musqueam people as well as “immigrant groups.”⁹⁵ That so many White interviewees did not recall Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations is not altogether unexpected. For those who benefited from the policies of the DIA, the status quo may have seemed somehow inevitable. As a result, few meditated on the

⁹³ Barbara Weightman, “The Musqueam Reserve: A Case Study of the Indian Social Milieu in an Urban Environment” (PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1972): 250-256.

⁹⁴ Out of 63 interviews with White interviewees, 21 contained references to Musqueam individuals, 19 to Chinese individuals, 9 to Japanese individuals, and 6 to South Asian individuals.

⁹⁵ “Immigrant groups” for Documenting Dunbar project members meant non-Anglo White individuals as well as non-Whites.

root causes of contemporary circumstances. Yet, memories of the ways in which the DIA influenced interactions were indeed pronounced for those whose daily existence was negatively affected by Indian agents. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, for one, is wary of those who claim ignorance. He writes: “We are never as steeped in history as when we pretend not to be, but if we stop pretending we may gain in understanding what we lose in false innocence. Naiveté is often an excuse for those who exercise power.”⁹⁶ However, it may ultimately be difficult to establish definitively whether silences were based on no contact with Musqueam people or no knowledge of their existence, or if stories about Musqueam people were simply not considered worth including.

Most scholars working today would agree the present is paramount when it comes to writing history. This is especially true of the way historical memory is constructed in oral histories. For Documenting Dunbar, individual biases, motives, and mood all came into play at the specific time and place interviews were carried out. Interviewees were not simply accessing memories they had stored away, but pieced them together in ways that made the present circumstance seem a more logical outcome of what they remembered.⁹⁷ When Documenting Dunbar project members set out to conduct interviews in 1999, they did so at the height of a long and protracted dispute over lease land rates between the Musqueam Indian Band and non-Musqueam residential tenants on the reserve. The conflict, which made the national news at the time, was one of several that involved the Musqueam First Nation in the years leading up to the Documenting Dunbar project. These included Bill C-49 First Nations Land Management Act in 1998, which gave First Nations greater control in administering reserve lands; the Sparrow decision in 1990, which confirmed Aboriginal rights were protected under the Constitution of

⁹⁶ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995): xix.

⁹⁷ David Thelen, “Memory and American History,” *Journal of American History* 75, no. 4 (March 1989): 1121.

Canada; the transfer of the University Endowment Lands to the Greater Vancouver Regional District in 1989 despite Musqueam protests, resulting in the creation of Pacific Spirit Regional Park; and the Guerin case in 1984, which affirmed the federal government's fiduciary duty towards First Nations and Aboriginal title as an inherent right.⁹⁸

These conflicts over Aboriginal governance, lease agreements, and land claims brought to light both a profound ignorance of the history that led to the political present, as well as the pronounced divisions between Musqueam and non-Musqueam people in Point Grey. Musqueam elders may have recounted their long, rich histories in the courtroom, but non-Musqueam people were not privileged to hear this historical evidence—and whatever messages did emerge were quickly skewed in the press.⁹⁹ Diverging views were often expressed as racially charged rhetoric in news articles and in public forums organized by local groups like the DRA.¹⁰⁰ And at the centre of each one of these political disputes was the ever-present DIA. However, the role of the DIA in creating these contemporary conflicts was rarely discussed in the press, just as it was rarely addressed in Documenting Dunbar oral histories with White interviewees. On occasion, political debates entered briefly into conversations between interviewers and interviewees, but more often they only framed larger silences. As a result, the power of the DIA in the present was masked despite its long history of involvement in Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations.

