INTRODUCTION

A specter is haunting American anthropology—the phantom of earlier American anthropology.[1] Many of today's students fear the possibility of "complicity," of "appropriation," and of causing harm through their research and writing. They are obsessed with the image of anthropology as the playground of white males leering at "savages" and conspiring with colonialists. And worse. As a Princeton professor of anthropology, Julia Elyachar, wrote (30 June 2023), "Anthropology carries into the present inexorable and bloody traces of the past. Can the discipline be divested of its entanglements with colonialism, anti-Blackness, imperialism, and civilizational discourse?" A former editor of the *American Anthropologist* claimed, highlighting the declaration, that "Anthropology has consistently erased Indigenous peoples, just as it has consistently dehumanized Black people" (Thomas 2020). The call for papers for the 2022 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association "asks anthropologists to articulate . . . what steps can be collectively taken to make the field accountable to its historical and current harms." It is no wonder that today's anthropology students are worried about the ethical demands of the day.

Friends who are still teaching speak of the angst of their graduate students. An article by a Harvard undergraduate reports that their required tutorial on ethnographic methods unsettled her and her fellow students when their instructors stressed Michel-Rolph Trouillot's "critique of anthropology's role in placing certain peoples and cultures in imperial categories of non-Westerness, otherness, and the 'primitive.'"[2] The instructors spoke of "anthropology's collusion with nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonialism, a time when many anthropologists served as cultural informants to colonial officials" (Chung 2019). What decent person wouldn't be disturbed?

This book makes the case that the hegemonic discourse of anthropology's harmful past is without foundation as well as deeply damag-

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ing to the present and future of the discipline. The distressing paradox is that the horror stories emanate from an imagined past that the students and their instructors do not study and only know through an accretion of a half century of anthropological legends and folklore. The invented dread becomes more exaggerated each year. After the righteous anger and dissatisfactions arising from the many political and social causes of the 1960s there developed an unending succession of critiques of anthropology that took many forms with varying degrees of credibility. The discourse originated out of resistance to a terrible war and sympathy with the oppressed both at home and abroad, but the protests and critiques have expanded to encompass almost everything that anthropologists were said to have done and written, with escalating suspicion and resentment. Decade by decade new types of grievances are added to the discussion, even as less and less is known and understood of the realities of American anthropology before the 1970s. The present-day specter becomes increasingly frightening while the older anthropology it is supposed to represent becomes increasingly unrecognizable to those who remember it or who study its actual history.[3]

Today's anthropology is in many ways a different field from that of 1968, a major point stressed in Chapter 1. Its perspectives, aims, and approach, at least among the current leaders of the field, are different. Many anthropologists have turned their collective backs on their obligation to understand human beings and their history wherever and whenever found and instead are primarily concerned about the wrongs of the world. The field has changed from scholars who considered themselves humanists and scientists to ones who draw upon philosophers who had contempt for humanism and consider science to be just a Western discourse of domination. The exemplary anthropologist today is determined to reveal the rottenness in every aspect of society and perhaps to set it right. And for some reason the new folks feel it necessary to begin their writings with at least a brief invocation repudiating the evils of past anthropology.

Some of the earliest denunciations of the field were in the influential collection *Reinventing Anthropology* edited by Dell Hymes (1972). In his review of the book Walter Goldschmidt wrote, "One might expect that a series of essays critical of the current state of a discipline would demonstrate the existing inadequacies, but this is not the case. Most of the essays avoid discussion of what anthropology has been doing for over a generation. There are many more references to the philosophical underpinnings of anthropology, from Aristotle to Marx, than to current work or theory" (1973: 613). This approach hasn't

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changed, but anthropology is now a half century older and the literature is rife with many more complex ideological and conjectural statements that are even further removed from the earlier work of anthropologists. Today's critics have so many more outside philosophers to draw on than in Goldschmidt's day, such as Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault, Edward Said, Louis Althusser, Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler, Gayatri C. Spivak, Sylvia Wynter, and Homi K. Bhabha. There is no evidence in these works about what pre-1970 out-of-fashion anthropologists actually wrote, what they did, and what impact they had.[4]

Here is a brief response to the demoralizing claims in the opening paragraph before describing what happened through the decades:

1. Fewer than a dozen American anthropologists carried out research in areas controlled by colonial powers before World War II and those who did had little or nothing to do with imperialism or colonial governing by force or governmentality. Neither "Gough 1968" nor "Asad 1973," the two sources inevitably referred to, offers a scintilla of evidence to the contrary (see below and Chapter 2).

2. Most of the positive and useful literature on Indigenous peoples around the world was written by anthropologists and anthropological linguists from America and elsewhere. Information about their languages, arts, ideas, stories, recorded music, social arrangements, techniques, and material culture is available to the descendants of those peoples, if they care to read and make use of it, as well as to all of humanity. This is the opposite of "erasure," whatever that oxymoron could possibly mean.

3. Far from "anti-Blackness," American (Boasian) anthropologists constantly fought anti-Black racism in their teaching, writing, and as public intellectuals. Franz Boas and Melville Herskovits did more than any other non-African American researchers to encourage studies of African American and African culture and history, often working in collaboration with African American scholars. "From 1900 onward, both [W. E. B.] Du Bois and [Alain] Locke based their ideas of race upon [Boas's] and his students' findings" (Hutchinson 1995: 63). (See also Willis 1975; Zumwalt and Willis 2008; Appiah 2020.)[5]

4. Anyone who thinks US anthropologists were guilty of what the Princeton professor called "civilizational discourse" doesn't understand the most fundamental aspects of the history of the field as it developed after 1900. There were no more powerful intellectual opponents of the idea of the superiority of one "civilization" over another than Boas and his students, who worked to overcome the prevailing notions of cultural evolution, held firmly at the time by intellectuals of

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both the left and the right, from Marx and Spencer to William Graham Sumner, robber barons, socialists, and feminists alike (e.g., Pittenger 1993). Accusations such as those above, from highly placed anthropologists, epitomize the current unfamiliarity with the most basic elements of anthropology's past as a result of fifty years of "critique."

American Anthropology

This book concentrates on American anthropology because its distinctive and readily encompassed national history was quite different from British, French, or any other. It was the only major tradition to preach, teach, and practice the four-field approach and to set itself explicitly against racism and ethnocentrism. Moreover, American anthropologists were the earliest and loudest to lash out at their own field, to embrace the critiques, and to continue to elaborate on them. Because it was primarily cultural (or social or sociocultural) anthropologists who raised the complaints and have continued to be most outspoken and wide-ranging in their concerns, we will concentrate on them rather than on linguists, physical anthropologists, or archeologists.

Here is an example from a textbook that introduces the older discipline of anthropology: "Anthropologists study human beings wherever and whenever they find them—in the Australian outback, a Turkish café, a Mesopotamian tomb, or a North American shopping mall. Anthropology is the exploration of human diversity in time and space. Anthropology studies the whole of the human condition: past, present, and future; biology, society, language, and culture" (Kottak 2006: 3). That's more or less the same way that Franz Boas put it a century earlier: "At the present time anthropologists occupy themselves with problems relating to the physical and mental life of mankind as found in varying forms of society, from the earliest times up to the present period, and in all parts of the world" (1904: 513). In that same article Boas also said,

> A last word as to the value that the anthropological method is assuming in the general system of our culture and education. . . . Of greater educational importance is its power to make us understand the roots from which our civilization has sprung, that it impresses us with the relative value of all forms of culture, and thus serves as a check to an exaggerated valuation of the standpoint of our own period, which we are only too liable to consider the ultimate goal of human evolution, thus depriving ourselves of the benefits to be gained from the teachings of other cultures and hindering an objective criticism of our own work. (Ibid.: 524)

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Marvin Harris, Franz Boas's leading critic during the 1960s, would agree: "But the findings of anthropology are never based upon the study of a single population, race, tribe, class, nation, time, or place . . . . In anthropological perspective, all peoples and cultures are equally worthy of study. Thus anthropology is opposed to those who would have themselves and no one else represent humanity, stand at the pinnacle of progress, or be chosen by God or history to fashion the world in their own image (Harris 1987: 5). Eric Wolf, coming from a Marxist background similar to that of Harris, wrote that because of the anthropologists "the inventory of humanity has come to include many 'significant others'; the originally unified image of man has splintered into a thousand different, equally valid, refractions" (1964 10). "The anthropologist, who has had occasion to confront the range of human possibilities, is committed also to an image of man that asserts both the variability and complexity of human life" (ibid.: 97).

