

Speaking Notes Version # 4, Iteration 3

[15-08-31, Further Content Restructuring for Progressive Simplification, Clarity and, Continuity of Thought, Logic Flow, and Sequencing. In this iteration I intend to finalize major content and structural detail, moving expediently towards a 15 Minute Sept 13 Presentation Version # 5]

**Living in History as a 21st Century, Post-Industrial, Western People,
Comments to the Doane Family Association of America Inc., Ontario Chapter,
Annual Meeting Sept 13, 2015¹**

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¹ An invited paper requested June 1, 2015 by Gary Gilbert, Secretary, Doane Family Association of America Inc., Ontario Chapter, for presentation to the Chapter's Annual meeting Sept 13, 2015,

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Introductory Remarks

Good afternoon,

What Gary didn't understand when he invited me to speak after lunch today is how problematic such an event is likely to be. For this is the point in my day [after a nice lunch] that I usually nod off for 20 minutes or so. So you could be in real trouble and so could I

The fact is, however, as I explained to Gary, that I take the work of special interest groups like yours very seriously. For what gets done by way of community cultural development in this country depends on groups like yours and the ones I have worked with over much of a lifetime.

For that reason my remarks are of a serious nature, much more than those of an after lunch entertainment speaker.

So hopefully we will both stay awake

How I Came to be Here:

But first, my thanks Gary for the opportunity to talk to your Annual meeting.

Gary and I can claim to among the relatively few true "Aurorans" still around. Both of us were born and raised in Aurora, although several years apart – he is clearly half my age. Yet, not surprisingly, what we share in common is a sense of community, with a shared history, heritage, and community culture.

His invitation set my mind spinning, thinking about what I might say, if I were to accept his invitation. Just what would be the information of most worth that I might offer, drawing on my lifelong interest and experience working variously in the fields of community cultural development and material culture?

Two thoughts came to mind, first our shared interest and commitment to the work of special interest groups [much like the Doane Family Association], and second our shared fascination with the ideas of history, heritage and the culture of a people.

What I am Going to Talk About for the Next 15 Minutes - Mapping the Territory

Some introductory remarks are in order to put what I have to say in working context for you. Otherwise you are likely to go away saying "What was that guy talking about anyway"

I want to start with is a map of the territory we are going to cover together in the next 15 minutes or so – just so we both don't get lost and start wandering aimlessly around

First, I want to talk about volunteer, special interest groups much like the Doane Family Association, the significance of the work they do, and their special contribution to the enrichment of our culture as Canadians [Section 1]

We are then going to get into "the heavy lifting" [Section2], including:

- Changing Views of History and the Role and Contribution History in the 21st Century
- The Contribution of Scientific thought and what we will call the “the Post Industrial Future Hypothesis”, and something of the
- Implications for Special Interest Groups in the History and Heritage Business

Then, as time allows, we will look in more detail at some twenty-first century views of the history, heritage, and culture of a people [Section 3]. Including:

- The Nature of History and Historic Knowledge and their Contribution to Human Understanding of Self and Community
- History and Its Popular Appeal as myth Making
- The Notion of “Useful History”, Its Uses and Abuses
- The Role and Contribution of Cultural Heritage
- Culture and Cultures

I will conclude with some possible implications for special interest groups like yours contributing to the development of Canada’s Culture Sector

My Disclaimer:

A word of clarification of my interests in all this; to be clear I do not speak as an historian, so much as a consumer of history [student of history] relatively little of which I ever retain in mind. What I do tend to retain, following my training in the applied and social sciences and engineering, is patterns and trends. The latter is the foundation on which my work in futures studies depends²

When I started to prepare my comments for to-day I saw them as a kind of fire-side chat, rather than course 101 in community cultural development. I must be careful not to cross that line.

Make a note of questions the comments raise for you and I will see if I can shed some light on them as part of our wind-up

² My attachment to the field

Section 1

In Praise of Special Interest Groups and their Contribution to Canada's Social and Cultural Development

So let's start with the idea of a "special interest group" or "SIG". Did anyone ever call the Doane Family Assoc. a SIG before – because that's what your branding [see letter head] suggests to me? You are "Organized to create interest in the history and welfare of the descendants of Deacon John Doane, who came to Plymouth in 1629".

You are in fact, part of an honored fraternity in the fields of social and cultural development. It's through work of groups much like yours that the history, heritage and culture of a people are discovered. And we will come back to explore in detail those key ideas of "history", "heritage" and the "culture" of a people. For they constitute the core of what I have to say this afternoon

The idea of a SIG is a useful one drawing attention to areas of potential private and public concern. SIGS can be seen as a community within a larger community where individual agree to work together, to explore common purposes in advancing specific areas of knowledge and human understanding³ Their work typically centers variously around advocacy and activism.

Paradoxically while central to the enrichment of personal and community life, dedicated special interest volunteer groups such as yours remain largely underappreciated, underfunded, as well as under-staffed. They are, all too often, the subject of popular jest [Really]. That is certainly my life experience working with the Aurora Historical Society for over 50 years.

Yet not-with-standing such groups attract the dedication, time, money, and life commitment of many of us, for reasons we often find difficult to talk about. Yet such organizations, wherever they are to be found, are the backbone of much of what gets done in Canada's Cultural Sector.

We should make no mistake, for much of what gets done by way of the generation, conservation, documentation and dissemination of historic/cultural knowledge is done by groups much like yours.

Gary's invitation gave me cause to muse over what I had learned volunteering, as well as working professionally contributing to the development of Canada's substantially underdeveloped cultural sector.