⁹⁸ For discussion of the Musqueam Park leases, Bill C-49, and the UEL, see Jennifer Anne Hamilton, "Resettling Musqueam Park: Property, Culture, and Difference in Glass vs. Musqueam Indian Band," in *Indigeneity in the Courtroom: Law, Culture, and the Production of Difference* (London, UK: Routledge, 2006): 45-70; and Bruce Granville Miller, "Foreground: Indigenous Rhetoric, Ethnonationalist Movements, and the State," in *The Problem of Justice: Tradition and Law in the Coast Salish World* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2001). For a detailed account of the Guerin case, see James I. Reynolds, *A Breach of Duty: Fiduciary Obligations and Aboriginal Peoples* (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing, 2005).

⁹⁹ For an account of Musqueam testimony in the courtroom, see Roy, "Making History Visible," especially 1-12; and Reynolds, *A Breach of Duty*.

¹⁰⁰ For reaction in the press to Musqueam Park leases, see, for example, Peter O'Neil, "Indian Expropriation Law Facing Amendments," *The Vancouver Sun*, May 8, 1999, <http://www.mail-archive.com/nativenews@mlists.net/msg02533.html>.

While Documenting Dunbar project members admittedly aimed to convey a “sense of pride” in their community, the historical and contemporary relationship of Musqueam and non-Musqueam groups in Point Grey made it difficult to cast this history in a positive light.¹⁰¹ One strategy employed to overcome this challenge was avoidance, especially among White interviewers and interviewees. When the subject of current controversy arose, discussion was usually cut short:

Doug Edwards: Does that Musqueam area and the conflict come into your area?
Peggy Schofield: I don’t know how much we’re going to say about that kind of thing.¹⁰²

White interviewees rarely addressed the specific historical circumstances that might have led to these present conflicts. Dispossession, the DIA, Indian Residential Schools, and racism were carefully avoided. This did not mean that all historical controversies were absent from dialogue. Many White interviewees were all too willing to condemn the removal and internment of their Japanese-Canadian neighbours in 1942. In some ways, then, focusing on past wrongs that might today be considered “resolved” served to deflect attention—and blame—away from present injustices.¹⁰³

It was not just White individuals who chose to remain silent on controversial issues, but Musqueam band members as well. However, their interviews with White project members read very differently than those between White interviewer and interviewee. An air of tentativeness replaced a sense of collaboration. Musqueam band members appeared to choose their words carefully, perhaps unsure of the political leanings of the interviewers and cautious not to create

¹⁰¹ “Our sense of place is accompanied by a sense of pride; our patient editor Naomi Pauls had to warn the authors it was inappropriate to engage in ‘boosterism’ in our writings.” “Preface,” in *The Story of Dunbar*, ed. Schofield: ix.

¹⁰² Gail and Doug Edwards, interview by Peggy Schofield, August 25, 2002, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

¹⁰³ For further discussion of this point, see Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*: 150.

conflict. The interview conditions requested by Musqueam individuals speak in some ways to the level of unease between the two groups. Most interviews took place at the band office. One elder, in particular, was not comfortable in a one-on-one interview situation with Peggy Schofield, and asked that Musqueam Indian Band research librarian Larissa Grant be present to provide additional support.¹⁰⁴ In his interview for Documenting Dunbar, Andrew C. Charles omitted certain details that he had felt comfortable revealing to Musqueam band members in an earlier interview about the same story. Compare the first excerpt from the interview for Documenting Dunbar with the second from an interview for the Musqueam Indian Band:

Andrew C. Charles: And when we were small children, there was a Red and White store next to where the Shell gas station is. And it was run by a family called Hyams. Now we dealt with Hyams for the longest time. They would give us credit, and when fishing season came we would pay them back.¹⁰⁵

Andrew C. Charles: He had a pot-bellied stove that we used to huddle around very shyly. When the White customers would come in—because they always got preferential treatment, even during the course of Mr. Hyams having to serve us—he would stop to serve the White person first and we would disappear into the background. He always charged us one or two cents more for our food because it was on credit and he felt that—and I’m sure he felt justified in doing it—but he always charged us two or three cents more for every article because we were on credit.¹⁰⁶

If those interviewed stayed silent on the topic of Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations, it was likely that those silences either hid painful memories of the past or sidestepped uncomfortable conversations that might have implicated blame and guilt.

