Amelia Susman
A Woman of Substance

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Preface

Recently while researching information regarding Lucy Young (a Wailaki elder who lived in Round Valley with her Wintu husband Sam Young in the late 1930s), I came across a reference to Amelia Susman having interviewed her in 1937 during her fieldwork in Round Valley. Having written a brief biography of Lucy Young for the Trinity County Compendium[1] (TCC Vol 2: B02), I was aware that Susman had worked in Round Valley, but it seems, with a relatively late publishing date of 1976, l had paid little attention to her research. A quick check of the major ethnographic studies for the region (including Baumhoff 1958, Elsasser 1987, Therodoratus 1980) showed there were virtually no references to her paper; although a book on the history of Round Valley; *Genocide and Vendetta: The Round Valley Wars of Northern California* by local avocational historians Lynwood Carranco and Estle Beard (1987) references her paper.

I was somewhat surprised and puzzled as to why the paper was not published until 1976 if the field work had been accomplished in 1937. I was even more surprised, however, when I began my research in an effort to find out more about Susman, and the reason for the long hiatus in publishing her paper. It turns out that Susman had passed away only last year. Her obituary in *Archaeology News* (July 6, 2021) noted that "Amelia Louise Susman Schultz[2], the very last student of Franz Boas, died on April 22, 2021 at the age of 106." After reading Susman's paper, it became apparent why it never saw the "light of day." The content of her paper is both astonishingly frank (although not strident) and somewhat inflammatory regarding the people, both white and Indian, who were living in Round Valley at the time of her visit.

Although it turns out that Susman's study produced little in the way of new ethnographic data (hence the few references to her work found in the ethnographic literature), what the

[1] The Trinity County Compendium (TCC) is an archive by the author of ethnographic, historical, and environmental data for the Yolla Bolly country of southwestern Trinity, southeastern Humboldt, and northeastern Mendocino Counties. This data is available at the Trinity County Historical Society, Weaverville. Much of this material, including homestead records, historical maps, census records, interviews, and published papers is also available on my web site.

[2] Her married name was Schultz, but she published her work under her maiden name.

paper lacks in useful information regarding the ethnographic period, is more than made up for by the fact that it focuses its attention on the Indians who were living on the reservation during the Depression era, and the challenges they faced trying to adapt to the racist and hostile world that surrounded them, while trying to maintain some semblance of their cultural identities.

Susman's study is unique in focusing on the people living on the Round Valley Indian Reservation at the time of her visit. For the most part, the anthropologists who worked in the region during the first few decades of the 20th century rarely commented, or even made notes, on the contemporary lives of the people they were interviewing. As will be seen in the section below, Susman was thought by her advisors (perhaps being a woman) to have been "too emotional," and that she had not been able to "remain detached" from her subjects, when she was writing about the squalid conditions on the reservation, the cultural, social, economic, and political barriers that Indians faced, and their efforts to maintain their cultural identities despite the traumatic events of the past nearly 100 years. The story of why this paper was not published until 1976 involves sexism, racism, and even politics. It is a story worth telling.

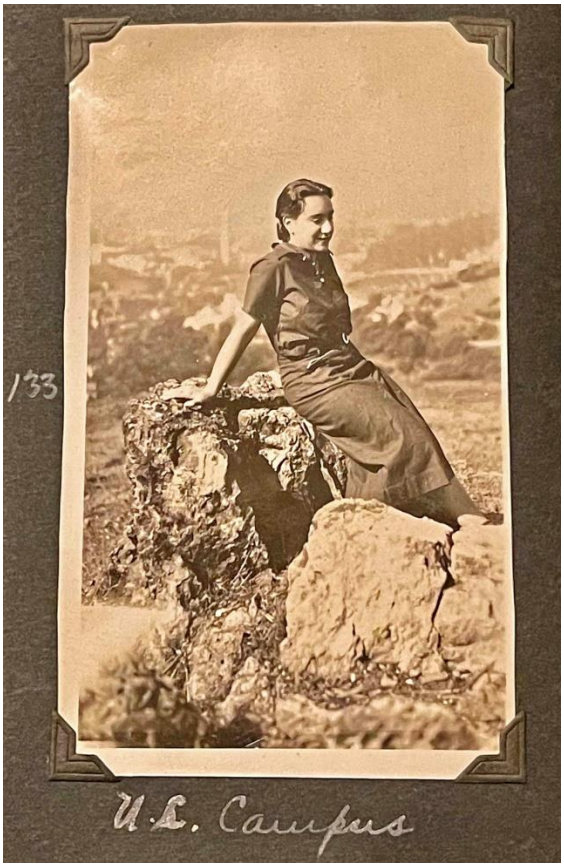

Image 1 (Susman 1976: Plate 1) was taken in the hills above the UC Berkeley Campus in November on her visit to California in 1937 when she was 22 years old--note the Campanile Tower on the UC campus in the background.
Image 2: *America*n *Anthropologist,* Obituary, November, 2021. Not dated.