Special Interest Groups, Their Sense of Purpose and Branding in Changing Times

Those of us here in this room recognize that special interest, not-for-profit, advocacy groups, driven by dedicated individuals [much like yourselves] may well be a dying breed – to be replaced by some new form of social media. Facing a possible uncertain future. We need to be

³ See Google July 27, 2015

increasingly conscious of why we exist, re-examining the sense of purpose and relevance in a vastly changing world in which we must sustain ourselves or close up shop.

What seem to be required of those of us supporting SIG's is a larger sense of purposes, clarity in the objects to be achieved, the products and services to be delivered to our community of interest, defined in the context of our changing times – and above all a sense of purpose that is believable to the new generation of 21st century off-spring – the so called Millennial generation⁴.

All of which seems critical to branding our organization in a manner which attracts ongoing support, assuring sustainability – to whatever extent sustainability is valued as a preferred future [Or maybe that is all too much, planning for the future, we are content with responding to our sense of present need – we will let the future take care of itself].

One observer suggests that organizations, like individuals, gain their sense of meaning and purpose from at least three sources, their sense of involvement in: (1) daily life, (2) the long term flourishing of self and community, and (3) in a still longer term, in a universal or “cosmic story” to which they aspire to contribute. All three of these realities may well be in minds simultaneously, although at different levels of awareness.⁵

As a people, Canadians generally find a good deal of purpose and satisfaction in their many daily activities, as well as in musing over the larger context of family, and community to which they see themselves contributing. But there is still a larger level of reality, the “greater purposes”, and the

⁴ McLean's ref

⁵ Allen Tough, Ontario Studies Of Education, University Of Toronto, deals with this matter in “ Critical Questions About The Future”, University Press of America, 1991.

The ideas in this Section derive from a number of sources. A principal one is Ruben Nelson, one of Canada's distinguished futures thinkers, working throughout the latter part of the century. His interests are in developing insightful and positive images of the future and determining the conditions for their realisation.

See, for example, “What Dose The Future Require Of Us, An Introduction To The Post Industrial Futures Hypothesis”, Post Industrial Futures Project, Ruben F. W. Nelson, Square One Management, Ottawa, February 1989, (unpublished paper).

A second lies in the work of Robert Theobald, whose insights into the wrong headed nature of much of the current dogma of economic growth, and the new conditions for community integrity, learning and development are finding wide spread acceptance in societies now ready and eager to explore new ways of thinking and acting

See, for example, “Reworking Success: New Communities At The Millennium”, Text originally prepared for the CBC Massey Lecture Series, New Publishers, Gabriola Island BC, 1997

History and the Public Interest”, Sharon Baraian, Material History Review, National Museum Of Science And Technology, Ottawa, Vol. 45, Spring 1997, pp.51-55.

The line of thinking reflected here is based on original text prepared by Lealie Oliver for ther Aurora historical Society and appearing in their publication “Building Capacity, Anticipating and Preparing for the Futurer of the Aurora and district Historical Society, 1996.

“grand projects” to which people like to believe they simultaneously contribute – beyond, self, family, and community.

It is, of course, this last sense of reality, the “cosmic and universal” vision, which gives organizations their true sense of purpose needed to carry on over the years - in spite of changing situations and failures, as well as the successes to feel good about. Community organizations typically like to think they are about “good things” and in pursuit of “laudable ends”. They want to see themselves strongly aligned with the future. Which means they want to see themselves aligned with good ideas, movements, causes, and forces which contribute positively to the human state.

It is said that every viable society and culture, as well as every individual, organization and institution must ultimately have a universal vision or image of the future to work from. That vision must be one that helps to identify and manage the key issues for serious attention, define progress, measure success and sustain hope for itself, that is one which is grounded in a reality for its times, one that is both relevant and believable by all its members and adherents, as well as the greater community which it hopes to serve in ways seen as relevant.

In addition, to be of practical value, that vision statement or Branding of the an interest group must help to reveal the directions in which the organization seeks to move over prolonged periods of time, as well as to instill in its members, those whom it wishes to lead and nourish, a sense of confidence, because, among other things, the image aligns with their values and beliefs, their individual sense of need, and the significant challenges presented by the future. ⁶

What might the purposes of the Doane Family Association look like expressed in terms of daily activities, in the larger contexts of family, and community, or in more cosmic terms of the larger human purposes to be served?

⁶ Source material attributed to Ruben Nelson

Section 2

Changing Views of History Coming to Understand the Changing Role and Contribution History in the 21st Century

All that having been said about the work of special interests groups variously in the history, heritage, and culture business, what I really want to get to is an exploration of contemporary concepts of history, heritage, and culture. For these are the very foundation stones on which a SIG like your come to rest.

With that as working context I want to focus our attention in 4 areas which have been game changers for me.:

- 1. Our Changing Views of History, What Science Tells**
- 2. The Contribution of Science and the Post Industrial Future Hypothesis**
- 3. Post-Industrial Views of History**
- 4. Implications for Special Interest Groups in the History and Heritage Business**

All of which is likely more than you ever wanted to know about the business interests and responsibilities of SIG, such as the Doane Family Association ...

As time allows, we will then look in more detail at our dominant 21st century views of history, heritage and culture, and draw some conclusions of the “so what” variety.

All of which might sound quite overwhelming, but have a listen and we will see where we end up in 15 minutes.

2.1: Our Changing Views of History, Heritage and Culture - What Science Tells

By way of preamble, a word about “good science”, and its contribution to all of this

In our current popular culture driven by the popular and social media, the sound bite and video clip reign supreme. It’s often difficult to come to a profound understanding of the world around us. The dominant popular media, seemingly a mile wide and an inch deep, leaves us with the impression that if you can’t say it in 4 sentences or less you likely don’t understand it and it’s likely not worth talking about any way. All of which contributes to the immense anti-intellectualism of our times.

Yet, paradoxically our contemporary post-industrial information society demands, as never before, on increasingly deep understandings of the complex world around us –those understandings that come with disciplined, observation and thought.

