

IN MEMORIAM DAVID PENTLAND

David H. Pentland, Professor of Linguistics and Anthropology at the University of Manitoba, died on 6 July 2022 after a short illness.

A prominent figure across the field of Algonquian Studies, David Pentland received his early training in philology in the course of an Honours degree in Icelandic (University of Manitoba, 1968). Turning to general linguistics, he quickly became committed to the comparative study of the Algonquian languages, and his Ph.D. dissertation (University of Toronto, 1979) on *Algonquian Historical Phonology* showed an early mastery of the field in both depth and breadth: in a life-long research program of admirable intellectual coherence, David Pentland not only drew on the structural and geographic diversity of these languages and their remarkable time-depth and historical documentation but also used the analytical tools of synchronic linguistics, comparative reconstruction and ethnology in a way that was exemplary and creative at once.

After a lengthy stretch as an itinerant lecturer, his exceptional status as a scholar was at last recognised in 1993 when the University of Manitoba established a joint position in Linguistics and Anthropology which also carried with it the Editorship of the *Papers of the Algonquian Conference / Actes du Congrès des Algonquinistes*.

Pentland's oeuvre includes a long series of carefully crafted and elegantly presented papers. Beside these formal contributions, he was a generous mentor and guide, at the annual Algonquian Conference as in copious correspondence, to generations of scholars, combining a sharp sense of what makes a good problem with a deeply quizzical stance towards the tools linguists use to solve such problems. His field studies of the Cree spoken at Lesser Slave Lake (Alberta), South Indian Lake (Manitoba) and the eight communities around James Bay (where he also studied Cree cartography) are reflected throughout his work but most obviously in the tribal synonymies that appear in the Subarctic volume of the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians*. As an authority on the philological and cultural evidence and the systematic comparison of the languages he had few peers.

His magnum opus is the *Proto-Algonquian Dictionary*, unfinished at the time of his death (and now being readied for publication as it stands). An historical and comparative analysis of all the Algonquian languages, this is a scholarly work of extraordinary ambition and devotion. It will be his lasting monument.