Background

A short biography of Amelia Susman in 2018 (*The History of Anthropology Review*, December, 2018) noted that she was valedictorian of her high school class at 14, and that after graduation:

> Since she was just under five feet tall, she was ineligible to work at Macy's, the usual graduation option for women until marriage. Instead, she enrolled in Brooklyn College in 1931, gaining an AB degree in Psychology with pioneering social psychologist Solomon Asch.

Seeking a graduate degree, she was warned by classmate Irving Goldman[3] that only the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University under Franz Boas willingly accepted Jews and women into its graduate program. Her biographer writes (anon: n.d.) that:

> When she took the subway uptown to see Boas, a German Jew like herself, he welcomed Amelia into the PhD program but warned her presciently, "I can't guarantee you a job" afterwards. Amelia said "So What" and never regretted her decision.

Franz Boas was born in Germany and earned a PhD in geography before immigrating to the United States in 1887. The geographer-turned-anthropologist was recognized worldwide for his work with the Indian tribes living along the coast of British Columbia, and is considered by many to be the "father of anthropology." In 1902, Boas established the first anthropology department in the United States at Columbia University. Alfred Kroeber, a student of Boas' was the first individual to receive a PhD in anthropology in the United States. After moving to California, Kroeber established the anthropology program at the University of California at Berkeley--the first in the state (See Keter 2009).

After enrolling at Columbia University to pursue her doctorate, Susman was first assigned to Ruth Benedict[4] and later to anthropologist Ralph Linton[5] who replaced Boas after his retirement. When Boas retired in 1936 he had intended for Ruth Benedict to take over as head of the Anthropology Department. However, as Susman's biographer notes (Anon: n.d.): "After Boas retired in 1936 Benedict was acting chair [in] 1936-37, before Columbia imposed Ralph Linton as the department chair in lieu of Benedict, the woman who was Boas's intended successor."

[3] Irving Goldman went on to study linguistics and anthropology with Boas at Columbia University.
[4] Ruth Benedict, also a PhD student of Boas, wrote one of the most influential books in anthropology *Patterns of Culture* published in 1934.
[5] In 1937 Ralph Linton was appointed head of the Anthropology Department after Boas retired. Linton's choice was opposed by most of Boas' students, with whom Linton had never been on good terms. The Boasians had expected Ruth Benedict to be the choice. As head of the department, Linton, during the "Red Scare" of the 1950s informed on many of his students to the FBI, accusing them of being communists.

During the summer of 1937 Susman was one of eight PhD candidates (three were women) assigned by Linton "to study and compare acculturation in eight tribes" (Susman 1976: iv). Funding for the project was provided by the WPA (Works Progress Administration). Susman was assigned to do her field work at Round Valley. The eight dissertations by Linton's students were to then be published in a single volume (one of the requirements to receive a PhD at Columbia).

When the book A*cculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes* (1940: Ralph Linton editor) was finally published, missing from the book was the paper by Susman. Not only was her PhD dissertation, *The Indians of Round Valley*, rejected for publication, but in fact she was essentially instructed by Linton to pursue a new dissertation topic. Susman wrote somewhat sarcastically (1976: v) that professor Boas (who had already retired) was able to "... find funds for me to do a language study and get my degree with a dissertation on a linguistic, presumably safer, subject." Her thesis was entitled *The Accent on Winnebago* and she submitted her dissertation to Benedict in November of 1939.

The Indians of Round Valley was finally published in 1976. The Preface by Susman (1976: iv-vii) recounts the events leading up to the rejection of her work. It is written couched in academic terms and polite language, but the sting of rejection still shows after 40 years. And with good reason. It is clear that the paper was rejected by Linton and not published to avoid both public and political controversy (and possibly from what I can gather his personal politics--see below). Susman writes (1976: vi) that after the eight manuscripts had already been sent off to the publisher, she was informed by Benedict, who was by then her advisor, that Linton had informed her that the chapter on Round Valley:

> ...could not be included because some of the material might be challenged in court as libelous. To the best of my recollection it was not suggested that the data were incorrect but simply that a legal challenge would delay publication of the whole volume.
>
> It was implied, or I felt that it was implied, that I might have been less than objective, that I had allowed my emotional reaction to the horrors I had heard from my informants and had read in old San Francisco newspapers and Bureau of Indian Affairs reports to color my presentation. Genocide and exploitation of native peoples to the point of slavery were not, I suppose, popular subjects in 1937.

Her paper is well written and is solidly documented, and in my opinion is a fair and accurate portrayal of both the whites and Indians residing in Round Valley during her visit. However, as Susman writes in the Preface (1976: vi), in the early 1900s: "Ethnohistory was not then a subject in its own right. The Indian point of view was not regarded with as much seriousness as it is today."

Although Susman's dissertation, *The Accent on Winnebago*, was accepted by Benedict in November of 1939, it would be four more years before she received her final degree, as one

of the requirements was to have it published. With no funds to have the dissertation published--a requirement of the program--she was stymied once again in securing her PhD. With the beginning of World War II she enlisted in the Women's Army Corps and in an effort to finally get her degree she wrote:

> In 1943 while I was a member of the Women's Army Corps, I spent many evenings typing the dissertation and at my own expense had it printed (in photo-offset, $300 for 75 copies, which by that time Columbia had come to accept as a substitute for reprints) and received the degree.