While what we are talking about here [our understandings of the nature of history, heritage and the culture of a people] is by no means “rocket science”, it does depend on “goods science”. And

good science, in turn is built on careful observation, data collection, analysis, and on descriptive, explanatory, and predictive theory building, supported, validated, and replicated by mountains of empirical evidence. In fact much of science has to do with documenting the obvious, often enabling us to understand it for the first time. Often the findings of science force us to confront the obvious in new more profound ways.

So it is with such realities of “climate change”- for example. We could sense climate change was a real a decade ago, yet it took several years of scientific study, mountains of empirical evidence, along with much descriptive, explanatory and predictive theory building, and the the work of public advocates and activists like Al Gore’s to bring about a popular understanding of the reality of climate change.

We have become conditioned to think about the wonders of contemporary science in the physical, natural biological and medical sciences [examples], but much less so in the social and behavioral sciences. But here too the principles of scientific thought apply, when it comes to the study of such abstractions as history, heritage, and culture.

While no one has ever seen history, heritage, or culture, we have all seen in various forms the results and consequences of these notions in action. This gives rise to what is known in the social and behavioral sciences as “constitutive” and “operational” definition”. In which the idea is broken down into its observable “elements” and “operations”.

So, by observing, documenting and analyzing, we can build theories about the nature of history, heritage, and culture in terms of actions, results and consequences in use.⁷ We will come back to this process of definition and theory building in a moment and see some great examples.

2.2: The Contribution of Science and the Post Industrial Future Hypothesis:

But, we need to take a moment out to look at one particular piece of theory building and what it tells about the changing ways many Canadians have come to view history.

There are a myriad scholars who have produced viable, well documented theories of possible, probable, and preferred futures for Western society⁸. For our purposes here I am going make use of the work of Ruben Nelson, a distinguished Canadian, one of Canada’s foremost respected thinkers in the field of future study. I worked with Ruben, although briefly, back in the 1980’s.

Much of Nelson’s thinking is revealed in 10 working papers produced for his privately sponsored, turn of the century, 1998, “Post Industrial Future Project”. It was a unique study, well in advance of its times, sponsored by an impressive list of Canadian institutions and corporations⁹

⁷ See Fred N. Kerlinger, “Foundations of Behavioral Research”. Section 3, Constructs, variables and definitions, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966

⁸ See for example the voluminous work of the World Future Society

⁹ Sponsors included Environment Canada, Health and Welfare Canada and the Secretary of State, Ontario Ministries of Colleges and Universities, Education, Air Canada, and the United Church of Canada

Drawing on best practice in scientific thought, Nelson's study started with a specific hypothesis, his "Post Industrial Future Hypothesis". The objective of his research was to test the hypothesis, accepting it or rejecting it based on direct observation, data collection and analysis. To paraphrase Nelson:

The post-Industrial Future Hypothesis is the view that a new and fundamentally different understanding of reality – a post-industrial understanding – is emerging in the 20th century in much of the Western world; and that it yields a more sustainable, realistic way of viewing humanity and living on the planet^{10 11}.

His voluminous findings set out in the working papers are far reaching and attention getting. Here is an example which provides us with a starting point in rethinking our concept of history :

"To consciously shape our future, we must be able to choose wisely and act responsibly in the present. However, too many of our present personal and institutional concepts, processes and structures do not even encourage us, let alone enable us, to do so.

*Therefore, we need to commit ourselves to the task of inventing and developing new life-giving perceptions, relationships and structures which both embody and reflect wisdom and responsibility."*¹²

We can see from the vantage point of 2015, 25 years later, the predictive power of his 1998 theory derived from the study his "Post-Industrial Future Hypothesis". The way we have come to view much of our world has changed dramatically, in ways we could scarcely have imagined in the first half of the 20th century.

2.3: Post-Industrial Views of History:

Of special interest to us are the new life giving perceptions of history emerging from his research. He concludes:

"History and the tasks of living within history are now central. The central task of a people, and those who constitute it, is the developmental task of learning to embody an ever deeper maturity, not only as individuals, but as groups and whole societies.

The goal of history is for human beings to achieve that "sustainable, but dynamic, prosperity which is possible within a mature community of co-creating persons". 13. History, then, is understood as a condition within which it is not only possible that human persons and human communities can learn to live well, but it is probable that we will do

¹⁰ Based on Nelson's working paper No.1, What Does the Future Require of Us, An Introduction to the Post-Industrial Future Hypotheses, P. VIII

¹¹ A fully formulated hypothesis is provided by Nelson in his working paper No.1, What Does the Future Require of Us, An Introduction to the Post-Industrial Future Hypotheses, P. 23 as followsNelson WP #1,P 16

¹² Paper #10, Preface

*so to the degree that we are willing to pay attention to all of the signals available to us. Every aspect of reality, including historical existence, is understood in developmental terms”.*¹³

All a bit heavy, but certainly attention getting and worth musing over on a sleepless night.

Nelson goes on to conclude that history is revered or shunned for what it teaches. But it seems to teach different things to different peoples; and what it teaches seems to be changing.

Without making value judgements, he sees three essentially different concepts of history which we all carry around with us, and variously make use of as the situation requires, and we do it almost unconsciously. He makes reference to three groups which he refers to as “Societies”¹⁴:

- **Traditional Societies** established by traditional peoples were ever they are to be found around the Globe
- **Industrial Societies** which Canada is seen to have largely been throughout the 20th century, and
- **Post Industrial Societies**, which Canada is currently viewed as being part, of along with much of the Western world

He sees the contribution of historic knowledge as different for each group.

- For those in traditional societies Nelson sees that:

“History is just a place where one can learn the wisdom of timeless truth and learn to live by it. Accordingly, the golden age is always in the past, never in the future. The best a people can do in the present is to reject it and to return to the wisdom of the past.”

