

4.18.06

Dear Donna,

Thank you for a remarkably splendid Conference. We all created an experiment that worked.

I am writing to follow-up on our April 5th four Workshops, our guest speaker Donna, and the Panel Discussion.

Betsy Fitzgerald opened up wonderful opportunities for us all. She came to our meetings, got to know us and we are grateful for her financial contributions. Betsy's MCSS monthly meeting takes place the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Following her May meeting, she will send me a copy of Teacher Evaluations and a list of schools represented at the Conference.

Craig Saddleire, the freelance video professional, sent me the disc, "Wabanaki Voices: Humanizing L.D. 291". Craig did a fine job. He is on a short holiday, but will send me copies of the disc when he returns, and I will send one to each of you.

I want to thank Julie Nowell who was always available to schedule our Orono Meetings and Conference calls. She gave me great support throughout.

I have several ideas relating to the Conference.

1. Because Social Studies Teachers in many parts of the state did not come to the MCSS Annual Conference, is it possible for us to reach them?
 - a. Could our Elementary, Middle School and High School teachers make plans to present their Native Studies Lessons with these teachers at various schools in the Portland, Brunswick, Bath areas? Could our teachers make one or two appointments during the 2006-2007 school year?
 - b. Could our April 5th Agenda, or modified Agenda, be repeated at the Abbe Museum and the Hudson Museum in the fall, 2006 or spring, 2007 attracting teachers from those areas?

Once we receive information from Betsy Fitzgerald on the list of schools represented at the Conference, we will know which schools were absent and how to proceed.

2. How can we use the DVD?
 - a. Should it be edited?
 - b. Should we think of ways to follow up on specific tribal concerns?

3. Do we want to use Craig Saddlemyre again?
 - a. to film Maurer's Stereotype Workshop?
 - b. to film Donna's talk?

In closing, These questions and ideas are for the Committee to consider and I shall help if and when needed.

I shall keep in touch with Joseph. I thank him for sending me a copy of his e-mail following the Conference.

Warmest Greetings,

Rosie

(In addition, Betsy F. encourages us to continue to use the MCSS website).

Your April 5 talk has gone to all Committee members - Thankyou.

I hope you are almost settled and that it seems o.k.

April 5, 2006

Donna M. Loring

“When Columbus and a handful of Spanish sailors landed in the Caribbean , this was the beginning of “far and away, the most massive act of genocide in the history of the world” At a cost of more than a hundred million lives in five centuries: To put this in a contemporary context, the ratio of native survivorship in the Americas following European contact was less than half of what the human survivorship would be in the United States today if every single white person and every single black person died”.
American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the new world by David E. Stannard

Genocide in the Americas started with Columbus and was carried out during the next 500 hundred years. Through military actions, government policies and even educational curriculum. Genocide took place not only in the forms of Mass murders, mutilations, germ warfare but through policy that was effected to clear the land and take the resources. Policies of removal that resulted in the slaughter of whole villages known to us now as massacres such as Sand Creek, Wounded Knee and here in New England the Pequot and Norridgewock Massacres. The Removal Act of 1830 set in motion a series of events that culminated in what is known by the Cherokee Nation as the “Trail of Tears” a thousand mile walk where hundreds of Cherokee people, mostly the elderly, the sick and the children died

from disease, starvation and the harsh elements. All this was done because President Jackson wanted to gain 100 million acres for the Southern states. He wanted Indians in one place and confined them to areas known as reservations. It was his belief that Indians were inferior to white men and could not survive too close to settlement areas. He is quoted as saying "They have neither the intelligence nor moral habits.. Established in the midst of a superior race, they must disappear." This removal policy was not only in line to be used in the South but was to be used here in Maine. In 1825 President James Monroe who followed Andrew Jackson took over Jackson's removal policies. In a book entitled "History of Indian Tribes of the US vol 3 I found this information on Pg 512 "The Penobscot population 277 lands owned by the tribe 92,160 acres estimates accompanying the plan for western removal submitted to congress by President Monroe.