It appears from a contemporary perspective that Susman's "controversial" Round Valley study was career ending--or perhaps it was simply because she was a woman, but despite a PhD from Columbic University--under the tutelage of Franz Boas, Ralph Linton, and Ruth Benedict no less-- she was unable to find a job as an anthropologist. In 1947, she earned a master's degree in social work and settled in Seattle, Washington where she worked with unwed Indian mothers. Susman in the Preface to her paper (1976: vi) writes how its publication finally came about.

> After the war I entered the field of social work, having found no position in anthropology, and was "discovered" about two years ago [1974] at the University Hospital, where I have been employed since 1960 by Jay Miller, of the Department of Anthropology, University of Washington. Contact with young anthropologists renewed my interest in the field and with the help of a hypnotist I located the long mislaid Round Valley manuscript and found with it extensive handwritten and typed notes which document the historical events.

In 1976 her paper was accepted for publication by Robert Heizer, a professor at the University of California Berkeley. He was recognized at the time as one of the foremost anthropologists in California. Heizer, wrote the Forward for Susman's paper explaining how its publication came about.

> On March 3, 1976, Dr. Amelia Susman Schultz wrote asking if I would look at her manuscript on Round Valley which is published below almost exactly as originally written nearly 40 years ago, and which bears her new Preface and Addenda. I liked her paper very much; agreed publish it; and here it is.
>
> The Archaeological Research Facility [at UC Berkeley] is pleased to publish Dr. Schultz' paper for several reasons:, 1) It helps to right a wrong, or perhaps better, a mistake; 2) it is an excellent piece of work, and; 3) it adds substantially to the literature on acculturation studies which are in short supply for Native Californian societies.

The Collection of Ethnographic Data in the Early 20th Century

To understand how radical Susman's study was when she did her field work in 1937, it is necessary to first understand why and how ethnographic data were collected at the time. What is unique (one might say radical or path breaking) about her study is the fact that she makes an effort to focus on recording and documenting the contemporary living conditions, and both the cultural and social contexts of the individuals she was interviewing.

There was of course a reason during the first decades of the 20th century for the effort by ethnographers to focus almost solely on the collection of ethnographic and linguistic data. By this time there were few remaining Indians who still had a direct knowledge of their cultures prior to the beginning of the historic period. For example, in California, Kroeber (the most influential anthropologist in the State at the time) recognized that Indians with knowledge of the precontact period were quickly disappearing due to old age. He felt that it was important, given this fact, that ethnographers should focus on collecting as much information as possible from elderly informants regarding their knowledge of their precontact cultures and languages.

As a result, informants were queried intensively about many aspects of their precontact cultures. However, like Kroeber, most other ethnographers at the time displayed little empathy or much interest in trying to understand or document how the traumatic events that had taken place since the beginning of the historic period had affected the people they were interviewing--including living conditions on the reservation, racism, social problems like alcoholism, lack of adequate health care, contemporary religious practices, economics, and social interactions between the Indians living both on and off the reservation with the surrounding white community.

Kroeber visited Round Valley in 1938 when his student Frank Essene[6] was working there. Kroeber (1941: vi) in his introduction to Essene's paper noted that one of Essene's informants: "Eben Tillotson has a habit of injecting personal or ethical considerations which are not germane from the ethnologist's point of view." It is clear that Essene followed Kroeber's lead on this subject, as there are virtually no references in his dissertation to the contemporary beliefs, cultural practices, or social conditions of the people he interviewed.

Susman writes (1976: 42) that Professor Kroeber had personally told her that he "finds Round Valley depressing because the Indians live neither in the past nor in the present." In his seminal and monumental *The Handbook of the Indians of California*, (over 1,000 pages in length). Kroeber (1925: i) writes:

> After some hesitation I have omitted all the directly historical treatment in the ordinary sense; that is, accounts of the relations of the natives with

[6] Frank Essene spent about 11 weeks working in Round valley in the summer of 1938. His PhD dissertation *Cultural Element Distributions XXI: Round Valley* was published in 1941.

> whites and of the events befalling them after such contact was established. It is not that this subject is unimportant or uninteresting, but I am not in a position to treat it adequately. **It is also a matter that has comparatively slight relation to the aboriginal population**. [Emphasis added]

As Eric Smith notes (1990:53) in his review on the methodologies of the ethnographers who were working in California in the early 1900s:

> Traditionally American anthropologists had paid little attention to the welfare of their subjects…… In general the federal government remained much more "activist" with respect to Native Americans than did academic anthropology. It employed anthropologists in the Soil Conservation Service and the Applied Anthropology Unit of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Amelia Susman: *The Indians of Round Valley*

An in-depth review and critique of Susman's paper is beyond the scope of this essay. Rather, the goal here is to provide some insight into its content with some examples of why her paper was so controversial at the time. Susman begins by noting that one of the main problems with the Round Valley Indian Reservation (established in 1856), was that it had not been created for a single tribe, but that Indians from throughout northern California were sent there. This included people from nine tribes speaking six different languages[7] resulting in poor communication, and sometimes disagreements and conflict among the various groups. Most people living on the reservation when Susman visited Round Valley in 1937 were descendants of the survivors of the "Indian Wars of the Northwest" of the 1850s and 1860s (Bledsoe 1885, Keter 1990, Carranco and Beard 1981).