Sometimes, silences in the oral histories seemed not necessarily a result of avoidance, but a result of conflicting goals. Common to all four interviews with Musqueam band members was

¹⁰⁴ Larissa Grant, personal communication.

¹⁰⁵ Andrew C. Charles, interview by Peggy Schofield.

¹⁰⁶ Andrew C. Charles, interview by Fran Guerin, December 1976, Musqueam Oral History collection, Musqueam Indian Band Archives.

the explicit engagement with stereotypes of Aboriginal people. Many of the stories those interviewed told served to counter popular images of the “lazy Indian” or the “welfare Indian,” and to explain their historical roots.¹⁰⁷ But while Musqueam individuals often used the interviews as an opportunity to educate their audience about the effects of Indian Residential Schools, the Indian Act, and land claims, interviewers persisted in trying to gather stories about safer subjects like mentorship, the arts, and spirituality in pre-colonial days. On one occasion, former Musqueam chief Wendy Grant-John gave a poignant account of land claims in the area, in which she called attention to hypocritical stance of some Dunbar residents. Instead of engaging in the discussion, Peggy Schofield, attempted again and again to regain control of the interview with more benign questions about Aboriginal games and religion:

- Wendy Grant-John: I wonder how many of the citizens of the Dunbar/Point Grey area would put up with the kind of treatment that we have had with respect to our understanding of ownership. None of them. None of them would accept the behaviour of the province and federal government as it stands now. In fact the provincial government knew exactly what they were doing when they took the land that they had which was called the University Endowment Lands, and handed it over to the city...
- Peggy Schofield: Do you know anything about the Shakers?
- Wendy Grant-John: I know very little about it but I have a lot of respect for them. ..
- Peggy Schofield: And slahal. What is it?¹⁰⁸

By focusing the discussion on traditional anthropological categories of culture, Documenting Dunbar project members could satisfy the desire to include information about Musqueam people while avoiding more controversial issues of colonization. But this line of questioning only reinforced the dichotomy of Aboriginal and urban by failing to situate Musqueam people in the

¹⁰⁷ See especially Larry Grant, interview by Peggy Schofield, November 22, 2004, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA; Delbert Guerin, interview by Peggy Schofield, March 6, 2004, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA; and Wendy Grant-John, interview by Peggy Schofield, January 17, 2003, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

¹⁰⁸ Wendy Grant-John, interview by Peggy Schofield.

cityscape of Vancouver. Despite the persuasiveness of the interviewee, it seemed the message fell on the deaf ears of the interviewer if it was not the answer they were hoping to hear.

Because they did not necessarily share the same goals, White interviewers and Musqueam interviewees often drew different interpretations from the same discussion. When Larry Grant observed a major change in the attitudes of those who were forced to go to Indian Residential Schools, Peggy Schofield tried to relate by talking about similar changes in the Dunbar community. You can almost hear the exasperation in his reply:

Larry Grant: But those people did not go to Indian Residential Schools. So you have to understand that, that I'm talking about—I'm not talking about the change in society—I'm talking about the Indian Residential Schools where they're incarcerated and institutionalized, and then they're abused and things taken from them but not returned.¹⁰⁹

In other cases, Musqueam individuals were less inclined to push the point they wished to make.

Andrew C. Charles related the following story about a popular Vancouver tourist bus that visited Dunbar during the first half of the twentieth century:

Andrew C. Charles: Now, when I was a child—I'm bouncing back and forth here—the streetcar used to come to the intersection of 41st and South West Marine Drive, and they had a turn table there, and they would turn around and go all the way down to Hastings Street. But I noticed that in the summertime they had this open carriage, with weird seats, and I noticed that farther along the White kids would sing and dance, right, and people would throw them the coins! Of course, I tried that, but nobody threw me any coins! We gave that up in a big hurry.