Another Boas student, Melville J. Herskovits, put it this way:

> The fact of cultural variability, the existence of common values expressed in different modes of behavior, the devotion of every people to its way of life—these, and many other aspects of human existence have gradually fallen into place to form a pattern for tolerance and understanding. Just as the physical anthropologists have ceaselessly combatted the conception of racial superiority, so cultural anthropology has, both explicitly and implicitly in the presentation of its data, documented the essential dignity of all human cultures. (1948: 653)

And Margaret Mead added, "We have been bold and forthright enough when our scientific knowledge has been called upon to deal with problems of racism and genocide" (Mead 1964: 12).

These six anthropologists,[6] whose births span the years from 1858 to 1942, all shared a vision of American anthropology as serving humanity through this broadest, multipronged, and overambitious approach to knowledge of everything about itself. They believed fervently in human equality and were opposed to racism, discrimination based on actual or supposed biological difference, and ethnocentrism, based on cultural difference. They believed in the need to find out about the ways of humankind through research among living people as well as by digging and sifting among the remnants of those no longer alive. This was the field into which those of us in the oldest generation of anthropologists were socialized, or enculturated.

We are told, however, that we caused harm beyond our understanding, despite our values and best intentions. This idea has been pervasive for decades, but instead of demonstrating it by careful studies, the critics prefer to cite other critics and incomprehensible philosophers

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and employ catchy slogans.[7] We understand that "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence" as in "the absence of proof of the existence of Big Foot doesn't mean Big Foot doesn't exist." But in the case of anthropology, we do have some information about what earlier practitioners actually did and it makes sense to consider that evidence. I contend in this book that the prevailing myths of the harms of anthropology have developed over more than a half century as many unexamined critiques have been layered one upon the other, leaving knowledge of older realities far behind. Criticism from actual anthropologists who knew something about the subject has been overtaken by the uncritical acceptance of inappropriate theoretical concepts from European philosophers in which Theory substitutes for evidence and slogans reign, as knowledge of anthropology and anthropologists of earlier eras disappears into the mists. The history of American anthropology is rarely taught these days and works actually written by earlier anthropologists are seldom referred to or quoted even when relevant. It is another case of "Hamlet without the Prince of the Danes."

American Cultural Anthropology in the 1940s–60s

We shall not dwell on the well-known tale of Franz Boas arriving from Germany in 1886 and, through his research, museum work, writing, organizational work, and teaching, reorganizing the incipient field of anthropology. From the department he founded at Columbia University sprang, and thence radiated, a cadre of eager young anthropologists who multiplied and were fruitful. They in turn founded departments of anthropology all over the land, above all at the University of California at Berkeley, the universities of Pennsylvania, Chicago, and New Mexico, Yale University, the New School, and Brooklyn College. Nor will we discuss the ways Boas countered the offensive aspects of invidious cultural evolution, which George W. Stocking described as follows: "savagery, dark skin, and a small brain and incoherent mind were, for many, all part of the single evolutionary picture of 'primitive' man, who even then walked the earth" (1968: 132). These ideas were a large part of what Franz Boas was arguing against in *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911; Stocking 1968: 112). Similarly, no later than the 1890s, our culture hero set out to counter the then almost universally held belief in inherited biological inferiority, racial determinism, that somehow persistently ranked Black folks at the bottom and white folks—guess where. These battles culminated by the late 1920s and the 1930s in the anti-racist, anti-evolutionary

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anthropology taught and propagated publicly by trained American anthropologists.[8]

Let us pick up instead about the time I discovered anthropology, in 1953. When I took my first course in anthropology in my junior year in college, American anthropology was doing fine. The once miniscule field had been refreshed and expanded by an influx of young men and women who had been through the Great Depression and World War II. Before that war most cultural anthropologists carried out their research in the United States, primarily (but not exclusively) among American Indians; only a handful worked outside of the US, usually in independent countries (see Chapter 2). After that war, not only had many of these young people been all over the world and seen the peoples who lived there, but they now had increased funding to do research among all the world's cultures.[9] Eric Wolf wrote approvingly of this expansion of American anthropological perspectives as well as the discipline's growth spurt. "Membership in the AAA multiplied twenty-fold in the period between 1941 and the present. The number of universities teaching anthropological subjects rose heavily, giving increased employment to professionals" (Wolf 1964: 8). It was still a small crowd, however. At the 1955 AAA meetings (my first) there were 116 papers given, and in 1962–63 there were only about five hundred people recorded as teaching in forty-four departments according to the "Guide to Departmental Offerings in the Field of Anthropology." In 1964 the AAA had almost a thousand members (American Anthropological Association 1964). At that time a large majority of all the American women and men who had ever received PhDs in anthropology were still alive, beginning with A. L. Kroeber (Columbia, 1901). We were able to learn from them.[10]

In the 1950s we took pride in our unique way of knowing; our methodology, unlike that of any other discipline, involved going to live among a group of people for extended periods, and learning their languages (at least trying to). Many of our fieldwork adventures were among people very different from ourselves, but not always. (See numerous examples of anthropology "at home" [Lewis 1998: 721].) But even when we did research among people much like ourselves, we believed that we had fresh eyes and possible special understandings because of our knowledge of comparative cultures. We had been trained in the idea of analytical cultural relativism, trying to set aside our own cultural lenses and biases and see the world from our interlocutors' perspectives. (See Fernandez [1990] on Herskovits and cultural relativism as a way of understanding other cultures.[11]) Many anthropology courses focused on the ethnography of world areas

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through which we learned of the ways of peoples of Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe, the Indigenous peoples of North and South America, and rural and urban North American communities. Other courses focused on such human phenomena as social structure (kinship and the family, community organization), political organization and action, economic systems, religious beliefs and practices, and processes of cultural change and acculturation, most in comparative perspective.

Our anthropology, like that of our immediate predecessors, was marked by genuine interest in, curiosity about, and concern for the peoples we studied. We believed we could make a positive difference for intergroup understanding and perhaps for the solution to at least limited problems through the application of our knowledge. It was our boast that we fought racism, racial determinism, and ethnocentrism, wherever and whenever needed, in our teaching, writing, and in the public arena. In those days we never talked about our complicity with colonialism or about placing people into categories of otherness. (We never used a term like "the Other," nor did we have use for such an alien term, imported from European philosophy.) We didn't think that by going to live among people, write down their stories and their histories, praise their arts and describe their social systems, record their languages and their music, write books and articles about what we had learned, that we were erasing Indigenous peoples. Were we just blind? It is increasingly difficult to convince today's students that Euro-American women and men of fifty to a hundred years ago lived among peoples with very different lives (even "exotic" ones) out of positive motives, out of deep interest or in the hope of understanding human behavior through a comparison of all the ways of being human. We didn't do that in order to feel superior to other peoples. Have the critics uncovered realities of colonialism and "erasure" that we weren't aware of? If they have, they have not demonstrated it, only declared it, unrelentingly and mercilessly.

In that era, we had many different interests, far beyond the imaginings of later generations. Those who are interested in the history of anthropology could look at what American anthropologists actually did for their doctoral research as listed in the *Guide to Graduate Departments of Anthropology for the Year 1964–65* or the *Yearbook of Anthropology—1955* (Tax 1975). These included colonialism and imperialism, social justice, and issues such as public health, migration and migrants, prisons and other total institutions, ethics, concern for the conditions of Indigenous peoples, and revitalization, revolutionary, and national liberation movements.[12]

Here is a sample of the research and writing of my teachers and my friends from the Columbia graduate program in the 1950s and

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1960s in order to convey a sense of what we were actually doing when some might imagine that our discipline was stuck in "the savage slot."[13] First, a few of my teachers: Robert Manners, my first teacher, carried out research in a community of small-scale farmers in the mountains of Puerto Rico as part of a project meant to show both the influence of environmental variations and that of capitalism and world markets even at local levels.[14] John Murra inspired others with his studies of the social, economic, and political system of the Incas derived from historical data. Ruth Bunzel produced the pioneering study of women's skill and esthetics *The Pueblo Potter* (1929). Morton Fried wrote about the ties that structured social life in a Chinese county in the late 1940s while a decade earlier Charles Wagley did research on an infrequently contacted people in the Amazon rainforest thought to be on the verge of disappearance (the Tapirape, now reduced to about fifty-one souls). He also studied a far larger group that has been changing as a result of contact for hundreds of years (the Tenetehara) and published a book about a small town on the banks of the Amazon River. Wagley wrote about race in Brazil and much more, as one of the leading social science experts on Brazil and Latin America.[15]