Her biographer notes that during her stay in Round Valley in the summer of 1937:

> Amelia traveled the reservation on her bicycle, "Squeaky," and heard from women about their history of abuse, abductions, rapes, massacres, and land theft that traumatized their community. She corroborated their accounts with archival research in federal records held in San Francisco. To fulfill Linton's literal protocol list, she wrote an ethnography organized under his standard headings, but her section on "Contact with Americans" reports Yuki trauma, including a critique of the BIA agents, missions, ranchers, and other whites who committed fraudulent land seizures, enslavement, killings, and other atrocities.

[7] Round Valley was the homeland of the Yuki. Susman's list does not include all of the tribes that were interred at Round Valley. For a discussion with the problems related to the classification of Indian groups into tribes or "tribelets" in northwestern California see Keter 2009 and Baumhoff 1958.

Susman's paper is divided into several sections. The first section (pages 1-15) simply presents a brief overview summarizing the ethnographic data collected up to that time for the various tribes living on the reservation, and a brief history of the region since the beginning of the historic period. Her primary ethnographic sources were Kroeber's *Handbook of the Indians of California*, Stephen Power's *Tribes of California* (1877) and Edward Curtis' *The North American Indian*: Volume 13 (1924).

In the second section (pages 15-33) Susman provides a brief contextual overview and history of Round Valley, and the reservation from the beginning of the historic period in 1854 to the time of her visit. This bloody and tragic history is recounted in great detail using many of the same primary sources that authors Lynwood Carranco and Estle Beard later used in their publication on the history of Round Valley: *Genocide and Vendetta: The Round Valley Wars of Northern California* (1981).[8]

She then turns her attention to the situation of the Indians living in the valley at the time of her visit in 1937. The reason for the controversy over her paper becomes evident in this section (pages 33-72) when she turns her attention to living conditions on the reservation, and relations at the time of her visit between Indians living on the reservation and the white residents of Covelo --the small town that was the social and business hub of Round Valley--and in the surrounding valley.

Susman begins by noting that "most of the damage to Indian culture was done before 1870, and what remains [of precontact knowledge] exists only for a few old Indians who were children in the 1850s and for even fewer in the next generation" (1976: 32). The section is broken down into a number of topics including: health, marriage, male and female sexuality, housing, education, economics, religion (native and Christian), etc. She also discusses in frank terms the relationship and interactions between Indians and the local white community. I have included a few quotes below to provide an idea of the contents and findings of her study regarding these subjects.

> Very early, English was used for communication with other tribes, and under compulsion by the Whites. In school Indian languages were effectively discouraged. Now, many middle-aged people can understand, but not speak, the aboriginal languages; very few, if any, of the younger generation, can even understand them. [Page 34]
>
> Living conditions vary, but the survey found about one third of the houses to be ramshackle shanties. About half have inadequate clothing and bedding. The houses are warmed with wood-stoves, often in a very dangerous condition, and the walls are lined with newspapers or cardboard. Some are very clean, some are dirty. [Page 53]

[8] See also *Conflict and Settlement The Refuge Period and Historic Settlement in the North Fork Eel River Basin* (Keter 1990), and *The Ranching Period in the North Fork of the Eel River Basin 1865-1905* (Keter 994). Both papers can be found on my web site.

> "Relief" or "welfare" for the Indians is opposed by Whites. Even one of the more sympathetic White women said they do not feel that the county should be responsible for Indians since the government dumped them here." [Page 53]

Susman also focuses much of this section on the challenges facing children and adolescents:

> Boarding schools took most of them away from home during the years when they might have learned something of old customs, and even recently, within the last fifteen or twenty years, children were forcibly prevented from using Indian expressions or playing Indian games in the day school [page 35]

Susman also wrote about the poor medical and dental care provided by the BIA for people on the reservation.

> The early government doctors could hardly have inspired much confidence and the hospitals in Willits and Ukiah, overcrowded and under-staffed, do not encourage Indians to enter [Page 36]

> The nearest hospital is in Willits, about forty miles away over the mountain roads. This, and the Ukiah hospital, are understaffed, overcrowded, and have records of losing patients. A non-ward Indian, who will probably not have enough money to recover in the hospital, might as well spare himself the two trips. The result is usually the same anyway. [Pages 49-50]

> The Indians are subject especially to respiratory infections, and to diseases for which there is no specific, since their resistance is low. There is a considerable amount of tuberculosis in a valley where the Whites have little and the cattle almost none. Syphilis is politely called tuberculosis. However, the Indians have less venereal disease than Whites of the same economic class according to the county nurse, and the greatest incidence of gonorrhea is at hop-picking time, when Indians are in close contact with poor Whites. [Page 50]

> ... the Indians are considered by government doctors to be more responsive to health campaigns, vaccination, etc., than the Whites. [Page 38]

The preceding comments are not those of a typical "detached" anthropologist collecting "ethnographic data" on an Indian Reservation at that time; even if they were expressed in more academic terms. The following comments by Susman (1976: 47-48), however, should suffice to demonstrate one of the reasons why her dissertation was so controversial.