- By contrast, for those in an industrial society, the view of history is much more that of an account of human progress:

“...the ideal future... when it will be known and no more change needed ...is ahead in time, rather than behind..... History is the stage on which human learning or revolution, takes place.....”

- Finally, He sees that in our now rapidly evolving post-industrial society history is concerned less with matters of social progress than with an evolving human maturity:

“History and the task of living in history are now central...The central task of a people....is learning....an ever deeper maturityThe goal of history is for

¹³ [Paper #1, P.22]

¹⁴ Google definitions

human beings to achieve that sustainable, but dynamic, prosperity which is possible with in a mature community....”

Clearly these three societal outlooks [perspectives] tend to go-exist in all of us. It becomes a matter of dominance. For there is in all of us “traditional” along with “industrial” and “post-industrial” outlooks.

We talk, for example, of what we have learned from history about the “good old days” in one breath, and what history teaches about the “wonders of modern progress” in the next. Inevitably, however, in our current times, we come to talk about what history teaches about the need for a new more sustainable society, culture, and humanity.

2.4: Implications for Special Interest Groups in the History and Heritage Business

Our challenge, then, as a special interest, volunteer group is to decide the individual values and interests we are going to appeal to in vying for recognition and support. Will it be to a desire for:

- Comforting images of the past and of the golden age now gone,
- Informative images of human progress that has been accomplished, building on the shoulders of those that have gone before, or on
- Human insights into how to achieve a richer, fuller, more sustainable humanity and culture?

For me, Nelson firmly established that essential intellectual logic link between history and the future. It’s that quintessential link that gives meaning and a sense of purpose to the headline I chose for my comments today: **“Living in History as a 21st Century Wester People, Making Sense of Our Times”**.

Section 3

Twenty First Century Views of the History, Heritage, and the Culture of a People

So let's run with Nelson's conclusions, that for 21st century Canadians:

- History and the task of living in history are now central, that
- The central task of a people....is learning....an ever deeper maturity, that
- The goal of history is for human beings to achieve that sustainable, but dynamic, prosperity which is possible within a mature community

Let's look at the explanatory and predictive power of Nelson, theory building and some of the dominant ways in which Canadians have come to use history and historic knowledge, to think about their culture and their heritage.

Let's see something of the new knowledge, insights, and understandings that history provides, the learning experiences, the learning opportunities, and teachable moments it affords a post-industrial, information rich, learning society. That is, if we move beyond a dominant view of history as comforting images of the past

In so doing we will come to see, maybe for the first time, the true conceptual power of some of these all too often abstract concepts of history, heritage, and culture. Seeing them in terms of their observable and measurable constituent parts and operations, their potential value to special interest groups might well take on new meaning the business. We might well ask of our Organization: Just what business are we in anyway; What purposes do we serve and what might we be about; What are our deliverables to community; and How can we better brand ourselves to respond to new generation of "Millennial" Canadians¹⁵.

3.1 The Nature of History and Historic Knowledge, and their Contribution to Human Understanding of Self and Community¹⁶

As I look back from my present vantage point one of the first lessons I learned at school, possibly by grade 5 was that history was much like arithmetic - certainly of the same nature and kind, with many of the same essential and distinguishing attributes.

History was from 11:00 to 11:45 am on Wednesdays, arithmetic came earlier from 9:30 to 11:00. It would take me a while to understand the differences – that arithmetic was about what I did, while history was about who I was and hoped to be – and there was world of difference as I was about to discover.

Hearing my mother and father talk about our family history, as late 18th century immigrants, on both sides of our family, the homestead, and the hardships and challenges endured during those

¹⁵ Cite McLean's article

¹⁶ In these notes I reflect on the results of research work I first did for the Aurora Historical Society back in the late 1990's. It was published by the Society under the title, "Building Capacity, Anticipating and Preparing for the Future of the Aurora and District Historical Society", See Section 4.3

embryonic and early settlement years on the Whitchurch highlands, their dedication to hard work respect for god and man, there to commitment to family and neighbors, and to their Methodist faith, it gradually came to me that history indeed was about who I was, my fundamental values, attitudes, interests, and life's expectations for me - the very foundation stones on which I would build a life. I was indeed "living in history".

History, then, was not at all like arithmetic, but of a higher order, yielding higher order understanding of life's ways.

The literature is rich in its accounts of the many benefits to individual and community of knowledge of history and heritage and their contribution to cultural development and life's most valued learning.

A short list of purposes or benefits served might include:

- **As a means of satisfying a basic human need for a sense of identity, place and time;**
- **As a unifying symbol for community,**
- **For understanding social and cultural contexts and issues of the day;**
- **For planning for the future, based on past experience;**
- **For shaping particular values; developing mind sets; building and strengthening ideologies;**
- **For bringing out new ways of thinking;**
- **For arousing people to action in response to deeds of the past;**
- **For helping to reform society by reinterpreting the past;**
- **For contributing needed facts and insights for the resolution of the day-to-day challenges of life, and**
- **For helping to identify and preserve our cultural past as an inheritance to be preserved and past on.**

The list, as it stands, is sufficiently long to justify any number of "special interest groups" jumping into the history, heritage, and cultural development business, defining for themselves an appropriate mission statement, and developing constituencies, based on whatever specialized business niche they wish to serve. So what business niche are the Doane Family Association and Aurora historical in, based on the above list of possibilities; and what business would they like to be in - in any one, all, or none of the above?

For example, are we simply in the "history business", i.e., in the business of creating and disseminating historic knowledge of community or something more? Just what is the role and contribution of history, historians, and outward-looking, community, historical societies in the 21st century?