Peggy Schofield: They got rid of all the coins by the time they passed you! Well, it was worth a try.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Larry Grant, interview by Peggy Schofield.

¹¹⁰ Andrew C. Charles, interview by Peggy Schofield.

Despite evidence of day-to-day racism subtly implied in his story, Peggy Schofield offered instead a less contentious explanation as to why patrons might have chosen to reward White but not Musqueam children. Perhaps Peggy Schofield purposefully avoided further discussion of the issue, or perhaps she really had no reference point from which to make sense of the story. While some controversial stories did get told, their significance was not always registered because interviewer and interviewee were speaking at cross purposes.

While silences about Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations were produced in different ways, the few oral histories that did deal with interactions often skewed their representation. Many of the “good news” stories that emerged in the oral histories were stories told by White interviewees about their relationships with Musqueam people. These stories frequently centered on individual friendships, some more consciously than others. As a descendent of both the McCleerys and the Moles, two of the original settler families who built their farms near the Musqueam Indian Reserve, Betty McQueen was used to answering questions about her pioneer ancestors:

Terry Slack: Was there a connection between the Musqueam reserve at this time? Did the Natives come and welcome the settlers, or was it kind of a situation where you were a little further away from them?

Betty McQueen: They had a good relationship. Of course, I don't remember, but my parents apparently took me to a gathering on the reserve. It was a very friendly gathering—they loved having neighbours over. I heard somebody once say that they didn't get along, but they did get along. They were good neighbours and grandfather was a good neighbour to them.¹¹¹

Ignoring her family's role in the dispossession by pre-emption of their Musqueam neighbours, Betty McQueen satisfied the interviewer's hopeful line of questioning. Like many settler “origin

¹¹¹ Betty (Joan Elizabeth) McQueen, interview by Pam Chambers, February 1, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

stories” in North America, the idea that Aboriginal people welcomed settlers was a convenient way to rationalize the appropriation of their traditional territory.¹¹² In this particular story, what one wished had happened was told as what did happen—or at least was exaggerated as such.¹¹³

An older generation of pioneer descendents were not the only ones to read “good news” stories back into the past. White suburbanites also told stories citing good relations with Musqueam people, though perhaps with a different purpose in mind. These interviewees emphasized how they formed special relationships with women from the reserve who would come to sell baskets, or how Musqueam people were “great customers” at the local stores.¹¹⁴ A small handful also claimed Musqueam friendships.¹¹⁵ One of these stories—a second-hand account told by the wife of the late Robert Montador—entered the historical record repeatedly as it was transmitted by interviewers in subsequent interviews. Here, Peggy Schofield related the anecdote she originally heard from Ena Montador to two White Dunbar residents in the first excerpt and to a Musqueam band member in the second:

- Peggy Schofield: The first White boy was evidently born at 33rd and Crown, name of Robert Montador.
- Lionel Jinks: Oh, Montadors. I know them.
- Gordon Jinks: Oh, Montadors.
- Peggy Schofield: That was near you. Yes. Anyway, he was the first White boy born in Dunbar evidently.
- Gordon Jinks: No kidding.

¹¹² This emphasis is common in Canadian narratives of early Aboriginal-settler encounters where the exchange of local knowledge for Western technology is highlighted and conflict is minimized. See Elizabeth Furniss, “Chapter 3: The Landscape of Public History: Pioneers, Progress, and the Myth of the Frontier,” in *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), especially 69-70. For an American example, see Thrush, “The Changers, Changed,” in *Native Seattle*: 126-150.

¹¹³ For further discussion of this point, see Portelli, “The Peculiarities of Oral History”: 100.