> I do not doubt in the least, but have no proof, that such a White economy as there is here was established first by land-grabbing from Indian owners, then by a great deal of free pasturage on Indian owned range.

> ... In the White social scheme, the Baptist and Methodist Churches and the Women's Improvement Club of Covelo are the centers, and anyone who does not participate in their activities is suspect; one hears very negative comments about the few Catholics. So close are Church and State that school teachers are expected to teach in Sunday school. In the Club, the more prosperous women get together in a sort of caste system. The Church creates a holier-than-thou feeling, and the Baptists, especially, heap hell-fire and damnation on heretics. In relation to the Indians, it is said, White people keep up just enough show of friendliness to make "Indian buck Indian for the benefit of the Whites."
>
> ...They oppose Indians' doing WPA or other relief work as it upsets their old labor system as well as raising the scale of wages. It also spoils their grip on the situation.

Susman also noted there was hostility by the local white community against the BIA, state, and county social workers, doctors, dentists, or anyone else entering the valley to work with the Indians on the reservation. Many of the early settlers came from slave holding states including Texas, Virginia, and Missouri (Keter 1994). Susman noted there still remained a high level of racism against Indians by whites living in the valley[9].

> On public occasions things seem friendly enough. Whites and Indians sit and ride together in the Rodeo, Whites attend Indian funerals, and sometimes point out Indians as their friends, saying, "Mrs. Johnson is the better type." However, outsiders often remark that Covelo is like the South, though not quite as bad. [Page 57]
>
> On the social plane, there is no mingling: One of the quietest, best-spoken and cleanest of the Indian women has been in only three White houses in her life, as a servant. [Page 58]
>
> It suggests strongly that public opinion in Covelo is responsible for the shyness of Indians, young and old. Self-respect and self-confidence are lacking in young people, who are often truants from school, who have nothing to do with their time. Boys are more aloof than girls: on several occasions when I was with a family and conversation was general, a young man in the group would neither say a word, nor look in my direction. [Page 57]

Based on her interviews and the documented history of the Round Valley region Susman (1976:70-71), concluded that:

[9] This region of northwestern California was a hotbed of southern support during the Civil War. The largest land owner in the valley George White (referred to as the "King of Round Valley") was a distant cousin of Confederate General Stonewall Jackson (see Keter 1994).

> Although the treatment of American Indians by the Whites has generally been bad, the Round Valley situation...is unique in the complete domination of the Indian by the White group, the speed with which this domination was achieved, and the frankness and the thoroughness of White exploitation.
>
> The case must be construed as primarily one of directed acculturation, although the direction was almost entirely of the negative sort. The place of the Indian in the combined Indian-White community was designated almost entirely by the White and was at the very bottom of the social and economic scale. The function of the Indian, in the eyes of the dominant group, was to provide cheap and docile labor and any attempt to depart from this role was punished by the expropriation of the Indian's property even if there were no more forcible measures. The Indian was to be a slave without even the security which a chattel slave might derive from his value as property.
>
> ... If the Round Valley tribes had resisted this treatment they would probably have been exterminated during the first few years of contact.
>
> ...Round Valley Reservation was an example of minimal acculturation, if by acculturation one understands the adaptation of an aboriginal culture to that of a dominant group. Decimation, transplantation and systematic exploitation had reduced the Northern California tribes in this area to remnants, living on a tiny reservation in dire poverty and cultural disarray.
>
> ... Clearly, Round Valley did not represent a single integral culture adapting itself to the White mores.

The Crux of the Matter

In the Preface to her paper (1976: vi), Susman writes that most of the objections to her paper by her committee seemed editorial and minor. She then expresses what she believes to have been the primary reason that her dissertation was rejected.

> If, as is more likely, the compelling fact [the paper was rejected] was that the publisher feared Collett, who was at that time representing many Indian tribes in Washington, D.C., and had started suit against Collier[10], Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for libel, I could easily have deleted references to him. I doubt whether any living white resident of Round Valley would ever have seen the volume or felt the need to defend his forebears.

[10] John Collier (May 4, 1884 – May 8, 1968) was a sociologist, writer, and social reformer. Collier was a strong advocate for Indian rights, and his proposals were considered highly controversial, as numerous powerful interests had profited from the sale and management of Indian lands.

In fact, Susman was also caught up university "politics" at Columbia University when Ralph Linton was hired in 1937 to chair the Anthropology Department, replacing Franz Boas who had retired from teaching in 1936[11]. As one of Susman' biographers notes (Anon: n.d.), university politics and the retirement of Boas and the hiring of Linton played a large part in the rejection of her Round Valley paper.