Conrad Arensberg studied the economics and family and community life of smallholder farmers in County Clare, Ireland in the early 1930s—a contribution much appreciated there today.[16] Joseph Greenberg's studies of African language classification totally overturned racist concepts of African history and culture, and by accomplishing that he gave all historiography of Africa a new and anti-racist beginning! Harold Conklin carried out detailed research into the ways of mountain farmers in the Philippines, including inquiries into their farming knowledge, language, cognition, color categories, and kinship ("folk classification"). After his dissertation on "Ethnic interaction in a British Guiana Rural Community," Elliott Skinner made his mark through research and writing about the Mossi kingdom of Burkina Faso and later about the city of Ouagadougou. Marshall Sahlins, as was his wont, marshaled a great deal of comparative ethnography for his theory of the development of social stratification in Polynesia. That was before he went to Paris, had a conversion experience with Lévi-Strauss, and wrote so much more, based on close reading of ethnography and travelers' accounts. His range and influence were exceptional and he wrote with wit contra the posts, which he called "Afterology" (crediting Jacqueline Mraz).

In my cohort, Morton Klass conducted a study of cultural persistence in a community of transplanted East Indians on the island of Trinidad (then still part of the British Empire) and later did research

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among low-caste laborers in independent India. He cowrote a popular book condemning racism.[17] Arnold Strickon's dissertation research was on the persistence of gaucho culture on Argentinian ranches; he wrote about class and political patronage in Argentina, and later, about the complex relations of Wisconsin Norwegian famers to tobacco as a cash crop. Roy (Skip) Rappaport first gained prominence for his study of ritual and ecology in New Guinea.

John Gwaltney studied blindness in Oaxaca and later wrote *Drylongso: A Self-Portrait of Black America*. William E. Mitchell studied Jewish kinship clubs in New York City and was later married to the late Annette Weiner, much honored for her studies of the wealth and importance of women in the Trobriand Islands whom Malinowski had neglected to write about. Sidney Greenfield produced a study of family organization in Barbados before studying patronage and religion in Brazil. Lucie Wood Saunders studied cross-cousin marriage and the changing roles of women in Egyptian villages, while Joan Mencher's dissertation was on child-rearing and family organization in a Puerto Rican barrio in New York. Joan's subsequent career was devoted to many types of research on policy issues in India. Annamarie "Pim" Malefijt, with her Dutch background, did research among Javanese in Surinam, and Sydel Silverman (later Wolf) wrote her dissertation on landlord and peasant in Umbria, Italy. Niara Sudarkasa (Gloria Marshall) studied "woman, trade, and the Yoruba family" and Frank Conant studied a non-Muslim and non-Christian religion in Northern Nigeria. Oladejo Okediji (who was an outstanding student in the first course I ever taught, Peoples and Cultures of Africa) did a study of "policy decisions and directed change" in his home country, Nigeria. Shepard Forman and Conrad Kottak followed their advisors and did research in Brazil among fishermen, while Lambros Comitas studied fishermen in rural Jamaica before becoming an expert on ganja and other aspects of Jamaican and Rasta culture. According to his obituary in the *New York Times*, "His work provided important insights for government programs and international aid aimed at improving people's economic circumstances" (8 March 2020).

For my dissertation research in 1958–60 I studied among a people in southwest Ethiopia with particular emphasis on the history and the structure of power in a Muslim Oromo kingdom. My slender book (1965) was banned in Ethiopia by the imperial government because the Amhara rulers pretended that the Oromo they ruled were too primitive to have reached the stage of monarchy! I was pleased to find ten copies of it in Addis Ababa University in 1980 after the change of government and now I often get requests for the book from Oromo and

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Fig. 0.1. Harold Fleming (white shirt) and Herbert Lewis recording basic words in the Gato language, Southern Ethiopia, 1959. Fakir, in sweater, helps interpret through several languages. Photo by Marcia Barbash Lewis.

other Ethiopian students and scholars more than fifty-five years later. Following the lead of my teacher, Joseph Greenberg, Harold Fleming and I collected wordlists from speakers of a number of barely known languages of Southern Ethiopia. Drawing on our findings and Greenberg's lessons on historical linguistics I published an article that overturned the long-standing racist belief about the peopling of the Horn of Africa (Lewis 1966). It has been viewed by over nineteen thousand online and never contradicted in print.[18]

In 1998 I had the great good fortune to discover a huge trove of biographical accounts by more than 220 women and men of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. These memoirs had been written, collected, and recorded by Oneida men and women themselves, who were paid for their work by grants to the anthropology department of the University of Wisconsin through the US government's Work Projects Ad-

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ministration (WPA).[19] The anthropological linguist Morris Swadesh organized the project in 1938 as a study of the Oneida language; the material from that study has been safeguarded and is used for language learning by the Oneidas until today. When they had finished writing texts in the Oneida language and translating them there was still money in the grant so they kept working, writing biographical and ethnographic accounts. The resulting 165 stenographers' notebooks were put in a carton in a basement storeroom of the anthropology department and forgotten. I was honored to be able to make the writings available to the nation again, and to preserve the work of the Oneida reporters and recorders as well as that of anthropology students Floyd Lounsbury and Harry Basehart who collaborated on the project. I published an edited volume, returning the words and stories of their parents and grandparents to members of the Oneida Nation, but unfortunately this very readable and interesting book was reviewed by only one anthropology journal (Arndt 2007).

In 1960–61, May Ebihara was the first American anthropologist to do a study of a Cambodian community, before half of its people were wiped out by their own crazed rulers between 1975 and 1979. Her unpublished dissertation circulated among scholars of Cambodia for many years and served as the basis of all further work. She returned to what remained of the village in 1989, a decade after the genocide, and one can only imagine the greeting she received in the community. Some of her students couldn't. When she returned to the community "They [the villagers] wanted [May] to write their stories. Ebihara told me once that she was teaching a class at CUNY Graduate Center and she used the phrase 'giving voice to' rural peasants who had not told their stories to the rest of the world or even to the rest of Cambodia. But her students, good post-modernists, objected to the phrase, asking what right had she to 'appropriate' peasants' voices? She said she was stunned" (Ledgerwood in Ebihara 2018: xxv). I would be stunned, too, were I not used to the extraordinary lack of understanding and empathy that results from the defamation and fabrications that have been drummed into recent generations of anthropology students.

In summary, these are some of the bad things we did not do:

1. None of the thirty of us worked for colonial governments, not even the very few who did research in colonies during what were the last days of the Raj (Nigeria, Trinidad, Guiana, Barbados).

2. The disagreeable phrase "savage slot" is often included in critical discourse, but employing this expression for the sake of argument, Charles Wagley was the only one who might fill that niche because he worked with subsistence foragers in tropical forests. Not "savages" but

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human beings, some in distress. One can check the internet to see how his work has preserved knowledge of those peoples' pasts as the basis for knowing their history and their present. "Erasure"? For shame!

3. Many of us worked with people of so-called black skin in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa. Several of these Columbia anthropologists even fit the description of "Blacks" themselves. Where is the evidence that what we wrote contributed to "anti-Blackness"?

4. I am not sure what the Princeton professor means by "civilizational discourse," but if they refer to theories of cultural evolution, some of those people held in highest regard for their Marxist bent were engaged in such discourse. The early Boasians fought against social and cultural evolutionary thought and left it in tatters by 1930, but in the late 1940s and 1950s it had a revival, first by the Marxist Leslie White, then with the support of other Marx-inspired anthropologists like Elman Service, early Marshall Sahlins, Betty Meggers, Robert Manners, Eric Wolf, Marvin Harris, the Spencerian Robert Carneiro, and the less Marxist Julian Steward. True, their ideas formed a grand narrative of the sort the postmodernists condemned, but if critics read the neo-evolutionists they will see that they in no way blame those people who lived less complex lives. On the contrary, as the current volume by the late David Graeber and David Wengrow indicates, these armchair theorists were often likely to find the "primitive" much happier, better off, and more moral than folk with more complicated lives.[20]

In summary, back in the day we were unabashed followers of humanism, with groups and individuals at the center of our concerns and a belief in rationality. (Boy! were we wrong on the second count!) We had a heritage that stretched back to Herder and the Enlightenments, though mediated by some romanticism and much German liberalism introduced by Boas. His approach was adopted by his European-born Jewish students (Paul Radin, Robert Lowie, Alexander Goldenweiser, Edward Sapir, and the New York-born almost-Jewish A. L. Kroeber) and passed on down through several generations. As British anthropologist Raymond Firth put it so elegantly, "anthropology is not the bastard of colonialism but the legitimate child of the Enlightenment" (Firth 1972). We also believed in the idea of science. As Eric Wolf's frequently quoted statement goes, anthropology is "the most scientific of the humanities, the most humanist of the sciences" (1964: 88).

