

Unit 1: Video 3 Transcript

Q6: How has the field of Aboriginal–settler history developed?

A: As someone who stumbled onto the subject of Native–newcomer relations, I would say that it's exploded over the last several decades, through the work of Cole Harris and his students. I've named some of the important books that they've produced and some of the work that they've produced through the major land claims cases that we've all heard about in the news. Books have come out of that by anthropologists, and historians, and local activists who have worked on those cases, have produced major works which really speak loudly to Native–newcomer relations. Richard Daley, Dara Culhane at SFU, are some of the important figures who have written on that. More recently Bruce Miller at UBC in Anthropology, Arthur Ray in History at SFU—no, at UBC. Arthur Ray just retired. Writing about their experiences as historians in anthropologies—anthropologists as expert witnesses in these land claims cases has led to an explosion of really exciting new literature on Native–newcomer relations.

The new historians I've just mentioned, Paige Raibmon at UBC, has—is a relatively new voice doing excellent work. Mary-Ellen Kelm at SFU doing excellent work with Paige Raibmon. There's a new collaboration with Elsie Paul, a Sliammon Elder that's just come out, that is very—going to be an important book. Leslie Robertson at UBC in Women's Studies in Anthropology has worked with a Kwagu'l family on the history of one of their Elders who died in the 1950s. As a family collaboration, they went to Leslie. So these are kind of new collaborations that are very exciting. As far as Native–newcomer relations, stumbling onto this, I think the most exciting development too has been new voices coming from the Indigenous community, speaking to this topic in ways that we can use so fruitfully in the classroom, which many of them who are now ending up in the university are teaching in the classroom. *They Called Me Number One* by Bev Sellars just came out last year. Has won lots of awards. It's just—as I mentioned with Elsie Paul's story with—in collaboration with Elsie Paul's granddaughter and Paige Raibmon. These are works of people telling their own stories. Bev's story reaches back to her own grandmother. So they—and Elsie's to her grandparents. So these cover, for Elsie Paul, a coastal story. For Bev Sellars, Williams Lake, an interior story, that when you read them together, you get such a cross section of life lived in British Columbia that has—just doesn't appear in the history books. Bev now talking about writing a history of British Columbia. She's very excited about it. And the publishers of her book

are very excited because she's telling it in her own way. It's probably going to take a different shape than the books by my colleagues, who I like very much but we need to be hearing books—seeing and reading and hearing about books that are written by Indigenous authors. I'm just looking at my shelf right now and I'm seeing *The Fourth World*, which was one of the—the story of George Manuel of Neskonlith Lake. His own life story as told by himself. That was kind of a leader in this genre, and I can't convey enough about the importance of such books coming forward for British Columbia. So our whole—we'll be able to develop whole courses just based around these courses. I have tried more recently to try to present my courses with these Indigenous voices leading me forward and our class. Starting, for example, with Bev Sellars and ending with Bev Sellars. And then trying to sprinkle it with Harry Robinson and others, all the way through mixed up with these—my colleagues' newish work on British Columbia.

And I think that Native–newcomers relations is going to be taking a different shape. And I do think our departments are also focusing more on, we need to have Indigenous faculty members teaching these courses. So there's been much more an initiative at UVic, for example, and other universities to actually get people through our PhD programs, Indigenous people. Who then can come back and be teaching these courses in the ways that they want to be teaching them. In my day, you know, we were hauled forward and did our best. And it was our best, but probably not good enough. I've tried my best, and as I say, I'm indebted to the Harry Robinsons, and the Mary Abels of Vernon, and the Amy Augusts of Neskonlith, and the Louie Phillips of—and Hilda Austins of Lytton who just took me through such a life world, a life changing world, of what is this place we call British Columbia?