A fundamental issue facing all special interest groups working in the fields of culture, history, and heritage, is in branding themselves and gaining public interest and support, coming to a more precise understanding of what business they are in, sharpening their sense of purpose, defining their objectives and deliverables to community, as well as communicating their interests more effectively.

3.2: History and Its Popular Public Appeal as Myth Building¹⁷:

Paradoxically, it has been argued that, in fact, academic historians and researchers have traditionally shown very little interest in contribution of history to personal life enrichment, to community cultural development, or in fact to the practicalities of community cultural policy and planning.

If so, this leaves public historians, curators and heritage workers pretty much on their own, in fostering public awareness of the value and uses of history, and the effective utilization of historic knowledge in personal and community development matters.ⁱ

One theory of why public interest in history continues to grow, while professional historians are seemingly left out, is that the appeal of history is seen in its ability to build personal and public myths (e.g., nostalgic views of the past), as well as to generate the ideologies which a people sense a need for, in the present – all of which are beyond the interest the historian.

It has been noted, for example, that in “traditional societies” the public myths of history are largely “utopian” ones, and are meant to explain all. They explain the past as prelude to the present and forecast the future, as well as the means by which it might best be achieved. In turn, accompanying rituals are invented, well calculated to fulfil the promises of the future having been made - according to the particular ideologies and myths in hand.

According to this view, historic knowledge is offered as a useful way to explain the past satisfactorily, to dramatize it, and to identify the changes needed to achieve the particular preferred future being advocated.

The widespread interest in Canada’s early years of settlement, Victorian and Edwardian architecture, life-styles, and the artifacts associated with Canada’s centennial year (1967) is an extraordinarily dramatic example of the power of public myth building, the promotion of nostalgia

¹⁷ I draw here on positions variously elaborated in:

- “History and the Public Interest”, Sharon Baraian, *Material History Review*, National Museum Of Science And Technology, Ottawa, Vol. 45, Spring 1997, pp.51-55,
- “Culture As History: The Transformation of American Society In The Twentieth Century”, Warren Susman, Chapter 1, Pantheon Books, 1984.
- “What Does the Future Require of Us, An Introduction To The Post Industrial Futures Hypothesis”, Section III, Post Industrial Futures Project, Ruben F. W. Nelson, Square One Consulting, Ottawa, February 1989, (unpublished paper).

and the ways of the past. It was, in fact, interest in centennial celebrations both local and national, which lead to the founding of the Aurora Historical Society in 1963.

3.3 The Notion of “Useful History”, Its Uses and Abuses

The notion of living in history as a contemporary Western people is in many ways a no-brainer, a self-evident fact, which is not at all news worthy. Yet, to muse over what distinguishes much contemporary Western thought as it has emerged now over several centuries, is to see the sharp contrast with the outlook of other peoples, the “traditional cultures” we see around us.

The immense utility, and the crucial role played by history in our post-modern times has come to the attention of a number social scientists. For example coming out of the research by Colleague Paul Schafer is the following conclusion:

“Our own past is moving away from us at a frightening speed, and if we want to keep open the lines of communication which permit us to understand the greatest creations of mankind we must study and teach the history of culture more deeply and more intensely than was necessary a generation ago...If culture history did not exist, it would have been invented now”¹⁸.

That kind of evidence should be of particular interest to SIG’s such as the Doane Family Association in the history and genealogy business - giving them legitimacy and sound reasons for being and promoting their brand to the attention of any 21st century reasons people.

More recently is the work of Canadian writer William McMillan, popularized in a series in the *Globe and Mail*¹⁹. Among other things he demonstrates how the wisdom of the past continues to shape Canada in its unique approach to cultural accommodation, an essential and distinguishing attribute of the Canadian reality.

An essential role and contribution of historic knowledge rests in its inherent “Futurity” The Futurity of History, Looking Ahead, Anticipating, Preparing, and Planning for the Future is an application of increasing importance recognized by private and public sector agencies alike. Here the driving forces and trends [social, cultural and economic] shaping possibilities and outlooks the future are analyzed using advanced computer programming techniques. Similarly planned and intended futures are created and assessed as possible, probable and preferred²⁰

We also owe much too to Canadian writer Margaret Macmillan’s insights into the contemporary, popular uses history set out in her book “The Uses and Abuses of History”²¹ Among other things

¹⁸ “Culture Beacon of the Future”, P.83

¹⁹ *Globe and Mail*, July 3, 2015, “How Canada’s Eight Leaders of Special Vision Guided the Way”

²⁰ See WFS and cite a text

²¹ “The Uses and Abuses of History”, Margaret Macmillan, Viking Canada, Penguin Group, 2008

she talks to the Canada's current craze for history, our use of history as comfort, our preoccupation with the history of personal and national identity.

Some snips from her work will help make the case for the idea that 21st century Canadians, currently see themselves as living in history and how that reality plays out in popular experience. By way of introduction she reminds us that:

- We are all products of our individual histories, including our geographic place, our time, our social class, and family background [P. IX]
- We make use of our history constantly to help understand ourselves, and others as well [P.X]
- History does not lie safely in the past for us to look at when the mood takes us [P. X]
- It's not a pool of artifacts, so much as it's a pool of idea and thoughts that silently shapes our institutions, our ways of thought, our likes and dislikes [P. XI]
- It's what we call on for purposes of validation, for lessons well learned, and as solid time-tested advice for others

MacMillan goes on to warn of the skillful manipulation of history to mobilize and direct public opinion, and of the traps we can easily fall into when assessing the present and setting direction in light of historical events:

“Sometimes we abuse history, creating bad or false histories to justify treating others badly, seizing their land, for example, or killing them. There are also many lessons and much advice offered by history, and it is easy to pick and choose what you want. The past can be used for almost anything you want to do in the present. We abuse it when we create lies about the past or write histories that show only one perspective. We draw our lessons carefully or badly. That does not mean we should not look to history for understanding, support, and help; it does mean that we should do so with care.” [P. XI]

3.4 The Role and Contribution of Cultural Heritage

The Centrality of the heritage of a people and its potential contribution to the richness and meaning of everyday life is currently a commonly accepted fact, for many a common place.