> Politics in Columbia University anthropology between the new guard Ralph Linton and old guard Franz Boas embroiled her in writing two separate dissertations, Research for her first one exposed atrocities suffered by Native people in Round Valley, Northern California, but it was withheld from final publication because Linton was complicit in settler colonial politics.
>
> ...Arguing that wealthy locals or notorious Reverend FG Collett might sue for slander, Ralph Linton pressured Ruth Benedict, acting head, to ask Amelia (aged 22) to withdraw her chapter so that her classmates could receive their official degrees. An equally probable reason was that Amelia's great and truly lifelong devotion to Boas irked Linton.....

It is, therefore, likely, one of the major reasons leading to the rejection of Susman's paper was that the publisher feared a lawsuit by Frederick G. Collett[12]. The conflict between Collier, who President Roosevelt had appointed Commissioner of the BIA, and Collett, who represented a number of Indian tribes, was related to passage of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). The IRA was passed by the Roosevelt Administration in 1934, as part what was called the "Indian New Deal;" replacing the General Allotment Act (Dawes Act) of 1887. Under the General Allotment Act the objective had been to end the reservation system, and encourage the assimilation of Indians into the mainstream culture. The goal of the IRA was to reverse this effort at assimilation, and to strengthen and encourage tribes, in order to perpetuate their tribal identities and cultures. The IRA also restored to Indians the management of their reservation lands, tribal assets, mineral rights, and provided some economic aid to the residents living on reservations.

The Rest of the Story

It is clear Amelia Susman's study stands apart from those of other ethnographers at that time. Her comments, opinions, and insights regarding contemporary politics, social and

[11] Boas had intended for Benedict to take over the department and was overruled by Columbia and Linton was hired in 1937. Given her reputation at the time after publication of her bestselling book *Patterns of Culture* it is possible Benedict was not given the position because she was a woman.

[12] Rev Frederick G Collett (a Methodist minister) and his wife Beryl Bishop Collett were charging natives "dues" of $6 a year to represent them in a suit against the BIA. They had collected about $102,000 until they were indicted for mail fraud. Collett was at that time representing a number of Indian tribes in Washington, DC, and had started suit {for $125,000,000} against Collier as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for libel. The case was eventually thrown out of court based the legal privilege of Collier's office.

economic conditions, and the overt racism experienced by the Indians living in Round Valley far exceeded the "detachment" from their subjects that was the common practice followed by anthropologists at the time. In some ways the paper ended her career in anthropology.

Although this paper has focused on the life of Susman as anthropologist and her time spent in Round Valley, she lived a long and productive life after she left the field of anthropology, and she continued to maintain her interest in anthropological research. To find out more about Susman see the link to her biography in the References Cited section.

After leaving Columbia University and serving in the Army during the war, Susman moved to Seattle. There, she enrolled at University of Washington (UW), earning a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree in order to gain the necessary credentials to do social work. Susman's 1947 thesis on "Indian Unmarried Mothers" analyzed ten case histories in Seattle office records. Her biographer (Anon: n.d.) notes that Susman**:**

> Injecting a strong cultural relativity into her adopted field, she rightly criticized the ethnocentrism and paternalism of its psycho-methodology, showing the cultural bias inherent in its neglect of the cultural importance of kinship, especially grandparents, in native childcare

She married German-American "Dutch" Schultz and after they were married they lived in a number of places including Switzerland and England, before they moved back to Seattle in the early 1950s. After returning to Seattle, Susman was hired by the newly established Medical Genetics Division at the University of Washington as its first social worker and researcher. She worked with Thomas Bird, a Huntington's disease (HD) specialist and became recognized as a pioneer in providing holistic family care and genetic counseling to families struggling with the inheritable neurological disorder Huntington's Disease.

One of the hundreds of families Susman assisted was that of the famous folk musician and activist, Woody Guthrie, who died of Huntington's disease in 1967. After Guthrie's widow, Marjorie, founded the Huntington's Disease Society of America, Susman became a national trustee, and later served as a regional board member and coordinator of patient and family support groups. She was promoted to Research Instructor in 1965 and Assistant Professor in 1973, serving until she retired at the age 62 in 1977. After she retired, Susman lived another 44 years fully involved with her community and contributing her knowledge and time to multiple professions and academic disciplines--including publishing her paper on Round Valley. Her biographer writes a fitting conclusion for this paper of a life well-lived. Indeed, Amelia Susman Schultz was a woman of substance.

> In her last days she was reading three new books on Boas and his circle, each one personally inscribed by its author, each expressing admiration at her remarkably keen memory, helpfulness, and longevity: Her last fading days were attended by her very diverse group of friends, decades apart in ages, interests, and professions, drawn from academics, mushrooming, tai chi, yoga,

> senior center, swimming, book club, hiking, cooking, eating, and fun. Her long and interesting life bespeaks the virtues of a life lived in and out of the university, wise application of useful research abilities, the virtues of card files, and a sincere, clear headed, personal dedication to truth and patience....Today, we remember her quick wit and sly humor, sincere curiosity, interesting reading, adventurous mushrooming, even temper, pro-selfadvocacy, and loyalty. Profoundly dedicated to truth-seeking, care, and fairness, she lived her long and interesting life using anthropological research techniques with wisdom and creativity. When asked for the secret of her longevity, she would reply: boundless curiosity, meditation, exercise, mental challenges, and naps.