American anthropology's "era of good feeling" didn't last long, however. The tragedy of American anthropology is not that it conspired with colonial rulers or that it "erased" Indigenous peoples,

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or that it "dehumanized Black people," but rather that generations since the 1960s have paid no attention to the work we actually did, the things we wrote, and what we taught. Oh, how one wishes for an open-minded reading, or any reading, of our predecessors, teachers, and contemporaries. It is tragic that the critical discourses have caused so much misunderstanding and that so much has been lost in the half century since the turmoil and tension, the *Sturm und Drang*, of the 1960s.[21]

The Crises of the Late 1960s+

There is no lack of literature on America, or Paris, of the Sixties, and above all on the impact of the events of those years on young people. There is surprisingly little documentation of the immediacy of its impacts and long-lasting effects on anthropology, with the exception of my essay, "The Radical Transformation of Anthropology" (2009). That piece presents a detailed look at the ways that the momentous events and movements of those years influenced the attitudes, content, and directions of our work. Susan Trencher's (2000) important book goes into detail perceptively analyzing the intellectual and political trends between 1960 and 1980. (See review by Nancy Parezo [2001].) I shall give the briefest indication of the very many forces that affected our students and our colleagues from the mid-1960s, during the "years of hope" that turned into the "days of rage" (Gitlin 1987), and have become the decades of indignation, even wrath, for anthropology.[22]

A few key names and terms from that tumultuous period in the United States include: Vietnam, the draft, resistance to the war on college campuses; Kent State, Jackson State, and Sterling Hall; civil rights marches and the murders of marchers, civil rights workers, four little girls in Sunday school, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and Bobby Kennedy; from SLC to SNCC to Black Power, Black Panthers, Black Liberation, and Black Studies;[23] Watts and Woodstock; LSD, SDS, and the Weathermen; Stonewall; *The Feminine Mystique*, Women's Liberation, and the Women's Strike for Equality; the American Indian Movement (AIM), Alcatraz and Wounded Knee; La Raza and the Delano Grape Strike; student takeovers, the counterculture, and "trust no one over 30." And that ain't the half of it.

My institution, the University of Wisconsin in Madison, often a radical space, was in constant uproar at least from the time of the po-

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lice riot of 1967, when police beat up students who "sat in" to prevent interviews by recruiters for Dow Chemical, makers of napalm (see Maraniss 2004). Two years earlier many Wisconsin faculty had begun agitating against the war, when we held the second teach-in in the country in April 1965, right after Eric Wolf and Marshall Sahlins invented them at the University of Michigan. (A transcription of the talk I gave against the war is available if anyone is interested.) Hundreds of our fellow teachers signed anti-war petitions and a great many demonstrations ensued, with the National Guard called in after Kent State killings in 1969. The massive bombing of the physics building, Sterling Hall, that killed physics graduate student Robert Fassnacht, put a damper on further demonstrations after September 1970. The impact—the power—of almost a decade of war, destruction, demonstrations, organizing, and disappointment cannot be overestimated.

Events in the rest of the world had particular importance for anthropology students and their elders; as a discipline we were closer to those other peoples in faraway lands. These were the days when colonialism came into the conscious view and the discourse of anthropologists. By 1968 the Dutch, Belgian, and most French and British colonies were independent, but there were wars for independence in the three African Portuguese colonies and in Northern Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe) where "Whites" had declared independence in order to beat the Africans to the punch. Namibia won its independence from South Africa in 1990. Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, in English translation, became popular at this time and the political success of Mao Tse-Tung and the exploits of Ernesto "Che" Guevara in the Congo and Bolivia captured the imagination of some.

Students' consciousness was raised and some had increased contact with rebellious scholars in the rest of the world, especially in tumultuous Paris of 1968 (Brown 1974). Naturally many young anthropologists defied the "establishment" of their discipline as well as their society. There was heightened attention to social problems at the AAA meetings as early as 1962 (Lewis 2009) but the first major *cause célèbre* erupted in 1965 when Marshall Sahlins delivered his paper on "Project Camelot" (see Chapter 6). The annual meetings became an arena of resolutions from 1966 on, featuring resolutions in favor of equality and against all forms of discrimination, against American foreign policy, and especially against the war in Vietnam. The year 1968 and the connection between American students and rebellious French youth was to have the most far-reaching impact on anthropology as well as other fields in the humanities and social sciences.

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The Impact of Paris and Theory

Many of the American students who joined forces with their French others in Paris came home with new ideas that were gaining sway there, labeled "Theory." (See Ferry and Renaut 1990 for the intellectual developments and Brown 1974 for the political.) "May '68" in Paris was a moment of great political and intellectual tumult and ferment that involved students and workers, until the latter got fed up and went home.[24] American intellectuals brought home Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, the Frankfurt School, postmodernism, deconstruction, anti-positivism, anti-Enlightenment, and anti-humanism in their luggage. Not all at once, but with increasing intensity over the decades, the impact of these writers and their ideas would grow to transform American anthropology and intellectual life. The ideas of Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci were an important part of the rebellious days and are still central for many. The anti-humanist and anti-science ideas of the postmodernists took a little longer to percolate but would grow with much greater force through the decades.[25]

The French philosophers took their lead from the dark and anti-humanistic philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche and from the avid Nazi philosopher Martin Heidegger (see Ferry and Renaut 1990; Miller 1993). They founded their "Theory" on a dark view of humanity, one the original master, Friedrich Nietzsche, declared to be "the FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF SOCIETY . . . a Will to the DENIAL of life": "life itself is ESSENTIALLY appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and, at the least and mildest, exploitation" (1973: 175; emphases in original). The key is power ("life IS precisely Will to Power" [ibid.]), and for philosophers accustomed to playing with words, knowledge is power. Their followers have been employing that power to dominate others academically ever since.

The late Marshall Sahlins, a veteran of the middle ages of modernist anthropology who went through many transformations himself, had this to say about "the leviathanological discourses of (the Marxist) Althusser and Foucault . . . employing a pervasive sense of repression without contradiction in their construction of subjectivity without agency":

> Foucault especially. The most awesome transubstantiation of that old holy ghost, the Invisible Hand, into an all-controlling culture-at-large, would have to be Foucault's pancratic vision of power. Here is power as irresistible as it is ubiquitous, power emanating from everywhere

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> and invading everyone, saturating the everyday things, relations and institutions of human existence, and transmitted thence into people's bodies, perceptions, knowledges, and dispositions. (2002: 67)

French university students were delighted with the dark view of life presented by Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jacques Lacan. They were obsessed with power and disdained Enlightenment concerns about individual freedom and belief in reason. Warning about domination by others, Foucault and Derrida would turn the tables and would soon dominate much of intellectual life. Their ideas underlie the idea of discourse as a site of power and domination, the "hermeneutics of suspicion," the essentialist notion of "Orientalism," the excesses of postcolonialism, and Fabian's imagined *Time and the Other* (1983). Insisting that there can be no "objectivity" (Novick 1988) and certainly no "truth" (except of course for their own) they authorize the application of a vehement fact-free critique of anthropology. All this could not fail to influence both students and some well-established professionals, and here is the testimony of one anthropologist, then in his thirties, who had produced excellent ethnography, some theoretical contributions, and a fine general textbook.[26] Roger Keesing wrote,

> By early 1970s I had become politicized by my students [at the University of California, Santa Cruz], and my interests shifted from cognition and social structure to more global and political interests, including a belated self-reeducation in Marxism and social theory.
>
> In the last twenty years, I have been examining questions I mainly ignored in my early research: class, gender, power, 'development' and dependency, colonial discourse, cultural nationalism. I draw theoretical guidance from Marx, and more recently from Gramsci, Foucault, Bourdieu, Hall, Said, Guha, and a range of feminist theorists (notably Rowbotham, Mitchell, Ehrenreich, English, Irigaray, and Wittig). (Keesing 1994: 311)

