

**James Grant Snell**

Dear Colleagues,

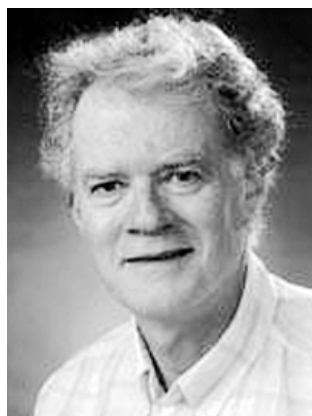
We are saddened to share the news that Professor James Grant Snell passed away on 15 August 2017.

Professor Snell earned his PhD at Queen's University and in 1968 was appointed to the Department of History, University of Guelph, where he served for thirty-seven years. Upon retirement, he was named University Professor Emeritus for his important influence in a wide range of administrative and leadership roles within the university.

Jamie was widely recognized as one of Canada's leading historians of family history, gender history and legal history. Over the course of his career, he published four books and over forty articles that cleverly combined class and gender analysis. His book, *In the Shadow of the Law: Divorce in Canada, 1900-1939* (1991) was heralded as a "ground-breaking study. It remains the only book specifically on Canadian divorce. Jamie argued that divorce laws and practice discriminated against women, even though it was women who often initiated the proceedings. He showed that given the restrictive divorce laws, spouses resorted to a wide variety of other types of marital breakup. His book, *The Citizen's Wage: The State and the Elderly in Canada, 1900-1951* (1996), remains one of the few books to examine the historical experience of the elderly. Jamie avoided treating them as a monolithic group of passive and helpless individuals. Instead, he provided a nuanced examination of their social experiences, the growth of "grey power," and the elderly's role in the development of the welfare state.

Some of his other works focused on institutional history. *The Supreme Court of Canada: History of the Institution* (1985) which he co-authored with Fred Vaughan demonstrated that Canadian judges tended to be conservative and non-activist, limited as they were by the doctrine of precedent and parliamentary supremacy. Finally, his popular book, *Remembering the Past, Embracing the Future: The Macdonald Institute, 1903 - 2003* (2003) continues to be cherished by students and members of the Guelph community. Here he analyzed the influence of gendered ideals on the development of domestic science.

Jamie participated vigorously in departmental life at Guelph, serving as Department Chair from 1998 to 2003. He was also a driving force in the creation of the Tri-University Doctoral Program which combined the graduate programs of the University of Guelph, the University of Waterloo and Sir Wilfrid Laurier University. He served as its first Director in 1990 and under his direction this innovative program grew in quality and reputation



to become one of the biggest graduate history programs in the country.

Knowing him for nearly forty years as first a student and then a colleague, I shall remember him as setting the highest standards for himself and others. As a student, he opened our eyes to the complexities and ironies of history delivering his lectures with vivid examples and a wry sense of humour. Always a conscientious teacher, he inspired many graduate students to take up the study of Canada's social history. He took great pleasure in teaching students at all levels and shared in their successes after they graduated. As a colleague, he set the bar high, and will long be remembered for his dedication, discipline and wit. He and Leslie warmly welcomed many new faculty members into their home and helped make the Department of History at Guelph a great place to work.

Family was central to Jamie's scholarship and his personal life. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather. He gave generously of his time to those around him, his friends, and community.

Thanks to his family and the generous donations from colleagues and friends, the department has established in his honour the James Snell Scholarships for Outstanding Achievement in History.

He will be greatly missed.

Catharine A. Wilson

Francis and Ruth Redelmeier Professor in Rural History  
Department of History  
University of Guelph

## John F. Leslie



John F. Leslie (1945-2017) was an historian who specialized in colonial and federal relationships with Indigenous people in Canada. For 33 years, he was the manager of the Claims and Historical Research Centre at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), where he conducted historical research for the department, and offered a research centre for First Nations to visit the department for claims research purposes. The culmination of John's time at INAC (1968-2001) and Carleton (Honours B.A. 1986, M.A. 1984, Ph.D. 1999), together with his publications and commissioned projects, has left us with immeasurably greater knowledge of the history of treaties, related policy, and the historical *Indian Act*.