Epilog

There is likely even more to the story related to her inability to find employment as an anthropologist. Due to its assumptions and lack of direct evidence I have included it as Appendix 1. In 2004 nearly 40 years after the publication of her paper on Round Valley where she wrote of her failure to be hired as an anthropologist after receiving her PhD -- despite being highly qualified--took what may be an even darker turn. In 2004 David Price, author of *Threatening Anthropology McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists*, wrote:

> In this book I examine how the Cold War shaped the development of American Anthropology. I use archival documents, correspondence, oral histories, published sources, and over thirty thousand pages of FBI and other government documents released under the Freedom of Information Act to document how the repressive postwar McCarthy era shaped and dulled what might have been a significant and vital anthropological critique of race, class, and the inadequacies of global capitalism.

There may still be more to the story of Amelia Susman's life.

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Author's note:

Anonymous n.d. Biography of Amelia Susman.

A very complete biography Susman can be found at the website link below. There are no page numbers hence no page references in this paper. Image 1 is from this website. The website is well documented with links to several other publications. Unfortunately there is no information on the home page identifying the source of the website or the author of the paper.

https:// www.ameliasusmanschultz.com/

Appendix 1

The "Red Menace" and Anthropology

There is quite possibly even more to the Susman story of her inability to find work after securing her PhD in anthropology in 1943, than her work in Round Valley in 1937 that lead to her paper being withdrawn from publication, and the repercussions to her career that followed. With the end of WW II, Susman with PhD in hand, was ready to look for a job in anthropology. By the late 1940s and early 1950s, however, a rising tide of anti-communist fervor was sweeping the country. It is likely, therefore, that there is one more chapter missing in the story of why Susman may not have gotten a job in anthropology at a university after receiving her PhD.

Susman was a socialist and had many friends who were communists in the academic community--not unusual in America during the Depression years of the 1930s. Later, in Seattle in the 1940s after the war, she became friends with Mel and Bess Jacobs. Mel Jacobs was a linguist and folklorist. During the "Red Scare" of the late 1940s and early 1950s he was "blacklisted" and almost lost his job at the University of Washington. Through the Jacobs she met and then married Elias "Dutch" Schultz, who shared their communist politics. Schultz was a wood carver and labor organizer who had fought in the anti-fascist Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War and then for the US in World War II (See Anon n.d. for more on this subject). After getting married in the late 1940s, they first moved to Switzerland (where Schultz funded by the GI Bill studied woodcarving) then in 1950 they moved to England for a short time. After returning from Europe, they initially thought about settling in the East. But, as Susman's biographer (Anon: n.d.) notes:

> Amelia made the rounds of academic institutions in and around New York City. Her meeting with Margaret Mead was especially brief, and, only much later, did she realize that Mead and Benedict noted her graduate progress in their letters, including the date of her final defense. Mead in person revealed none of this interest.[13]

Unable to find employment in the east they returned to Seattle in 1952. Susman after working a series of state and private agency jobs, as noted in the main paper, was hired in 1960 by the newly established Medical Genetics Division of the University of Washington as its first social worker and researcher. It may very well be that politics were still playing a role in Susman's efforts to gain employment as an anthropologist after World War II due to her "association with known communists" (quite likely recorded in FBI files), as there is some evidence that this may actually be the case. It all stems back to her time at Columbia University. In 1937 when Ralph Linton replaced Franz Boas at Columbia he had radically changed the anthropology program and curriculum established by Boas. This was due to the fact that Boas was also famous for something else beside the study of Indians on the

[13] This correspondence between Mead and Benedict was related to the acceptance of her second dissertation by Linton in November 1939.

northwest coast of British Columbia. Something that Linton simply despised--his theory of *cultural relativism*.

Boas was well known as one of the most prominent and vociferous critics of "scientific racism;" one of the most widely held anthropological theories of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This theory (also referred to as "biological racism"), held by many, but not all sociologists and anthropologists, contended that empirical evidence existed that supported the hypothesis that differences in intelligence were based on race--essentially somehow based on "brain size" and cranial morphology--with of course people of color being smaller brained, and therefore "racially inferior" to what was termed "the superior race"--that of course being white Europeans.

With the establishment at Columbia University of an Anthropology Department in 1902, Boas was the first to add women to the PhD program (Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead were his among his first students) and he became a great influence in both how cultural data were collected and how it was interpreted (see for example Kroeber's *Cultural Element Distributions*). Based on his research in proving the hypothesis about race as false, Boas introduced the concept of *cultural relativism* contending that cultures cannot be objectively ranked as higher or lower, or better or more correct: "but that all humans see the world through the lens of their own culture, and judge it according to their own culturally acquired norms.."