Post-1960s Critiques

The subject of colonialism, imperialism, and anthropology makes its appearance in 1968 with the greatest impact. According to a recent entry in *Oxford Bibliographies Online*, "Few topics in the discipline of anthropology are as important, and controversial, as colonialism. The historical origins of anthropology are rooted in the colonial enterprise, thus forever linking colonialism and anthropology. As such, colonial-

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ism is one of the most widely explored and written about subjects in the history of anthropology" (Kroll-Zeldin 2016). In view of this statement, it is very odd—but typical—that for "General Overviews" the author of the Oxford bibliography cites just a few shopworn works from the 1960s and 1970s as though they still warranted headline status or proved the point of the fateful connections. Leading the short list is the inevitable all-time favorite, Kathleen Gough's *two* papers that are actually the same paper; oddly authors frequently cite both of them as though they were two different articles. Neither the author of the bibliography or anyone else who cites "Gough 1968" seems to notice that aside from the title in the *Monthly Review*, "Anthropology and Imperialism," *that* is not what the article is about! (The title of the work in *Current Anthropology* is more honest: "New Proposals for Anthropologists" [1968b: 403].)

Kathleen Gough offers only two sentences and one paragraph of truisms regarding the issue for which she is famous. The sentences: "Anthropology is a child of imperialism. It has its roots in the humanist visions of the Enlightenment, but as a university discipline and a modern science it came into its own in the last decades of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries." Coeval, yes, but evil? The only paragraph on the topic makes it clear that she is writing about British anthropology, her own background, not American! ("Until World War II most of our fieldwork was carried out in societies that had been conquered by our own governments." See Chapter 2 regarding American anthropology.) She writes that anthropologists "tended to accept the imperialist framework as a given . . . yet, living closely with native peoples, they tended to take their part and to try to protect them against the worst forms of imperialist exploitation." Although "Customary relations developed between the anthropologists and the government or the various private agencies who funded them . . . Other types of customary relationships grew up between anthropologists and the people whose institutions they studied." She notes that "applied anthropology came into being as a kind of social work and community development effort for non-white peoples, whose future was seen in terms of gradual education and of amelioration of conditions many of which had actually been imposed by their Western conquerors in the first place" (1968b: 403).

That is all Kathleen Gough has to say about the involvement of anthropology (mostly British) with colonialism! These minimal and trivial generalities are all the evidence she offers in that famous article that launched a thousand citations. (And even these are almost

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exonerative!) Not about anthropology and colonialism, the article is a plea for anthropologists to become more radical, more political, and to study revolutions. In a retrospective piece about "Gough 1968" she never mentions the slogan for which she is famous (Gough 1993).[27] What sort of groupthink leads to the listing of this article as primary evidence of the complicity of anthropology with colonialism? Have none of those who cite her actually read beyond the title or the first page? This seems to be a case of academic and intellectual malpractice, but one unlikely to be rectified in the near future.

It is somewhat more reasonable to list "Asad 1973" because that collection does contain papers about anthropology and colonialism; but it is all about *British* anthropology, and significant articles in the volume are exculpatory of even those anthropologists. Asad writes in the introduction, "it is a mistake to view social anthropology in the colonial era as primarily an aid to colonial administration, or as the simple reflection of colonial ideology" (Asad 1973: 18). Two decades later, referring to "some vulgar misconceptions on this subject," he wrote, "the role of anthropologists in maintaining structures of imperial domination has, despite slogans to the contrary, usually been trivial" (Asad 1991: 314). If Asad is correct, and the book he edited deals only with British anthropology, why do American anthropologists cite it as evidence of the terrible complicity of American anthropologists with colonialism? (See Lewis 2014: Chapter 4, 73–105, on British anthropology and colonialism.)

Accompanying Gough in the same number of *Current Anthropology* are two papers about the social responsibility of anthropologists. The one by Gerald Berreman, "Is Anthropology Alive?" was cited frequently as a wake-up call, as was his "'Bringing It All Back Home': Malaise in Anthropology," in the influential volume edited by Dell Hymes (1972). The lead sentence of another commentary by Berreman reads, "I do not believe that any anthropologist seriously questions truth as a value in science nor verifiability as a criterion of truth" (1971: 84). Before long this would no longer be the case.

A "Radical Caucus" was established in the AAA by 1969 and annual meetings became more and more politically exciting. The Thailand controversy burst upon us in San Diego in 1970 and there were increasing numbers of papers accusing anthropology and anthropologists of racism (Audrey Smedley) and of being "oppressor(s) and obstacle(s) to progress" for Indians (Vine Deloria, Jr.). The idea that the people anthropologists studied were dissatisfied with how they were treated by anthropologists was heard at this time, as were accusations

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that racism was built into "white"-dominated anthropology (see Trencher 2000: 2–9 for several of these).[28]

Fifteen anthropologists and a sociologist expressed many forms of dissatisfaction with the field in an edited volume with a long introduction by Dell Hymes. For the most part these authors called for a more radical and politically involved American anthropology rather than accusing it of harms in the way that would soon follow, and *Reinventing Anthropology* became a go-to work for citations, if not for actual discussion, analysis, and criticism. A particularly hard-hitting article by William S. Willis, who had some very critical things to say about Franz Boas, became a favorite. That author would, however, come to have a very different view of the founder when he got absorbed in writing a Boas biography and realized his subject's significant relationships with Black scholars and his attempts to advance scholarship by and on Africa and African Americans (see Willis 1975; Zumwalt and Willis 2008).

The early critique of anthropological literature was heavily influenced by Marxist thought in its attitudes to capitalism, colonialism, and the West; for Jack Stauder (1972) it was especially functionalism, while for Diane K. Lewis (1973) it was "anthropology and colonial racism."[29] Articles in the *Critique of Anthropology* (1974) and *Dialectical Anthropology* (1976) and the short-lived *Critical Anthropology* were early entrants into the field. World systems (Immanuel Wallerstein) and ideas of center versus periphery (Andre Gunder Frank) became popular. Marxist thinking of various sorts is always with us, and despite serious disagreements of attitude and approach between Marxist and "post" perspectives these approaches would feed naturally into the later hegemonic postcolonial moment.

Hard on the heels of the furor over anthropology and colonialism and the "Is anthropology alive?" theme came the reflexive movement, associated with anti-positivism and the critique of science. Young anthropologists Paul Rabinow (1977), Kevin Dwyer (1977, 1982), Vincent Crapanzano (1977, 1980), and Jean-Paul Dumont (1978) expressed serious principled and theoretical dissatisfaction with their own fieldwork, casting more deep shadows on the field. Their concerns about "objectification of the other" and the power differential between anthropologist and subject, and the need to critically assess one's own motives and feelings, all struck at one of our discipline's most basic tenets and the fundamental methodology that set us apart and made us special and proud. (See Susan Trencher's [2000] trenchant exploration and Roy D'Andrade's [1995] critique of the "moral models.")