After John completed his undergraduate work in history at Carleton University in 1968, he joined INAC as a Research Officer in the Indian Lands Registry and Research Division. In 1969, Prime Minister Trudeau issued his *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy*, the controversial White Paper that proposed termination of Indian status and treaties. As a young civil servant, John witnessed first-hand First Nations' rejection of that policy; Canada's startled acceptance of that rejection; and the about-turning policies of Trudeau and then-Minister of Indian Affairs Jean Chrétien.

In 1973, in response to the landmark *Calder* decision on Aboriginal title, Prime Minister Trudeau created the Office of Native Claims. At that time, John became the Deputy Chief of the Treaties and Historical Research Centre, an office that provided historical research services for the department and facilitation and workspace for First Nations and their representatives who came to research claims. For many claims, a research trip to INAC or retrieval of records was an important part of the process, since the written records of an aggrieved transaction (such as a railway expropriation across a reserve, or an alleged failure in relation to treaty promises) may be filed at Indian Affairs. As a sociable person — with a welcoming laugh, dry joke and a true desire to be helpful — John loved being a point person for First Nations' research at INAC. He became manager of the Treaties and Historical Research Centre (THRC, later renamed Claims and Historical Research Centre) in 1977. John remained there for 33 years, until his retirement in 2001.

Under John's leadership, the THRC's research laid essential groundwork for Canada's understanding of treaties and the historical *Indian Act*. For example, John wrote "The Jay Treaty: A Study in Indian Border-Crossing Rights" (1979) and he and his

colleague Ron Maguire wrote "The Historical Development of the Indian Act" (1979). From 1981 to 1987, the THRC released a series of *Treaty Research Reports* (which are still widely used), authored by THRC staff and other historians: Kenneth Coates, Wayne Daugherty, Hugh Dempsey, Dennis Madill, James Morrison, William Morrison, and John Leonard Taylor. Meanwhile, John remained active in academic conferences and circles; for example, *The Bagot Commission: Developing a Corporate Memory for the Indian Department* was published in *Communications historiques / Historical Papers* in 1982.

On the advice of his mentor, Robert J. Surtees of Nipissing University, John returned to graduate studies at Carleton for an M.A. and Ph.D. in History, which he completed in 1984 and 1999. His master's thesis was, "The Commissions of Inquiry into Indian Affairs in the Canadas, 1828-1858"; and his doctoral thesis was, *Assimilation, Integration or Termination? The Development of Canadian Indian Policy, 1943-1963*, advised by Professors Stanley Mealing, Kerry Abel and Duncan McDowell. John dedicated his thesis to Dr. Sally M. Weaver, from whom he received early support and direction, and by whom he was inspired.

John retired in March 2001, giving him more time for his family and also his own projects. In the first four years of retirement, he published: *Native Policy since 1945*, with Kerry Abel, *Canada: Confederation to Present* (2001); *The Indian Act: An Historical Perspective*, *Canadian Parliamentary Review* (2002); *The Importance of Oral and Extrinsic Historical Evidence in Understanding Indian Treaties*, *Archivaria* (2003); and *The Policy Agenda of Native People from World War Two to the 1969 White Paper*, *Aboriginal Policy Research* (2004). In retirement, John was called on as a consultant, expert and deponent in projects and court cases related to his expertise. It is a testament to John that his clients included First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, as well as federal and provincial governments.

I had the great pleasure of working with John during his consulting and retirement years. In addition to his wealth of knowledge, John had a joke for every occasion and a long list of favourite professional memories to share. John was generous with his time, knowledge and expertise. His mentorship will be missed by many.

*Betsy Baldwin is a Principal of Public History, a research consulting firm in Ottawa, and a Part-Time Professor at uOttawa. John F. Leslie is lovingly remembered by his wife, Geri, and daughters Jennifer and Alison and their families.*