It's a given which no longer needs to be defended. But that was certainly not the case a few short years ago when I first found myself involved in the heritage business. The current popular acceptance of the fact that to-day heritage matters is further reflection on the predictive power of Nelson's theory that Canada has emerged into a new kind of post-industrial society, where the expectations are for a new humanity and sustainability based on the lessons that history teaches – much more than on its golden years that may or may not have been. Here, once more:

“The central task of a people....is learning....an ever deeper maturity.....The goal of history is for human beings to achieve that sustainable, but dynamic, prosperity which is possible with in a mature community....”

The 1990 report of the definitive Ontario Heritage Review²² provides some further details, spelling out what the abstract notion of what cultural heritage means in observable measurable, terms. The report talks about heritage as:

“All that our society values and that survives as the living context - both natural and human - from which we derive sustenance, coherence, and meaning in our individual and collective lives.”

It points out that:

“Arguably, the biggest obstacle to reorienting our thinking is the term “heritage” itself. A glance through the telephone book is liable to yield a variety of usage - from “Heritage Antiques” to “Heritage Transmissions”. One dictionary defines “heritage” as a synonym for inheritance, legacy, tradition, birthright.”

And that:

“Ontario’s heritage is that part of the collective heritage of all humanity for which we have particular responsibility. This legacy has tangible elements - our life-giving natural resources, along with the physical records of our human achievements. It also has intangible components - the customs and traditions and the whole intellectual and spiritual inheritance of our diverse population.”

“This more comprehensive understanding runs directly counter to ideas of heritage as a static collection of old ideas and antiques. Like people everywhere we are coming to see our heritage as the dynamic and ever-changing context within which we live our lives. We add to it and subtract from it daily, continually interpreting and reinterpreting it in ways that deepen our understanding of ourselves and our world. It is all around us and within every one of us. “A fish is the last to discover water”; our heritage is the “water” in which we live.”

The report goes on to state that:

“A central element of this large vision is that of community, which we understand to be group of individuals bound together by common experience, whether established through family connection, historical experience, ethnic origin, occupational or religious affiliation, or regional or geographic grouping”.

What about Paul’s def used in ACC see CSSCC0902Q, P.2report a mission

3.5 Culture and Cultures:

²² Full citation OHR, Greg Baeker as ..., my work on the project, and subsequent collaborations with Dr. Baeker on a number of studies for ACP

The terms, history, heritage and the culture of a people are often used in popular parlance almost interchangeably, notwithstanding the fact that each has its own special meaning and makes its own special contribution to our understanding. We talk about our culture as our history, our history as our heritage, heritage as our history, and our heritage as our culture

Canada's current national reality, with a universe of 50 - 60 cultures and languages making up our national mosaic has greatly altered political and public dialogue when it comes to the use of the terms "culture" and "cultures", "history" and "heritage". The question which gets asked is Just whose history, heritage and culture are we talking about.

The recognition of individual and cultural rights and freedoms and reasonable accommodation, for example, are now central in political, public, and in popular discourse through or social media and elsewhere.

A recent reference in the Globe and Mail cited "culture" as the word of the year, possibly as much through its common use, as for its over use, incorrect usage, and abuse.

Yet, paradoxically the word [concept] remains strangely illusive and abstract, subject to multiple definitions. For example, its popular use by the performing and visual arts community, and by the entertainment industry [The so called "cultural industries"] has served to greatly confuse understanding of a matter so critical to understanding our times and the way ahead.

While the performing and visual arts serve as a vehicle for cultural interpretation, exploration, and communication, the idea of culture and cultures demands deeper understanding in the complex Post-Industrial society in which we find ourselves.

In fact we have a wealth of uniquely Canadian thought that provide us with a wealth of constitutive and operational definitions, descriptive, explanatory and predictive theories, all of which help us in the serious business of understanding these abstract and complex notions.²³ And coming to understand what culture and cultures are all about in our contemporary time is paramount for special interest groups in the history and heritage business in defining their areas of interest, branding and promoting themselves to their respective communities.

I am deeply indebted to D. Paul Schafer [with whom I have worked for a number of years] for his scholarly research and theory building, based on several decades of investigation²⁴ Paul's work is representative of good science through his dedication to careful observation, data collection, documentation, detailed analysis and descriptive, explanatory and predictive theory building.

Going back to the 1990s his evidence and theory building, much like the work of the Canadian futurist Rubin Nelson, predicted profound changes Canada's 21st century reality - much of which

²³ My personal understandings of the field of study have been greatly enriched working with Rubin Nelson, Paul Schafer and Greg Baeker over the years

²⁴ Writer and dir of World Culture Project List his books most recently

has come about. The insights provided by his work have been largely ignored by our Western world. Long before the emergence of the Islamic State Paul's work told the story:

“There is mounting evidence to suggest that culture will play a powerful role in the world of the future...Clearly much more will have to be known about culture in general and culture in particular if culture and cultures are to play a constructive rather than a destructive role in the world”²⁵

Schafer goes on to speak to the frustratingly abstract nature of “culture” as concept, and to the diverse ways in which the word seems to find application, often in odd, counterproductive ways difficult to rationalize and justify in our a complex and challenges 21st century world:

“Is culture the arts? Is it publishing, radio, television and film? Is it the legacy from the past or leisure-time activity? Is it shared values, symbols and beliefs, a state of mind, a way of life, or a means of interacting with the natural environment? Is it the organizational forms and structures of different species? Or is it all of these things? Little wonder that culture is the cause of so much confusion, controversy, suspicion and misunderstanding. It can be stretched in many directions and used to justify all sorts of diverse and often devious practices, and there is virtually no agreement among individuals and institutions throughout the world today on how culture should be conceived and defined”.