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Anthropology was struck a major blow in 1978 that has haunted all we have done in the years since Edward Said published *Orientalism*. Although the author's target was not anthropologists (at first) but the linguists, historians, art historians, novelists, and travelers who wrote about the Muslim "Orient," what he claimed in the introduction is that "Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it; in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (1978: 3). Said employed Michel Foucault's notion of "discourse," of course, claiming that everything that is said constitutes an exercise of power in which someone wins and someone loses. Just about any idea or interaction or utterance can be considered a discourse. Said imagined a reified and essentialized discourse called "Orientalism" in which any "Westerner" [*sic*!] speaking of anyone "non-Western" is ipso facto, willy-nilly, guilty of an act of domination.[30] Said had no problem selling this idea and many authors in various fields have taken it to heart. In addition to causing anxiety in students it is quite useful for attacking others. No amount of critical writing by scholars who know the subjects Said wrote about much better than he has had any effect on the life of this discourse. Perhaps this is why Biolsi and Zimmerman believe they can say with such certainty "that anthropology originates in the unique moral dilemmas and political struggles of the West, not in 'man's will to knowledge'" (1997: 14). Remarkably, in the decades since all right-thinking anthropologists and intellectuals swore to eschew the evil of essentializing, certainly that of reifying, those who speak of "Orientalism" and "the West" seem unconcerned that these are essentialized reifications.[31]

Johannes Fabian's *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Other* (1983), frequently appears in bibliographies, as if the author had discovered the key to the major fault in anthropology. His thesis, derived from Foucault and Said, begins with the words "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER" all in caps, after which he asserts that anthropology has a "claim to power" that belongs to its "essence." He continues his imaginative essentialized construction: "It is by diagnosing anthropology's temporal discourse that one rediscovers the obvious, namely that there is no knowledge of the Other which is not also a temporal, historical, a political act" (ibid.: 1). It is telling that, like so much "critique," Fabian's bibliography is rich with references to Fabian, Foucault, Hegel, and other works on the history of science, philosophy,

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and critique of anthropology (ibid.: xii–xiii) but notable for the lack of references to actual ethnographies. In his critique, Frederico Delgado Rosa (2018: 14–15) wrote:

> In his preface to the 2002 reprint edition of *Time and the Other*, Fabian "confess[es] that [he] never felt secure about this attempt to take on an entire discipline" and that he had written it "more with [his] guts than with [his] brain" . . . . But his acknowledgement of its "shortcomings" has not prevented his admirers from taking it as an authoritative overview of the history of anthropology. As other critiques of anthropology, his creates a chasm between the present and the past of the discipline.

Despite Fabian's dark and complex philosophical contortions, the thesis makes no sense, as inspection of actual ethnographies and simple reason would show. Our claim to fame, our proudest boast, is that we live right there with the people. By what magic can we claim that we were in different eras when we show photographs of us smiling among "our people"? A. L. Kroeber is one of the very few older American anthropologists Fabian cites; from Kroeber's 690 or so publications he has chosen only one theoretical work for interpretation. From 1899 until his death in 1960 Kroeber collected and published an enormous amount of ethnography including recordings of music, language, and stories (see Chapter 3). His *Yurok Myths* (1978) demonstrates a striking degree of personal involvement and knowledge of individuals whose space he shared through the decades (see Rosa 2014: 12–13).

Soon after *Orientalism*, Fabian, and the reflexive moments, there came the "crisis of representation" and the literary turn, heavily influenced by trends in literary and social theory and other aspects of postmodernism, and inevitably Foucault. As Marcus and Fischer make clear at the outset, this was the time of "reassessment of dominant ideas across the human sciences" and "challenges to establishment positivism," rejection of metanarratives and the "authority of 'grand theory'"; there was heightened awareness of "indeterminacies in human life" (1986: 7–8). Taking Clifford Geertz at his word that the genres are blurred, encouraging "fluid borrowing of ideas" across the disciplines, they label this new era "'postparadigm'—postmodernism, poststructuralism, post-Marxism, for example" (ibid.: 8). (It was already postcolonial.) Many younger anthropologists apparently have the sense that anthropology's history begins with Marcus and Fischer (1986), Clifford and Marcus (1986), and just plain Clifford (1988). Citations to earlier literature are rare. Instead of going to the original works, more recent generations prefer to have their view of olden days filtered through the clever textual analyses of somewhat earlier

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anthropological critiques by James Clifford, Paul Rabinow, as well as literary people like Mary Louise Pratt (in Clifford and Marcus 1986), Marianna Torgovnick (1990), and Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989).[32 33]

Writing about anthropologists and their writing became a most prestigious element in the field and it did not come out well for anthropologists. The spirit of Nietzsche and Foucault reigned, and it was enough for a literary theorist or a literarily disposed anthropologist to do a textual analysis of, for example, Malinowski (see Torgovnick 1990 and Minh-ha 1989). The Polish-English "Great Master" (as Minh-ha sardonically honors him) was a particular favorite after the revelations in his intimate, posthumously published *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*. (His sensitive *The Sexual Life of Savages* was also too good a target to miss.)[34] These works are rich in references to Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, and feminist and literary theory, and lacking in ones to actual anthropologists and their work and works. Just check the bibliographies and the indexes. It is sufficient for their purposes for a literary analyst to take on Malinowski (not an American anthropologist, of course) or Evans-Pritchard (ditto) and perhaps a quotation from Clifford Geertz.[35] But even this mass of textual fetishism—the reading of a few passages of selected texts by a few favorite targets as though their literary magic could reveal secrets about the field of anthropology—could not allay the fears of one literary person and native woman. In a long footnote Trinh T. Minh-ha asks: "But again, as cultural writing itself, can a critique of ethnographic writing be done without reflecting on its own writing? Without, through its practice of language, 'unsettling the identity of meaning, and speaking/writing subject'?" (1989: 157).

The sociologist Bernard McGrane published a less celebrated book, *Beyond Anthropology* (1989), in which he declared:

> Anthropology's participant observer, the field ethnologist, appears on a concrete level to be engaged in intercourse with the 'natives', with the non-European Other. Analytically, this intercourse or dialogue is a fantasy, a mask, covering over and hiding his analytic monologue or masturbation.
>
> . . . [A]nthropology has been the modern West's monologue about 'alien cultures'. It never learned from them, rather it studied them; in fact studying them, making sense out of them, making a 'science' about them, has been the modern method of not listening, of avoiding listening, to them. The Other's empirical presence as the field and subject matter of anthropological discourse is grounded upon his theoretical absence as interlocutor, as dialogic colleague, as audience. In order for modern anthropology to sustain itself, its monologue about alien cultures, those cultures must be kept in analytic silence. (1989: 125, 127–28)

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And speaking of silence, McGrane does not cite a single work of ethnography in his book. Not one! At least we went to tropical forests, deserts, islands, mountains, and favelas to speak with the peoples we studied; McGrane could not even be bothered to go to the Columbia library. His oxymoronic thesis exhibits his ignorance of what we actually do, have done, and the fact that as early as the 1880s Franz Boas advocated collecting the words of 'natives' themselves, and taking them seriously. Which we did.

Postcolonialism, of course, could not help but add more contempt for anthropology, even if there hasn't been convincing evidence of genuine harm caused by anthropologists. The literature of postcolonialism is huge, vast, but demonstration of anthropologists' complicity is assumed rather than confirmed. Early and rare exceptions are the often-republished articles in the collections edited by Pels and Salemink (e.g., 1999) who strove mightily to claim that the sins of *pre*-anthropologists were the mark of Cain for the later professionals. The editors' pretext is that the writings of merchants, travelers, slave traders, and colonial police were the pre-text for modern anthropologists. The editors do not reveal that twentieth-century American anthropologists regularly worked to overturn damage their predecessors did.

Nicholas Dirks, writing about a nineteenth-century British colonial administrator, claims that anthropology and anthropologists can "never totally rupture the colonial genealogy of our enterprise" (1999: 159) because "It is through reading the texts that constitute the pretexts of fieldwork that we learn how the conditions of anthropological knowledge really were constituted historically; our exploration of the quotidian features of this history takes us to the heart of darkness, the *crime* at the beginning of anthropology, the *horror* that undermines but also undergirds the heterological task of reading culture" (ibid.: 177–78). Perhaps this is where the Princeton professor cited above learned about the "bloody" past of anthropology, but the connection between nineteenth-century British administration in India and the field that Boas and his students established in the United States some decades later is not clear. Those who include the Pels and Salemink collections in their bibliographies don't seem troubled by this problem, however (see Lewis 2014: 107–21).

The current discourses of anthropology have been supported by the notion that, as Melford Spiro put it, "for postmodernists, science—to borrow an expression from Haraway [1986]—is politics by other means" (1996: 772).

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> If now science is [seen as] ideologically motivated storytelling whose function is domination, then what makes one scientific story better than another is not, so postmodernists contend, that one is true and the other false but that one is good and the other bad, the latter qualities being taken here not as cognitive but as moral and political predicates. Hence, given their moral and political commitments, a scientific story is 'good' insofar as it 'empowers' subjugated groups (ethnic and racial minorities, women, third-world peoples) and 'bad' insofar as it perpetuates their subjugation." (Ibid.: 772–73)[36]

My concern here is not with the state of the field in general—only with the way older anthropology is treated in contemporary discussions. (This is the major point of Chapter 1.) The accretion of a half century of every sort of negative claim has created a discourse that is not only inaccurate and unjust but also results in studied ignorance of the knowledge and understandings of the past. There is a general intellectual climate at the center of the profession, though certainly not shared by all members, overseen by the spirit of Foucault, that is not conducive to open-minded consideration of the history of the field. As Sahlins wrote of "afterological studies," they have a "'reified' 'essentialized' and 'totalized' character . . . Selectively dictating what can be perceived, imagined, and expressed, 'discourse' is the new superorganic—made even more compelling as the effect of a 'power' that is everywhere, in all quotidian institutions and relations" (2002: 62). The presidential speech by Akhil Gupta made clear that current discourse is not interested in listening to students of the history of the field who believe it was, on the whole, really pretty good (see Chapter 1).