Throughout his life Linton maintained an intense personal animosity against the Boasians, particularly Ruth Benedict (most obviously for her bestselling book *Patterns of Culture*), and he was a fierce critic of the Culture and Personality approach championed by the Boasians. One historian (Marks 2009).noted that according to Sidney Mintz, who was a colleague of Linton when he was at Yale: "[H]e even once jokingly boasted that he had killed Benedict using a *Tanala* magic charm." David H. Price (2004: 112) in his book *Threatening Anthropology: McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists*, writes that:

> As head of the department Linton informed against Boas and many of his students to the FBI, accusing them of being communists. This led to some of them being fired and blacklisted, for example Gene Weltfish.

It is clear from her liberal Jewish upbringing and her continued work with disadvantaged people throughout her life, that Susman possessed a strong social conscience. Boas was a further influence on her as a student in coming to understand cultural relativism. With the abrupt change in 1937 from her mentor Boas to Linton as Chair of the Anthropology Department at Columbia, she was not only left with no academic support, but with an individual who was hostile to her on a personal level given her close relationship with Boas, and given the contents of her Round Valley paper (interpreting the Indian people through the prism of cultural relativism), and in her personal life by associating with "known socialists and communists."

Linton, given his role as an FBI informant during the "Red Scare," is unlikely to have provided Susman's potential employers a positive reference. This was also not a time that can be considered one of courage for large academic institutions, or many within the anthropological community who bent with the winds of political repression, and tended to avoid any potential problems by simply avoiding controversial issues that might cause someone to question their loyalty to the country, or who might accuse them of spreading socialist or communist "propaganda." Thus, Susman's problems with getting a job in the discipline of anthropology after the war was quite likely also wrapped up in the Red Scare and politics of the late 1940s and early 1950s.[14] Linton's strong personal dislike for Boas, as well as his disparagement of Susman's Round Valley paper that in effect viewed the Indians of Round Valley through the eyes of cultural relativism and rejected the notion of "racial superiority," was, perhaps, reason enough to cause Linton's attitude towards Susman to sour. But perhaps what is even the more likely reason Susman never got a job teaching in anthropology at a university is that Linton suspected her of being a danger to the country based on her personal political beliefs and her close personal ties to both socialists and communists considered to be enemies of the state.

Conclusion

Anthropologists and others working in the social sciences during the first two decades following World War II, and who were conducting research and publishing books and papers that challenged currently held beliefs (especially racial beliefs) were immediately considered suspect (in many way the civil rights movement of the 1960s was a reaction to this). Sociologists and anthropologists were, therefore, a logical target for politicians and the racists who supported them, and who still dominated nearly every facet of American life at that time. They were opposed to anything that tended to undercut their economic or social domination. As a result, the discipline of anthropology was not exempt from their efforts to suppress books and information that was deemed a threat to the country.

Susman's paper is a good example of a social scientist combining interviews with empirical data to document social and economic problems, and in concluding they were related primarily to racism and lack of economic opportunity. This was not, however, a popular opinion at the time. In his book, Price (2004 Preface) writes about how dozens of "activist" anthropologists were investigated and privately or publicly prosecuted during the Red Scare of the 1940s and 1950s, and that it was not Communist Party membership or Marxist beliefs that attracted the most intense scrutiny from the FBI and congressional committees, but rather social activism, and those involved in the fight for racial justice. The impact of the Red Scare and McCarthyism extended far beyond those who lost their jobs, or had their careers destroyed, as the intent was to create an atmosphere of fear and (self) censorship that in the end had a pervasive and chilling effect on the undertaking of any

[14] Price in his book indicates that under Director J. Edgar Hoover surveillance and keeping files on "suspected" communists like Martin Luther King and other civil rights leaders as well as others perceived as disloyal continued into the early 1960s up until 1972 when Hover died while still director.

anthropological investigations (for example, securing the needed grants or funding for a project) that may have resulted in controversial, or what might be termed "politically incorrect" conclusions challenging currently held beliefs.

As critiques and studies that might have attracted government attention were suppressed or abandoned, scholarship and criticism of federal and state government economic and social policies were curtailed. Potential studies that might be controversial were often canceled or were suppressed even before there was any chance for controversy. Price (2004: xiii) writes that:

> The American Anthropological Association's abandonment of these scholars helped support a prevailing environment of isolation and fear that spread through academic and activist communities...The FBI records of several anthropologists establish the methods and mindset of the FBI as it undertook extensive and expensive investigations of those they believed to be radical activists working for racial equality...The FBI's intrusive surveillance of liberal or moderate anthropologists such as Oscar Lewis, Margaret Mead, Philip Nash, Ashley Montagu, Vilhjalmar Stefansson, Cora Du Bois[15] and others establishes the extent to which America's secret police meddled in the academic and private lives of intellectuals who promoted racial equality and internationalist perspectives.

Today academic freedom is again under threat in this country by the same reactionary populist forces that rose to power in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Amelia Susman's story and that of the anthropological community during the Post World War II era is a cautionary tale for those working in the profession today.

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[15] Cora Dubois worked in Round Valley at about the same time as Susman in the late 1930s. She is best known for her study of the Ghost Dance. (Dubois 1939: *The 1870 Ghost Dance*. University of California Anthropological Records 3: 1-152.)