Here, as documented by Schafer, are few definitions and theories of culture and its contribution to human affairs to muse over, culture as:

- Community [P1];
- Anthropology [P.22];
- Sociology [values. P52];
- Context [P.51];
- Holism [P.47];
- Biology [race, ethnicity, gender P23]; and as
- Identity [P 55].

As a demonstration useful theory of “culture of community” Schafer cites the work of distinguished Canadian scholar and cultural bureaucrat Bernard Ostry²⁶:

“Culture, however, we define it, is central to everything we do and think. It is what we do and the reason why we do it, what we wish and why we imagine it, what we perceive and how we express it, how we live and in what manner we approach death.

²⁵ “Culture Beacon of the Future”, D Paul Schafer, 1998, Preface

²⁶ Cite cbc arts doc

It is our environment and the patterns of our adaptation to it. It is the world we have created and are still creating; it is the way we see that world and the motives that urge us to change it. It is the way we know ourselves and each other; it is our web of personal relationships, it is the images and abstractions that allow us to live together in communities and nations. It is the element in which we live”²⁷.

This theory is one with considerable descriptive power, as well as significant explanatory and predictive potential for special interest groups in the history and heritage business.

For example it might well focus and sharpen the research efforts of the Doane Family Association, as well as on their sense of purpose, and branding, their objectives, and their deliverable to the community of interest.

- What were the patterns of thought and action characteristic of the Doane family and what do they tell us of our unique heritage?
- Similarly, what were their characteristic patterns of thought, their images and wishes for the future, and what can we learn, as “useful history”
- How did they see their world and struggle to change it ?
- How did they, characteristically, see themselves and others and their role and contribution to their times?.....and so on

See also ACC mtl.0902

²⁷ “Culture Beacon of the Future”, P.1

Section 4

Some Conclusions and Implications for

So my time is up!

You have just had a crash 15 minute course in community cultural development 21st century style – which has more than likely left you reeling

I have made the case that Canadians, as a 21st century Western people have come to view their history in non-traditional ways, much more as a tool for informing their way to the future, than an account of the golden years that are now long gone.

We have used as a theme the notion suggested by Canadian futures Ruben Nelson “Living in history”

We have looked at contemporary ways [21st century, postindustrial ways] of thinking about our history, our heritage and our culture.

We have seen the surprising evolution in thought that has taken place almost unnoticed over the last 50 years or less certainly all within my adult life space.

The evolution reflected in thought and daily practice has had profound effects on public policy, our world view, and the way we respond to the world around us as individuals

Public policy is concerned with matters of cultural accommodation, equality of opportunity, equal access to services, for all, anti-discrimination in a country of unimaginable diversity certainly half a century ago. The idea of a Para Olympics or Pan Am Games would have been part of the 1950's but a very real of the 21st century experience.

Governments at all levels respect have respect for the diverse heritage of those within their jurisdiction. We protect the history and Heritage of our built heritage and tell the stories of its history and contribution to our sense of self and community.

All this has gone on largely unnoticed, few it seems have noticed, studied, and documented the big picture, the profound change in world view that has accompanied the seemingly subtle transition from Industrial to postindustrial times and our dominant ways of thinking.

We have seen the way one Canadian has tackled the job.....PIFH.....cite

We speculated on why this is at all important for SIG's in the history, heritage and culture business, in adapting to their changing times, re thinking their purposes, their branding and deliverable to community helping to ensure their relevance and sustainability

Cite mtl. from 2.4 P. 14

Many of us may feel that we have been caught up in a kind of a “time warp” still thinking in traditional ways about our history heritage and culture, while in fact our post-industrial world has moved on, bring with it new life enriching ways of thinking-----

Key talking points some with profound implications for the Sigs we come to voluntarily support with our private resources of timed resources:

1. The nature, role and contribution of Gigs to what gets done in Canada's cultural sector
2. Their clarity of purpose, always a work in progress seeking to brand themselves through clearly enunciated, statements of mission, mandate, products and services to their community of interest served
3. Coming to understand the concepts of history, heritage and the culture of a people in contemporary 21st century ways, expected of our times
4. Understanding the implications in terms of constantly evolving mandates, objectives and deliverables ensuring relevance to the needs, interests and expectations of an increasingly diverse, and demanding people.
5. Add specific point linked to the 4 principal talking pts.

Further Reading

Not-for-Profit, Special Interest Groups Contributing to Canada's Culture Sector

- We might well ask ourselves by way of responding to our times and building new capacities to deal with them.....
- The use of the idea of living in history in the title was as a kind of double entendre ??
- We might well ask of ourselves on the way home “So what was that all about anyways” might I suggest that it was about possible new ways of looking at what we do supporting special interest groups variously in the history and heritage business, about new perspectives, new frames of reference which comes from standing back seeing what we do within a larger frame of reference, possibly continuing to do what we have always done but doing it with new sense of purpose and priorities in mind

- How do the understandings gleaned from the history of the Doane family now over several centuries contribute to you -----

Some Candidate Text from Building Capacity p. 32-33

The ideas, concepts, and principles we have explored here are potentially valuable for coming to better understand the purposes and essential functions we perform as self-selected, special interest groups contributing to the work of Canada's cultural sector – and hence our mission as described in Sections 3.1 through 3.3 above) and needed capacities (dealt with in Section 5.0), as a community cultural organization. There are a number of implications, most central of which is the progressive clarification of the nature of the business that such organization are in.

It has been said that policy never appears fully blown in the life of any for any organization, but rather a matter of progressive clarification, as issues, options, directions, and priorities are assessed and revaluated in the light of changing times²⁸.