Leading anthropology departments offer courses on social theory that do not include the pre-1970s stalwarts of anthropology and rarely give courses in the history of actual anthropology. How is a student supposed to know what their predecessors actually did? Perhaps that is why so many people believe that "anthropology has been structured upon a notion of absolute alterity" (Allen and Jobson 2016: 145) despite the existence of an oft-cited article that employs actual bibliography to demonstrate how incorrect that idea is (Lewis 1998). Here is one example, among so many possibilities, of a current course on a subject that we thought was ours by virtue of our firsthand knowledge derived from living among people all over the world:

> This seminar explores the emergence of notions of *tradition* and *modernity* and their reproduction in Eurocentric epistemologies and political formations. It uses work by such authors as Anderson, Butler, Chakrabarty, Clifford, Derrida, Foucault, Latour, Mignolo, Pateman, and Poovey to critically reread foundational works published between

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> the 17th century and the present—along with philosophical texts with which they are in dialogue—in terms of how they are imbricated within and help produce traditionalities and modernities. (My italics)

No anthropologists are featured in this course highlighting the ethnography-free thoughts of great thinkers.

In 2015 the organizers of the annual meetings of the AAA warned participants of the dangers lurking behind the thinking of Boas, Kroeber, Mead, Harris, and earlier generations that we celebrated above:

> Casting common sense in new light by making the familiar seem strange and the strange seem familiar is a venerable strategy used across anthropology's subfields. It can denaturalize taken-for-granted frames and expand the horizons of students and public alike. But useful as this process of estrangement and familiarization can be, *it can lapse into exoticism through "us/them" comparisons that veil historical and contemporary relations of power and powerlessness within and across societies, begging the question of the normative templates (of the "West," of "whiteness") that lurk behind.* (My emphasis)[37]

This intellectual paranoia, now built into the discipline, is paired with an assertion of the need for action. In the same year the Task Force on Israel and Palestine made this explicit:

> Some anthropologists envision anthropology as a discipline that should broadly confine itself to addressing academic research questions, where possible with an approach that transcends politics . . . Others maintain that the discipline has a responsibility to take an "activist" role in critiquing how the powerful maintain their power and marginalize the less fortunate. Some of these latter anthropologists still see anthropological knowledge as objective, while for others claims that anthropological research can be apolitical bespeak a romanticizing of scholarship that downplays its undeniably political coefficients. For them, since Michel Foucault and Edward Said (1978), the production of knowledge can never again be thought of as autonomous of its political foundation and implications, and *anthropology should deconstruct the inequities of everyday social life and anything less entails a complicity with power and oppression.* (Emphasis added)

To the extent that this is the prevailing attitude there isn't much chance for the most humanistic of the social sciences and the most scientific of the humanities to 'scape whipping.

Conclusion

The fundamental fact is that the whole catalogue of the posts, the literary turn, the resentment studies, and postcolonial incomprehen-

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sibility lacks information about what most American anthropologists actually did. Beginning with the relentless citation of the irrelevant "Gough 1968," the pretense of the pretexts of Pels and Salemink, through the ingenious imaginings of *Time and the Other* and the absence of even an essentialized anthropology in *Orientalism*, we anthropologists were always absent. A textual analysis of Malinowski's *Diary* or a misreading of his *Sexual Life of Savages* says nothing about the wealth of even Malinowski's contributions, and reveals absolutely nothing about the research, ideas, or impacts of thousands of American anthropologists. The most recent acrimony in the discourse regarding "salvage" is based on a few clichés about the implications of that vast library of languages, ethnographies, and ideas, arts, stories, and lives. The actual conditions of collection, the substance of the material, and the past uses and potential value of the work remain unconsidered. The results and the uses for both their descendants and for humanity at large are denied. (See Chapter 11 on "salvage.") The actual demonstration of the harms, now stridently proclaimed, has been absent, imagined, ignored, and underspecified.

Existing refutations are disregarded (see Lurie 1969; Taatgen 1998; Willis 1975, Lewis 2014, for example). The vast machinery of the anti-anthropology myth is not interested in hearing anything that might modify its discourse or even in engaging in serious debate. My vain wish is that there will be a few scholars, in a Kuhnian manner, not fully absorbed by the current paradigm who may be inclined to take a truly critical look at the critique of anthropology (Kuhn 1962). By "critical" I do not mean "judging severely and finding fault" but "exercising or involving careful judgment or judicious evaluation."[38]

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Notes

1. J. S. Allen and R. C. Jobson recently found a different ghost: "As the specter haunting anthropology, decolonial thought is consistently relegated to the margins of the discipline" (2016: 145). Fortunately, their article in *Current Anthropology* and Jobson's famous case for letting anthropology burn in the *American Anthropologist* of 2020 do not seem to have been marginalized. In fact, Jobson's paper was given a very special webinar sponsored by the Wenner-Gren Foundation and attended electronically by a great many enthusiastic participants.
2. Trouillot's complex and erudite 1991 article is frequently misread or not read at all beyond the title and catchy phrase. As Richard G. Fox wrote in the introduction to the edited volume, "Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues that anthropology's construction of the Other was not, in fact, anthropology's own construction . . . . To castigate anthropology for its flawed construction of others, as the postmodern critique does, is fundamentally to misunderstand the agency and power directing our discipline; it is a curious instance of the victims blaming themselves" (Fox 1991: 10).
3. These days George Orwell is often invoked with respect to current politics: "'Who controls the past,' ran the party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past'" (1949: 32). Without impugning the motives of those who currently control anthropology's institutional present, they have been so influenced by the social and intellectual tumult of the last half century that the only past they know is a jumble of images and emotions that control beliefs about the past.
4. The presidential address by Akhil Gupta and Jessie Stoolman (2022) contains almost three hundred references, cascading out in bunches, giving the outward appearance of evidence of those wrongs. A closer look at the citations, however, demonstrates how barren many of them are of connection to the actual practice of anthropologists and demonstrations of harm (see Chapter 1).
5. A recent review essay by a historian ("Africa, the Center of History") honors W. E. B. Du Bois because "He first sought to show that Africa did indeed have a history" (Getachew 2023). But as Du Bois himself said, he had no idea of this history until Franz Boas told him about it in 1906! (See Du Bois 1939: 122.) The author notes that Du Bois was working on an *Encyclopedia Africana* until he died, but we could note that Boas had encouraged Du Bois and tried to get funding for the project.
6. Compare A. L. Kroeber on "ethnocentricity as one of the great perverters of truth" and the importance of anthropology as a corrective in Chapter 3.
7. Franz Boas wrote to John Dewey, "I object to the teaching of slogans intended to befog the mind" (Franz Boas Papers: 11/6/1939).
8. Mark Anderson (2019) and Lee Baker (2020) have lately made a *cause célèbre* out of an idea by Boas in a 1911 article that was approved, praised, solicited, and reprinted by W. E. B. Du Bois. Baker calls Boas's approach

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"racist anti-racism," applying the superior standards of the 2020s in order to judge Boas, and perhaps by implication, Du Bois, for their understandings in 1911. (See Anderson, Baker; also reviews of Anderson by Glazier 2020, Appiah 2020.)