¹¹⁴ For Musqueam basket weavers, see Alison White Wigton, interview by Peggy Schofield, February 14, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA. For Musqueam customers, see Jane S. (Pyatt) Hubbard and Thelma (Pyatt) Perrault, interview by Peggy Schofield, April 2, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

¹¹⁵ For another example of Musqueam friendships, see Marjorie Jones, interview by Peggy Schofield, March 27, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

- Peggy Schofield: And his story to his wife was that he used to play with the Indian kids up in the creek and everything by St. Phillip's. And his friends were all Indian kids.¹¹⁶
- Peggy Schofield: Getting back to interactions with the White population... I interviewed a woman whose husband was born in 1913, and he lived at Thirty-Third and Crown. One of the first houses there I guess. And he said all his friends were Musqueam.
- Andrew C. Charles: Oh!
- Peggy Schofield: He used to go up and fish at those streams, and there's a lake up there.
- Andrew C. Charles: I guess in those days that would have been the case. I assume, maybe because I was so small, and by the time I went to a residential school I was confined, then coming out of there I didn't make any friends.¹¹⁷

What began as one story passed down from a deceased spouse was repeated often enough to take on a weight of its own, despite the fact that no instances of cross-cultural friendships emerged in interviews with Musqueam individuals. For a group of project members painfully aware of strained relations between Musqueam and non-Musqueam groups during a particularly tense time, it seems they were desperately searching for any evidence of “good news” stories with which to compensate.

Much like Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations in early-twentieth-century Point Grey, the memories recorded in the Dunbar Oral History collection evoked both intimacy and distance between groups. While many White interviewees spoke of friendships with Musqueam people and their general interest in Aboriginal culture, silences around more controversial topics suggested a larger divide. As for Musqueam interviewees, their voices were not always heard when they did broach sensitive issues. In the end, what went unrecorded in the Dunbar Oral History collection spoke to the contested nature of historical understanding. As Trouillot observes, “silences are produced not so much by an absence of facts or interpretations, as

¹¹⁶ Lionel and Gordon Jinks, interview by Peggy Schofield, March 16, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

¹¹⁷ Andrew C. Charles, interview by Peggy Schofield.

through conflicting appropriations... silences appear in the interstices of the conflicts between previous interpreters.”¹¹⁸ Consequently, much of the complexity of Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions was flattened in the construction of memory. And the resulting silences bore serious political consequences in that they allowed the colonial narrative to persist, obscuring a more nuanced view of the past. In its stead, settler accounts that still dominate textbooks, museum exhibits, and media coverage today have only made it more difficult for non-Aboriginal people to make sense of contemporary conflicts, and for Aboriginal histories to be heard.

Conclusion

Ten years ago, during the course of an interview for Documenting Dunbar, Debra Sparrow paused to reflect on the significance of the stories she was relating:

Debra Sparrow: This history that I talk about is Vancouver’s history, it’s not just Musqueam’s and we should celebrate it in Vancouver. We do not talk about our history here. We only go back 135 or 140 years and celebrate that. When you go to any city in the world and there’s ancient histories and cultures, we talk about it, we celebrate it. But here we don’t. We’re quiet.”¹¹⁹

It seemed not much had changed since Kerrisdale’s Golden Jubilee pageant of 1936, in which Musqueam history was reduced to a singular moment of encounter with Simon Fraser in 1808. In the early twentieth century, the dynamic changes that came with rapid urbanization forced Musqueam and non-Musqueam people into new kinds of relationships. While the establishment

¹¹⁸ Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*: 28

¹¹⁹ Debra Sparrow, interview by Pam Chambers, February 23, 2001, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

of nearby suburbs deeply affected Musqueam way of life, non-Musqueam society was also influenced by the existence of the reserve and by the authority exerted by the DIA. But despite the long history of Musqueam and non-Musqueam interactions in Point Grey, the pervasive power of the DIA was reasonably successful in keeping these groups at a distance. And while Indian agents in fact enabled interactions in some specific contexts, White residents rarely saw—or wanted to see—the DIA as principal actor in these interventions. This effect was reduplicated in the oral histories of Documenting Dunbar where silences about this history were both perpetuated and created anew. But despite the erasing power of settler narratives, Musqueam voices have endured. And they tell stories that clearly document the many ways in which Musqueam history is necessarily Vancouver’s history.

