

## Introduction

The first problem to be solved before developing a list or bibliography on any subject is that one must have a clear definition of what is to be collected before sorting through the great mass of published and unpublished material available. Local history presents special problems in setting such limits. Most people have definitions they use which they assume are generally agreed upon but which contain subtle but important distinctions. Questions abound for the bibliographer. Is local history a strictly amateur affair with anything written by professionals excluded as being "real" or "academic" history? Does a work need to be written by someone who is geographically or genetically linked to be true local history or can anyone produce such a work? Does the term local history apply only to geographical boundaries or can it also refer to geographically dispersed communities such as ethnic groups?

Happily, there are published definitions to turn to in sorting out the problem. Carol Kammen, an American local historian and historiographer, aggressively defends the role of the local historian. Rejecting artificial distinctions between amateur and professional local historians, she argues that such arbitrary distinctions are generally used to the detriment of the amateur historian. (Kammen, pp. 1-4. For a complete citation see "Works of Assistance in Writing Local Histories in Manitoba" at the end of the introduction to this book.) A little later in her work she presents a sweeping definition of the topic, saying that "local history is despite its limited geographical focus, a broad field of inquiry: it is the political, social, and economic history of a community, and religious and intellectual history too." (Kammen, p. 5.) Inherent in Kammen's discussion is a belief that local history requires a sense of place, a link between subject and writer not necessarily found in other forms of history. Dr. Gerald Friesen and Barry Potyondi, in a sister publication to the present work, suggest that this is a defining characteristic of local history:

Local history fixes our place in the world in just the same fashion as the fireside game of "do you remember?" It takes immediate topics that are very close to each of us, and studies them thoroughly: three generations of one family, the first century of a local church, the story of a town and district. Individuals, institutions and communities are the focus of the work because the topics are close to us, they are the source of entertainment as well as instruction. We actually study ourselves and our homes. (Friesen and Potyondi, p. 3.)

For the present work we have used a definition which relied upon that sense of community. For our purposes, local history is any work produced by any writer seeking to explore and discuss any local community of which they feel themselves to be a part. Because of this we have included academic works in with amateur and popular histories where it was felt that link existed. Geographically, the outside limits were set as the boundaries of the