

## OBITUARY: PROFESSOR RAYMOND DAVID FOGELSON

23 AUGUST 1933 – 20 JANUARY 2020

A. JAMIE SARIS

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

Ray Fogelson, my mentor and friend, has passed. It was Ray who deflected me from my path as a Biology Major in my Junior Year at the University of Chicago, thinking seriously of Medical School, to taking my Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology because I wanted to write an undergraduate thesis under his direction. In the end, Anthropology Graduate School won out over Medical School, and Ray subsequently became the Chair of my Doctoral Committee.

Ray's contribution to Anthropology was large and is still poorly appreciated. Ray began fieldwork with the eastern Cherokee Nation in 1956 under the direction of John Guilick and A.F.C. Wallace. Further work was conducted with the western Cherokee in Oklahoma in 1958 and 1960. Writing up his PhD, Ray was a research fellow at the Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute. In 1962 he began a teaching position at the University of Washington, at which time he began his work with Native American groups in the Northwest Coast, including the Shuswap in British Columbia. He maintained regular connections with the Oklahoma Cherokee and Muskogee (Creek) from the 1960s to 2019. In 1965 he moved to the University of Chicago, where he continued to teach in the Department of Anthropology until his death in January. Throughout his career, he also testified extensively before Congressional Committees, promoting the federal recognition of land, water, and mineral rights for a variety of Native American tribes.

No obituary can do a scholar of Ray's breadth and imagination justice. Native Americanists know him as a wide-ranging, productive scholar across North America, a prolific trainer of PhDs, and an institution-builder (an Editor on the Encyclopaedia of North American Indians and a Founder of the journal *Ethnohistory*). He was also a prominent figure in the Anthropological History of the United States, with such important works as 'Nationalism and the Americanist Tradition', in Lisa Philips Valentine and Regna Darnell, eds., *Theorizing the Americanist Tradition*. Univ. of Toronto Press, 75-83 (1999); 'The Context of American Indian Political History' in *Occasional Papers No. 11, McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, Newberry Library*; and the brilliant 'Red Man in the White City' in D.H. Thomas, ed., *Columbian Consequences*, Vol 3. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 73-90 (1991). His 1990 piece, "On the Petticoat Government of the Eighteenth Century Cherokees", in D. Jordan and M. Swartz, eds., *Personality and the Cultural Construction of Society*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 161-181, is simultaneously a contribution to political and psychological anthropology, and a model for students interested in building bridges between subfields that tracked apart after the 1950s. In my opinion, though, Ray's 1989 article, 'The Ethnohistory of Events and Non-events', in *Ethnohistory* 36: 133-147, may well be the work that will be 'rediscovered' first by fields outside Anthropology as a means of analyzing how various "ethno-historiographies" create radically different historical ontologies (I would go so far to say functioning like a *dispositiv* in Foucault's sense).

For a graduate student, Ray was never anything but an intellectual adventure. There were few things that he had not read and that he could not find quickly in the great vault of his mind. The hours I spent in a dilapidated blue armchair fighting with a large, annoyingly resilient Ficus plant, while he unwound

the thread of his fine thought on a great variety of subjects, I still count as amongst my most important educational experiences. His dedication to his students was legendary. He opened his gorgeous condo in the Lincoln Park neighbourhood on the North Side of Chicago routinely to graduate students, and I cannot think of one of his advisees that doesn't have a 'Ray rescued me' story. Sentences like, 'He supported me in my subsequent career', give only the vaguest sense of how generously he assisted my own professional growth. It was one of my great personal and professional privileges to have helped organise a Festschrift session for him at the American Anthropological Association Meetings in 1996.

Ray also visited Ireland as a guest speaker a couple of times, and his talks are still remembered very fondly by some of my own students from that time who have subsequently become my professional colleagues. One of those times was a Spring visit, where I had, perhaps with undo optimism, organized a barbeque (never a sure thing in Ireland). Some of the early arrivals watched, with some bemusement, as Ray offered tobacco to whatever entity(ies) in charge of Irish precipitation (he was after all a full Initiate the Creek Green Corn Lodge) to have them delay their watery plans and let me get my fire lit. The BBQ went off under cloudy but dry weather.

As all of Ray's friends, I was delighted and charmed when I first met Karen, his partner for the last 20+ years. I had first heard Ray talk about her in a rare tone he used only when he was being very serious about something, and it was clear when I first saw the two of them together how much he loved and cared for her. Her time with Ray was the happiest I ever saw him.

Goodbye, Ray.