A number of policy options emerge from this little introspection. For example, in the glare of 21st century realities what are the most relevant, believable, and supportable images for special interests groups such as the Doane Family Association seeking support and resources for its important work:

- The history Business - Contributing to community cultural development primarily through providing historic understandings of a people and their times, the many myths and timeless wisdom, as well as the nature of progress made and its evolving human maturity?
- The Collections Business - Contributing through the collections of artifacts, those three dimensional pieces of our materiality left behind, and which tell volumes about the interests, values and priorities of those whose shoulders we stand on. This would involve the Organization in the business of identifying and recovering the preservation, renewal, interpretation, and use, as well as on-going storage and management of material resources - just the sort of mandate organizations shy away from given the high costs of doing business with possible spin-offs such as described in Section 4.2 – to which the creation and dissemination of historic knowledge would be an integral part.
- The archives Business ----stuff on images
- ????????

²⁸ Find ref if I can

Resource Materials

We will explore our changing times and what they require of those of us who are committed to the work of special-interest volunteer groups variously dedicated to promoting cultural history and heritage in all their various forms.

Such groups attract the dedication, time, money, and life commitment of many of us, for reasons we often find difficult to enunciate. These organizations, wherever they are to be found, are the backbone of much of what gets done in Canada's Cultural Sector by way of cultural conservation, interpretation, as well as education.

For many of us the uncertainty, ambivalence, and the difficulty we find in justifying the time and resources we spend supporting such groups is understandable. For these are essentially very personal private interests, reflecting idiosyncratic values and life priorities – often more intuitive than logic in origin. Too, we are often confused between whether our motivations are matters of “private” or “public” interest, or whether in fact they are one and the same.

But making sense out of what we do in supporting cultural history and heritage groups is not getting any easier. For the 21st century brings with it new costs and complexities on every hand. But fortunately it also brings new knowledge, insights, and understandings which help us to think about what we are doing in new ways, often with a renewed sense of purpose, and perspective.

Among other things we will explore some contemporary concepts of history, historic knowledge, heritage, culture and cultures – all of potential interest to us as 21st century people. Included are:

1. Three concepts of history, their distinctively different world views, and implications
2. The notion of our history as our culture, and conversely our culture as our history
3. The nature of historic knowledge and its centrality to human understanding of self and community
4. The centrality of the cultural heritage of a people and its contribution to the richness and meaning of life.

An invited paper requested June 1, 2015 by Gary Gilbert, Secretary, Doane Family Association of America Inc., Ontario Chapter, for presentation to the Chapter's Annual meeting Sept 13, 2015,

The paper focuses on 4 ?? big ideas, as potential 1st century game changers. Powerful ideas each in their own right we will see how they come together re-defining our way of thinking about our public history and our culture of community, region and nation.

5. Three concepts of history and the different world views an implications for practical action they present
6. The notion of our history as our culture, and conversely our culture as our history
7. The nature of historic knowledge and its centrality to human understanding of self and community
8. The centrality of the cultural heritage of a people [ref.7-10]

As component parts of a coherent, single system of thought they are mutually supporting and interactive notions. Together they challenging the traditional ways we have come to think about history and its role in our everyday life and times.

The paper will make its case variously through the exploration relevant concepts, principles and key ideas, citing recent research findings and authoritative outlooks to support the position taken.

The paper proceeds on three working assumptions:

1. The reality of the 21st century has reconfirmed the modernity of our times. As a “post-industrial society” we have come to think about ourselves, our community and the world beyond in many ways fundamentally altered from our past.
2. The role and contribution of volunteer, special interest, community advocacy organizations variously dedicated to the promotion of public history, cultural heritage, and the enrichment of community life has been inexorably altered, bring new challenges and opportunities
3. As advocates, and activist for the causes we hold dear, our A principal task is one of building new capacity, anticipating and preparing for the future now upon us

The Sept. 13 presentation to the Doane Family Association of America Inc., Ontario Chapter will be 20 to 30 minutes in length, and of a nature and scope intended for a special interest group; one

dedicated “to creating interest in the history and welfare of the descendants of John Doane, who came to Plymouth in 1629”.

Preliminary Listing of Resource Materials:

1. “Building Capacity” [significant blocks of text will help to set the stage from the perspective of a special interest, community advocacy group and help to make a solid creditable and believable case
2. Ruben Nelson [distinguished Canadian futurist], variously on his PIF project papers on Canada’s postindustrial life and times and the futurity of history
3. Margaret MacMillan on the uses and abuses of history
4. Draft mtl. [data sheets] prepared for Occasional Paper for Probus 146-1
5. Proj. 112-18 Development of Aurora heritage Centre
6. Proj. 101-2 Development of Aurora cultural Centre 2006-2009
7. Proj. 139, Development of Aurora cultural Centre 2009 -
8. Proj. 152, Development of Hillary McIntyre park Concept
9. Proj. 140-7 Aurora’s CMPL
10. OHR mtl
11. Paul S. mtl
12. Greg B mtl
13. Thomas Moore texts on life’s enrichment
14. Warren Susman text history as culture
15. John Kenneth Galbraith, The culture of Contentment
16. Daniel Dennett, The Evolution of Culture, in “Culture” Ed. John Brockman
17. Oliver Assoc. IRB Lib. Cultural development, see key texts Hannerz, Lindblom, Bloom, etc
18. Oliver Assoc. IRB Lib. Learning and structure of Knowledge – understanding the nature of knowledge, the formal disciplines of knowledge [strengths and limitations], the special contribution of personal, practical, useful, and day to day knowledge

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- ⁱ “History and the Public Interest”, Sharon Baraian, Material History Review, National Museum Of Science And Technology, Ottawa, Vol. 45, Spring 1997, pp.51-55.