Today, small changes seem to be slowly taking place. With increased recognition of the Musqueam First Nation’s political power has come increased visibility in the wider community. In taking control of the way their history and culture is represented, Musqueam people are no longer sidelined in commemorative events as they once were.¹²⁰ Non-Musqueam people cannot afford to ignore their presence, nor do they necessarily want to. There is more interest now among the general public in learning about Aboriginal culture, and in Point Grey some efforts have been made to develop a basis for new relations between Musqueam and non-Musqueam residents.¹²¹ The project members of Documenting Dunbar figured too in this movement toward new understandings, not least of whom was Peggy Schofield.

¹²⁰ For example, in 2005, the Musqueam Indian Band signed a Protocol Agreement with the City of Vancouver, and in 2006, they signed a memorandum of affiliation with UBC. For further discussion of the Musqueam Indian Band’s relationship with UBC, see Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University*: 134-138. Also, for a reference guide to interpreting and representing Musqueam culture, see Musqueam Indian Band, *Musqueam: A Living Culture* (Victoria: CopperMoon Communications, 2006).

¹²¹ For example, in the last few years Musqueam band members have taught carving classes at the Dunbar Community Centre, given talks and walking tours for the DRA’s annual Salmonberry Days festival, participated in reconciliation workshops at Knox United Church in Kerrisdale, and collaborated on the “Seniors and Elders Guide to the Westside” produced by Kitsilano Neighbourhood House.

Peggy Schofield's connection to the Musqueam First Nation, however, was full of contradictions. Before taking on the role of oral historian, she was a community activist, and her actions were sometimes directed at the Musqueam Indian Band. As President of the DRA in the late nineties, Peggy Schofield campaigned against the Musqueam First Nation with regards to the lease land dispute and Bill C-49. Her comments at the time were painfully absent of historical reference: "Canadians recognize the inherent injustice of creating one set of rules for one racial subset, and another set of rules for the rest. All Canadians should be subject to the same set of laws—no exceptions! ...People of Dunbar, People of Vancouver, you need to stand up now and fight for your neighbourhood."¹²² With these words, Peggy Schofield articulated how many non-Musqueam residents of Point Grey saw themselves as victims, excluded from negotiations between First Nations and the federal government. The political landscape had shifted, and settler society no longer automatically benefited from a system that had privileged them for so long. But for Musqueam people, these conflicts had always been present. What non-Musqueam residents failed to see was the centrality of the DIA and its actions in creating these contemporary circumstances. Bureaucratic power still heavily influenced Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations, but in ways that had become all the more obscure.

For these reasons, it is especially interesting to learn that it was Peggy Schofield who encouraged project members to include Musqueam history in Documenting Dunbar in the first place. "Certainly SOMEone from down there must be on our interview list before we go much further... Think of how it will build a level of trust between the two communities," she wrote to

¹²² Peggy Schofield to Jane Stewart, Minister of Indian Affairs, March 3 1999, Musqueam File, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA. Also, see Peggy Schofield to Heddy Fry, House of Commons, March 8 1999, Musqueam File, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA; and Peggy Schofield, "What Bill-49 and Gambling Means to the Dunbar Area" (March 4, 1999), Musqueam File, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

project members early on.¹²³ Despite Peggy Schofield's political views, she had grown close to several Musqueam individuals through their shared interest in weaving. Thus, she showed signs of both intimacy with Musqueam people based on cultural interests as well as distance through political rhetoric. The dualistic nature of her relationship with members of the Musqueam First Nation is in many ways indicative of a wider pattern in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations in Canada, as well as in other places affected by settler colonialism.

