

Chapter 8

Anthropology Resources

Anthropology is the study of human cultures and their customs. Anthropology includes the disciplines of **physical anthropology** (the study of evolution, adaptation, and variation of human beings) and **cultural anthropology** (the study of human behaviour). Cultural anthropology includes the sub-fields of **linguistics** (the study of human languages), **ethnography** (the study of culture based on firsthand observation) and **archaeology** (study of human cultures through physical remains).

Almost all of the different Indigenous cultures across BC have been the subject of anthropological study since the time of contact. Explorers, missionaries, surveyors, and scientists, among others, have visited communities across the province and recorded their observations of Indigenous People in journals, letters, field books and academic studies. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, anthropology became a formal area of study with standards for research and preservation of research materials. In most cases, anthropologists were preoccupied with the ethnocentric project of characterizing, examining, and organizing knowledge of “Indians” for non-Indigenous audiences in universities and museums. Often, ceremonial objects and important cultural artifacts were bought, traded, confiscated, stolen or otherwise removed from communities in the course of these studies. These artifacts, and the records that accompany them, are housed at a variety of libraries, museum, and archives throughout BC, Canada, the United Kingdom and other countries.



Members of the Haida Nation in front of a traditional house post, 1881. Many cultural artifacts, such as those belonging to the Haida, were removed from Indigenous communities in the name of anthropological research. (BC Archives B-03593)

The history of collecting cultural objects and the practice of anthropological research has come under increasing scrutiny in the last 25 years by Indigenous Peoples and academics. Those involved in anthropological research are becoming aware that the field of study is built upon a history of exploitation and misrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples, our heritage and our cultures. As a result, some researchers are employing more careful techniques to make sure Indigenous Peoples are no longer treated as “objects” of academic inquiry and

our voices are represented in the studies that are being conducted. Also, many communities are trying to **repatriate** their valuable cultural materials (return them to their original communities for display, research and use).

Primary and Secondary Sources

This chapter is designed to assist you in gathering the various anthropological reports, studies, books and **theses** that may be relevant to your community. As with other research, you will need to learn how to gain access to research materials in libraries, archives, and museums. You will also need to set clear objectives and plan your research carefully. Most importantly, you will have to assess the scale of your project before you begin. Ask yourself if you are after everything that has ever been written about your community or pursuing a more focused research question. For example, are you using anthropological studies to set the context for a larger project or looking for specific accounts from anthropologists about traditional use and occupancy to verify a land rights claim? Refer to Chapter 2: Research Methods for a detailed look at planning a project.

Whatever the scope of your research, you will need to make sure you carefully analyze the material you collect. Anthropological reports were most often produced by outside researchers with distinctly different cultural practices and expectations than the people they studied. They may include important information but they may also reveal more about the beliefs and values of the time and place in which they were created. Often, these studies may meet the standards of academic research but fail to accurately represent Indigenous People and our communities. Consider the biases and limitations in the documents you encounter while extracting the information you need for your research.

The original field notes and professional and personal papers of the many anthropologists who have worked among the Indigenous communities in BC are spread among many institutions. The specific institutions that have the most useful resources are listed below. The resources are organized into two categories: **primary sources** (original **field notes** and papers) and **secondary sources** (such as published studies and theses). For more detailed information on the institutions listed here and their contact information see Chapter 3: Research Institutions.

Primary Sources: Museums, Archives, and Libraries

British Columbia

- BC Archives
- Royal British Columbia Museum
- Vancouver Museum
- University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology
- University of British Columbia Special Collections

Canada

- Library and Archives Canada (LAC)
- The Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC)

- National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

United States

- American Philosophical Society
- National American Records Administration

Secondary Resources

There is a wide and diverse range of secondary materials that you might find useful for anthropological research. Most libraries in BC house published anthropology studies. University and college libraries have the largest collections so it is best to start there. Remember that many anthropological studies were published in **periodicals** (magazines or journals published at regular intervals such as monthly or quarterly) as well as books. You can find these by searching university library catalogues online or at the library. Be sure to ask a librarian for assistance in your search. If you are starting a search from scratch it is important to understand the way library catalogues work. See Chapter 3: Resource Institutions for information on library research. Some of the most useful resources to help you find secondary sources are:

- Publications. Check library search engines at local and university libraries for published archaeological studies.
- Anthropological Index Online, Library of the British Museum of Mankind. The Library has one of the most extensive collections of periodicals relating to anthropology, ethnography and archaeology. The database is a useful tool because it is always being updated to represent new sources available in the field. The database is available on the Internet. It consists of journals and publications from around the world dating from 1970. The address is: <http://aio.anthropology.org.uk/aio/AIO.html>.
- Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) Inc., Yale University. This is a non-profit research agency that collects encyclopedias and other ethnological and archeological resources for universities, colleges and research agencies from around the world that are involved in cultural anthropology. Since the mid-1990s, the HRAF have been issued on CD-ROM (rather than strictly fiche format). Researchers will be particularly interested in the HRAF CD-ROM collections on ethnography and archaeology, and its *Bibliography of Native North Americans*. In order to use the HRAF, you will need to go to an institution that is a member. BC members of the HRAF include Simon Fraser University, the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia, and Malaspina University College. For additional information see the HRAF website at: <http://www.yale.edu/hraf>.
- Theses. Graduate essays and dissertations are a rich source of new information on Indigenous anthropology in British Columbia. Check the Thesis Canada Portal at the Library and Archives Canada website: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada>. Every Canadian graduate thesis is indexed there except for those completed in the last two years.



- Unpublished Manuscripts. Like theses, unpublished manuscripts are a rich source of new information on Indigenous anthropology in British Columbia. These can contain significant amounts of information. Carefully check the footnotes and bibliographies of all of the sources you are consulting, as they may list any unpublished manuscripts that are available. Unfinished works in progress or completed but unpublished manuscripts are often circulated among acquaintances. You may see references for unpublished materials or for information that was transmitted by means of “personal communication.” If you come across such a reference and feel that it is relevant to your project, you can try approaching the individual who made the reference and the author of the unpublished manuscript for further information.
- Subject Bibliographies. There are many bibliographies (lists of secondary sources) available in the field of anthropology. Some of the most useful and most easily accessible are listed in the following section. Xwi7xwa Library at the University of British Columbia First Nations House of Learning has bibliographies on a number of BC First Nations and First Nations issues.

Further Resources

Resources for Anthropology Research

Asch, Michael and Rene R. Gadcz (Eds.). 1984. *Thesis and Dissertation Titles and Abstracts on the Anthropology of Canadian Indians, Inuit and Métis from Canadian Universities*. Ottawa: National Museum of Man.

BC Native Studies Bibliographic Centre. N.d. *Handbook of Indians of British Columbia (draft copy), Vols. 1-2*. Vancouver: BC Native Studies Bibliographic Centre.

Culhane, Dara. 1998. *The Pleasure of the Crown: Anthropology, Law and First Nations*. Burnaby, BC: Talon Books.

Duff, Wilson. 1964. *The Indian History of British Columbia: Vol. 1 The Impact of the White Man*. Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum.

Duff, Wilson and Michael Kew (Compilers, revised by Laine Ruus and Francis Woodward). Fall 1973. A Select bibliography of anthropology of British Columbia. *BC Studies*: 19.

Hoover, Alan J. (Compiler). 1982. *A Selection of Publications on the Indians of British Columbia*. Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum.

- Harding, George. N.d. *An Annotated Bibliography of British Columbia Indian Languages: Selected Literature and Current Research*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia undergraduate paper.
- Kew, Michael. Winter 1993/1994. Anthropology and First Nations in British Columbia. *BC Studies*: 100. 78-105.
- Krech, Shepard. 1994. *Native Canadian Anthropology and History - A Selected Bibliography* [revised edition]. Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Murdock, George Peter and Timothy J. O'Leary. 1975. *Ethnographic Bibliography of North America, Vols. 1-3I*. New Haven, Conn.: Human Relations Area Files Press.
- Purvey, Diane. 1985. *Guide to Holdings at Vancouver City Archives and Archival Documents located at Vancouver Museum on West Coast Native Peoples*. Vancouver, BC: City of Vancouver Archives.
- Stebbing, Elizabeth. 1978. *Native Indians in British Columbia - A Selected Annotated Bibliography*. Vancouver, BC: BC Hydro and Power Authority.
- [Various Authors], Smithsonian Institution. [Various dates]. *Handbook of North American Indians* – (Vols. 4, 6, 7 and 12 in particular). Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute.

History and Critiques of Anthropological Research

- Biolsi, Thomas and Larry J. Zimmerman (Eds.). 1997. *Indians and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria, Jr., and the Critique of Anthropology*. Tuscon, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
- Clifford James and George Marcus (Eds.). 1986. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- Dabulskis-Hunter, Susan. 2002. *Outsider Research: How White Writers 'Explore' Native Issues, Knowledge, and Experiences*. Bethesda, MD: Academica Press.

Websites

- Smithsonian Institution for Native Americans
<http://www.si.edu/opa/amind/start.htm>