Military actions and government policies were used to implement the genocide of Indian people these were the overt weapons. The covert weapons, a form of silent genocide were used in other areas one of the most effective and accepted areas of use was the educational system. This system made it an honor and privilege to be an American. It forced Indian children to learn English and prohibited the use of Indian languages, dances, ceremonies and even dress. To be Indian was something to be ashamed of and to be shunned.

I would like to read a portion of the remarks by Kevin Gover, Assistant secretary-Indian affairs, Department of the

Interior at the ceremony acknowledging the 175th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Bureau of Indian affairs. September 8, 2000. (Kevin Gover was the Assistant secretary-Indian Affairs for President Clinton.) Gover's remarks are as follows:

"In March of 1824, President James Monroe established the office of Indian affairs in the Department of War....and so the first mission of this institution was to execute the removal of the southeastern tribal nations. By threat, deceit, and force, these great tribal nations were made to march 1,000 miles to the west, leaving their old, their young and their infirmed in hasty graves along the trail of tears.

As the nation looked to the west for more land this agency participated in the ethnic cleansing that befell the western tribes...in these more enlightened times, it must be acknowledged that the deliberate spread of disease, the decimation of the mighty bison herds, the use of the poison alcohol to destroy mind and body, and the cowardly killing of women and children made for tragedy on a scale so ghastly that it cannot be dismissed as merely the inevitable consequence of the clash of competing ways of life.... We will never push aside the memory of unnecessary and violent death at places such as sand creek, the banks of the Washita river and Wounded Knee.

Nor did the consequences of war have to include the futile and destructive efforts to annihilate Indian cultures. After the devastation of tribal economies and the deliberate creation of tribal dependence on the services provided by this agency set out to destroy all things Indian. This agency forbade the speaking of Indian languages, prohibited the

conduct of traditional religious activities, outlawed traditional government, and made Indian people ashamed of who they were. Worst of all, the Bureau of Indian affairs committed these acts against the children entrusted to its boarding schools, brutalizing them emotionally, psychologically, physically, and spiritually. Even in this era of self-determination, when the Bureau of Indian affairs is at long last serving as an advocate for Indian people in an atmosphere of mutual respect, the legacy of these misdeeds haunts us....And so today I stand before you as the leader of an institution that in the past has committed acts so terrible that they infect, diminish, and destroy the lives of Indian people decades later, generations later. These things occurred despite the efforts of many good people with good hearts who sought to prevent them. These wrongs must be acknowledged if the healing is to begin.”

The United States government needs to acknowledge these acts of genocide that occurred not only in the west but all over the United States as well. ”

The educational system has been used as a silent tool for genocide. Many Indian people who are educated refuse to admit that they are Indian. The educational system promotes Indians as being all the same and would even mix Indian tribes from different parts of the United States for example they would depict a typical Indian Chief as wearing a long eagle feather headdress and portray all Indians in tepees. Also the idea that all Indians are lazy, dirty, alcoholics etc. The idea of sameness is a tool that does not recognize the diversity or uniqueness of different native cultures. Indian children cannot develop a high level



"Elder's Meditation"

We all form self-images and much of our behavior is pretty well determined by how we feel about ourselves.

"Eunice Baumann-Nelson"
Ph.D., PENOBSCOT

The excerpt below is from
"A Cherokee Feast of Days"
by Joyce Sequichie Hifler

There is a cycle of building beliefs called the self talk cycle. Our self talk builds our self image and our self image determines our behavior, our actions, and our self worth - how we feel about ourselves.

If we want to change the way we feel about ourselves we need to change our self talk. We need to build ourselves up. We need to talk to ourselves in a kind, positive, uplifting, good way.

We need to talk to ourselves about the good things that are happening and know that we are worthy and expect abundance.

Oh Great Spirit, today help me to know

myself. Help me to see the joy,
kindness, strength and beauty that I am.

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