Over the years, Peggy Schofield interviewed more than one hundred Point Grey residents for Documenting Dunbar, including a number of Musqueam band members. Although she evidently focused on finding "good news" stories for the project, she was privileged to hear a diversity of Musqueam perspectives on culture, history, and contemporary politics that may have challenged her initial political position. As the project evolved, some of these ideas were actually transmitted through Peggy Schofield to other non-Musqueam interviewees. Take, for example, these excerpts from two separate interviews she conducted, the first with Musqueam band member Wendy Grant-John and the second with a White interviewee:

Wendy Grant-John: I think some of it has to do with the protectiveness that we have developed about who we are and I think that is justifiable as well because if you look at the relationship between non-Aboriginal people and ourselves for so long, everything that we have had and held sacred to ourselves has either been ridiculed, outlawed or some kind of disdain put on it.¹²⁴

Gail Edwards: It was certainly very much a separate community.
Peggy Schofield: They fiercely hold on to their culture, and that's to be expected.¹²⁵

¹²³ Peggy Schofield, email, (no date), Musqueam File, Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

¹²⁴ Wendy Grant-John, interview by Peggy Schofield.

¹²⁵ Gail and Doug Edwards, interview by Peggy Schofield.

After several years of interviewing Point Grey residents, Peggy Schofield seemed optimistic about the potential to share what she had learned from Musqueam interviewees with non-Musqueam community members:

Peggy Schofield: I am hoping that the chapter on Musqueam in this book will start to educate people to the way of life down there.¹²⁶

Non-Musqueam interviewees, however, did not have the same opportunity as Peggy Schofield to engage directly in dialogue with Musqueam people. Instead, they reminisced in isolation from each other. For many non-Musqueam individuals, it was clear that the historical distance the two communities had experienced in the early twentieth century had affected their ability to later make sense of that history. Without understanding the historical foundations of Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations, some White interviewees struggled to explain the disconnect that persisted:

Barrie Lindsay: But one of the most interesting things of living in this street is the role of the Musqueam Indians, the First Nations people... So it's very hurtful, actually, to see this split that builds up. I don't know what's caused it.
Peggy Schofield: It may be the closing of the shipyard and the fishery.
Barrie Lindsay: Oh no, I think it's much more than that. But it's just like the difference between night and day.¹²⁷

The Documenting Dunbar project achieved much in the monumental research task it took on. But the end result that is *The Story of Dunbar* does not begin to convey to a general audience the complexities of historical relations between Musqueam and non-Musqueam people in Point Grey. Nor does it encourage non-Musqueam people to see themselves as actors rather than

¹²⁶ Wendy Grant-John, interview by Peggy Schofield.

¹²⁷ Barrie Lindsay, interview by Peggy Schofield, (no date), Add. MSS. 1533, Accession #2009-005, Dunbar History Group fonds, CVA.

bystanders in that history. Many of the silences in the oral histories ended up simply reproduced in print. And, in the process of arriving at that final result, project members missed out on opportunities along the way for Musqueam and non-Musqueam collaboration, and for face-to-face conversations among interviewees. In the end, non-Musqueam project members, interviewees, and members of the general public were left with only part of a story that Musqueam people knew all too well.

This is not to say that local history projects are insignificant. On the contrary, they often have the power to mobilize great numbers and to reach much wider audiences than conventional academic histories. It seems the need, therefore, is to focus efforts on the way community history projects are undertaken. One such recent example is the Dialogues between First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Immigrant Communities in Vancouver, a partnership between the City of Vancouver, community organizations, and several local Aboriginal groups, including the Musqueam First Nation. Project members plan to create dialogue circles in which participants discuss the past, current issues, accomplishments, and ideas for future cross-cultural alliances. Musqueam band councillor Wade Grant sees this initiative as an important element in a new approach to Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations: “We can’t forget that there were relationships between communities in the past. For many years, there were Chinese farmers in the Musqueam community’s territory—one of my grandfathers was Chinese. But things changed over time... When I was growing up, there wasn’t a lot of effort to educate other communities about our culture, or to learn about theirs. Now there’s a new understanding of the importance of making these connections.”¹²⁸ As Hong Tim Hing and Agnes Grant’s grandson, Wade Grant is both a product of the social history of Musqueam and non-Musqueam relations as well as a