9. As of 1950 most of the articles in the *American Anthropologist* by cultural anthropologists were still overwhelmingly about American Indians. See Chapter 3.
10. For a more extensive and detailed view of that period see Chapter 2, "Anthropology Then and Now" in Lewis (2014: 54–61). As a personal note, I had two courses with Kroeber, knew Radin, heard Lowie speak, shared an office with Herskovits, and frequently saw and heard Mead.
11. Analytical cultural relativism should not be confused with ethical or moral relativism, a position that would mean that whatever is done in other cultures is acceptable. This is a frequent misunderstanding both within and outside the field (Alan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* [1987] is a notorious case of the latter), but even those most closely associated with a more radical form of relativism like Ruth Benedict and Melville Herskovits were known for their political stands, especially against racism (see, e.g., Benedict 1940).
12. Although this was published in 1975, given the time lag in publication and the proximity to 1968 it is fair to assume that most of these responses are from anthropologists who were already professionals or were in the pipeline by the time of the revolutions.
13. These individuals all did far more, of course, but I am citing their earliest work and only a few examples of later research. To learn much more about the work and ideas of anthropologists of the 1940s–60s one can obviously read journals or books, but the programs of the AAA meetings and the lists of dissertation topics in the *Guide to Graduate Departments of Anthropology for the Year 1965–66* are also excellent sources.
14. Manners's best-known colleagues in this enterprise (The People of Puerto Rico Project) were Eric Wolf and Sidney Mintz, two anthropologists whose later works generally found grace in the eyes of the critics. Wolf's *Europe and the People without History* is part of the critical canon and his active participation in the rebellions of the late 1960s and 1970s is much appreciated. Mintz's books *Worker in the Cane* and *Sweetness and Power* are much cited and admired. Mintz was quite unhappy about the postmodern deconstruction of his field.
15. Wagley has come under fire for his approach to race relations and attitudes in Brazil, of course. He was too strongly influenced by a leading Brazilian intellectual, Gilberto Freyre (Anderson 2019).
16. Naturally Arensberg's work of the 1930s was given a postcolonial critique—though not in detail—but sociologist Anne Byrne and others of the National University of Ireland, Galway, have made clear just how valuable and valued Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball's work has been to those who still live there (Byrne and O'Mahoney 2013; Byrne, Edmondson, and Varley 2001).

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17. Predictably, Klass was struck a carping blow for his Trinidad study, but perhaps the most telling complaint in the postcolonial world was from Trinidad's dynamic scholarly Black prime minister, Eric Williams. Williams didn't want to accept Mort's demonstration that the descendants of East Indian laborers maintained an identity separate from Black Trinidadians. Who speaks for the marginalized?
18. I hesitate to foreground the original title of the book, but just like Boas's *The Central Eskimo*, *A Galla Monarchy: Jimma Abba Jifar, Ethiopia, 1830–1932* employs an ethnonym that is no longer deemed acceptable. Unfortunately, at the times Boas and I wrote those were the only names that were available to us. In fact, the term "Oromo" would not have been acceptable at that time to the Muslim people of Jimma because they considered that it referred to the time of ignorance, *jahiliyyah*, before they accepted Islam. Today, Oromo prefer to cite the book by the title of the later edition: *Jimma Abba Jifar, An Oromo Monarchy* (Lewis 2001).
19. During the Great Depression Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" employed millions of workers through this program. WPA first stood for Works Progress Administration, but it was later called the Work Projects Administration.
20. Cf. Sahlins (1966). There is serious literature attacking Julian Steward and some of his followers for putative damage to the interests of Canadian First Nations. Apparently Canadian lawyers and judges cited those anthropologists (see, e.g., Pinkoski 2008).
21. While the literal translation of the German is "storm and stress," the expression appropriately refers to a literary movement of late eighteenth-century Germany that fought against Enlightenment rationalism.
22. See Caute (1988) for a massive account of the events of the year 1968.
23. I was on the committee to institute Wisconsin's Afro-American Studies program and presented a plan for it at the general faculty meeting.
24. Aside from Nietzschean intellectuals there were influential Marxists, Maoists, and Trotskyists (Louis Althusser held sway as Jean-Paul Sartre was fading), and a group that Bernard Brown calls "anarcho-surrealists" whose doctrine was "unyielding resistance to modernization in all of its aspects" (1974: 209).
25. For one of many possible pieces dealing with debates in critical anthropology between Marxist ("political economy") and postmodern approaches see Ulin (1991).
26. He was also the son of two anthropologists, Marie and Felix Keesing.
27. In a remarkably naïve statement Gough writes, "I noted that because of anti-communism in the Western imperialist countries, hardly any Western anthropologists had done field work in socialist societies" (1993: 281). Younger readers may not be aware that "socialist societies," meaning those under the control of the dictatorships of the Soviet Union including all the Eastern European countries as well as Cuba, China, Albania, etc., would not normally permit "Westerners" into their countries to do research. If they did, they would be closely monitored and have

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"minders" controlling whom they could talk to and what they could see. Nor were their own citizens permitted to write anything that was not approved by officialdom. Some foreigners were so blinded by ideology that they were permitted access in order to write in praise of those regimes. Gough notes in her 1993 revisit of her paper of 1968 that she had "tended to neglect" the imperialism of the Soviet Union and China "because I am a Marxist and was somewhat biased in my outlook" (1993: 280). I am not aware that her admirers have taken note.

28. The effect of Deloria's breezy satire, which appeared originally in *Playboy*, has been devastating to relations between anthropologists and American Indians and, as Peter Whiteley reported, to the anthropological study of native America (1997: 190–93). Today very few non-natives would dare take on a subject that is the province of increasing numbers of Indigenous anthropologists whose concerns and interests are generally different from those of earlier scholars.
29. Diane K. Lewis's article in *Current Anthropology* is often included in References Cited in the canon. Sadly, those listing it never mention the reservations expressed by others in the "CA comments" that accompany it. The same thing is true of the responses to Gough's 1968 piece in that journal. There are never references to the critical comments by scholars who contributed far more serious work with peoples in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, like Ralph Beals (1968), David Brokensha (1973), and Edward Bruner (1973).
30. The idea of critiquing everything that exists is not original. Marx had already written that "our task is ruthless criticism of everything that exists, ruthless in the sense that the criticism will not shrink either from its own conclusions or from conflict with the powers that be." (This quotation is printed after Gough [1968a: 27] in the British Marxist journal *Monthly Review*.)
31. Marcus and Fischer offer succinct criticism (1986: 1–2); for extended knowledgeable critiques of Said's *Orientalism* see Robert Irwin (2006), Daniel Varisco (2007), and Emmanuel Sivan (1985), among many others.
32. The influential articles about anthropology by Trouillot (1991) and Jobson (2020), for example, are almost entirely lacking reference to works by anthropologists earlier than Clifford and Marcus (1986). Laura Nader (1997: 133) pointed out that this was even true of Marcus and Fischer. "Out of 225 references in their book only nine were of pre-1960 vintage."
33. For recent considerations of the complexities of "representation" see, e.g., Dureau (2014) and the essays by numerous authors in Wilson et al. (2013).
34. But nothing is safe from critique in the world of "cultural studies" so Marianna Torgovnick's highly praised book was ravaged by Marjorie Perloff (1998) for the former's reading of Michel Leiris's character through his texts, among other things.

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35. Melford Spiro gives an example of a typical piece: "Consider . . . [Renato] Rosaldo's critique of *The Nuer* which, rather than addressing Evans-Pritchard's methods or the accuracy of his findings—what one would normally expect of a critique of an ethnographic monograph—addresses only Evans-Pritchard's allegedly 'close links to contexts of domination' and his putative attempt 'to deny the connections between power and knowledge . . . and to bracket the purity of [the] data . . . from the contaminating contexts through which they are extracted'" (Spiro 1996: 772).
36. This course description at the University of Chicago is a good example of the totalizing, essentializing, reifying nature of the discourse.

    Feminist perspectives on science come from anthropology, sociology, history, and philosophy. What they have in common is a determination to uproot the deepest and least visible forms of oppression in our society: those pertaining to facts and methods we unquestioningly take to be true, known, and valid. *We will first acquaint ourselves with the value-free ideal of science as an objective, rational process of discovery, and the ways this ideal has been wielded as an instrument of domination.* (Emphasis added)
37. These days Horace Miner's little "Nacirema" piece (1956) is commonly employed to "denaturalize the taken for granted." (It was mentioned in the Gupta/Stoolman presidential address in a way that indicated that they didn't understand its purpose.) But a long-forgotten little essay that we used to recommend, Ralph Linton's "One Hundred Per-Cent American," brought home the lesson of hybridity (*avant la lettre*) long before the postmodern discoveries. But with more humor (Linton 1937).
38. *Merriam-Webster*, "critical (adjective)," https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/critical (retrieved 30 April 2024). As Regna Darnell recently put it, "We must consider what 'critical' means in this context, not criticize but to assess" (2023: 2).

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