¹²⁸ “Opening a Dialogue,” Olympic Host City website, <http://olympichostcity.vancouver.ca/mediaroom/feature-stories/opening-a-dialogue.htm>.

carrier of that historical memory today. By bringing Musqueam and non-Musqueam people into conversation with each other, perhaps these voices can help overcome silences about the past that have been perpetuated all these years.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: UBC Ethics Board Certificate of Approval



The University of British Columbia
Office of Research Services
Behavioural Research Ethics Board
Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - MINIMAL RISK

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Coll Thrush	INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT: UBC/Arts/History	UBC BREB NUMBER: H09-01650
INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:		
Institution	Site	
N/A		
Other locations where the research will be conducted: Research will be conducted at a place that is convenient for the subject, such as the subject's home or the Musqueam Band Administration Office.		
CO-INVESTIGATOR(S): Sanya A. Pleshakov		
SPONSORING AGENCIES: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) - "Making the Invisible Visible: The Relationship between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Communities in Vancouver during the Interwar Years"		
PROJECT TITLE: Musqueam-Dunbar Historical Relationship		

CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE: December 14, 2010

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:	DATE APPROVED: December 14, 2009	
Document Name	Version	Date
Protocol:		
Research Proposal submitted to Musqueam Indian Band	N/A	March 10, 2009
Application to Conduct Research within Musqueam Traditional Territory	N/A	March 10, 2009
Consent Forms:		
Subject Consent Form	N/A	November 9, 2009
Questionnaire, Questionnaire Cover Letter, Tests:		
Interview Questions	N/A	December 6, 2009
Other Documents:		
Musqueam Indian Band Permit to Conduct Research in Musqueam Traditional Territory	N/A	July 10, 2009
The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.		
Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board and signed electronically by one of the following:		
Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Chair Dr. Ken Craig, Chair Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair Dr. Laurie Ford, Associate Chair Dr. Anita Ho, Associate Chair		

Appendix B: Musqueam Indian Band Permit to Conduct Research



MUSQUEAM INDIAN BAND

6735 SALISH DRIVE
VANCOUVER, B.C.
CANADA V6N 4C4
TELEPHONE: 604 263-3261
FAX: 604 263-4212

MUSQUEAM INDIAN BAND PERMIT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MUSQUEAM TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

PERMIT NUMBER MIB-09-105-MB

This is to certify that the Musqueam Indian Band Council authorizes

Sanya Pleshakov, MA Candidate in History, UBC
(Name of Researcher)

To conduct educational research in Musqueam Traditional Territory.

To investigate Musqueam/Dunbar-Southlands community relations in the twentieth century
(Research description if applicable)

Consisting of: Researching of archival materials, community member interviews and possibly Musqueam Oral Histories

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The Permit Holder will obtain prior approval and make all necessary arrangements for the final deposition of research materials, upon authorization from the Musqueam Band Manager, and any associated documentation with the

Musqueam Indian Band and UBC Library
(Name of approved repository)

2. The Permit Holder will review, with persons designated by the Musqueam Band Manager, all film, audio recording and documents generated during the period of this permit to properly determine which field documents should be copied for deposit with the Musqueam Indian Band Archives.
3. The Permit Holder will adhere to all Policies of the Musqueam Indian Band relating to heritage resources.
4. The Permit Holder will adhere to the standards and guidelines accepted by the Musqueam Indian Band.

Other: SEE ATTACHED

(signature removed)

