Naamitapiikkoan: Blackfoot Influences on Abraham Maslow

By Richard Wright

On Thursday, March 15 we welcomed Ryan Heavy Head to NorQuest.

Ryan is a respected First Nations community leader and academic from The Kainai Nation (Blackfoot) in southern Alberta. He is an liyaohkiimi, or Beaver Bundle Caretaker, with a master’s degree in cultural anthropology. He was the director of Kainai Studies at Red Crow College (2004-2015), and now has a research consulting business focused on traditional knowledge.

Ryan’s presentation offered a story about what led psychologist Abraham Maslow on a journey to Siksika in 1938 to test his hypothesis that all primates (including humans) formed social hierarchies that were based on relationships of dominance and submission; what happened while he was there, and how it affected both his work and the society to which he belonged.

It was a very educational presentation that was told in a timeline beginning well before Maslow’s visit (1870s to 1890s when the southern Alberta Blackfoot tribes were taken advantage of by federal Indian Agents), to the time of the study in 1938, to present day.

Ryan’s entire presentation is worth the time it will take to watch (about 3 hours) and can be found at youtube.com/NorQuestCollegeVideos. It is engaging with tremendous historical and educational value. This story will be re-posted to the top of the news feed once the video is available.

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This month, the RBC Indigenous Mentorship group participated in the MMIW/Men walk with MacEwan University. The walk was to help support and raise awareness about the MMIW and men in this country.

We kicked off Inclusion Fusion week with music from around the world and finished with a Round Dance in the Singhmar Centre for Learning Atrium. Additionally, we also participated in the Humans of NorQuest and we were also part of the SANQC collective art project.

As well, earlier in the month we walked for the Cold Hands Warm Hearts Walk with the Hope Mission for the homeless to bring awareness to people.

We also finished up with ceremony skirts and shirt making with the Indigenous mentors that we have been working on for the past several weekends.

Constitution Circles for Community Dialogue

On Tuesday March 6, NorQuest College hosted a Community Dialogue for deeper understanding and healing. The conversation circles held space to speak to the impact of the not guilty verdicts of Gerald Stanley and Raymond Cormier in the Colton Boushie and Tina Fontaine cases and how we can come together to understand these results. The event began with an Honour Song from Lloyd Cardinal and included words provided by NorQuest Vice-President Joan Hertz, Intercultural Specialist Sarah Apedaile, and concluded with encouraging words from SISR Director Jonathan Robb.

The conversations held in the circles were difficult but much needed as everyone left their circles feeling as though they were able to talk about what was in their hearts and minds. Hiy hiy to Sarah for all of her hard work putting together this much-needed dialogue.
Wetaskiwin Campus Update

There are a couple of events that NorQuest College will be participating in Maskwacis over the next few months, starting with the Maskwacis Spring Job Fair, which takes place on Thursday, April 12 from 9 am – 3 pm at the Howard Buffalo Memorial Centre, Samson Cree Nation Maskwacis. This is an excellent opportunity to network with local businesses and organizations. Please drop by our NorQuest College table.

Then, on Wednesday, May 30, NorQuest will be attending Maskwacis Cultural College’s annual toonie barbecue and book giveaway from 11 am – 1 pm. This year's theme is “Let’s speak in Cree.” This is a wonderful opportunity for local youth to browse and pick up books. NorQuest College’s Strategic Integration and Stakeholder Relations team continues to be a proud sponsor of the book giveaway campaign at Maskwacis Cultural College.

NorQuest College Student Profile:
Justice Cardinal

Tansi, my name is Justice Cardinal. I am a Cree iskwew from Enoch Cree Nation. Currently, I am enrolled in the Practical Nurse program at NorQuest College. This is my first year here at NorQuest College and my first year in the RBC Mentorship Program.

Through the RBC Program I have had access to many supports such as cultural supports (smudging, elders to talk to, cultural activities) and learning supports (tutors, computers, etc.). In addition to all these supports, the RBC program has offered me one other unique support and mentorship.

A mentor doesn’t have to be a person in the program you are in. A mentor is someone who listens if you need someone to talk to. A mentor counsels you academically when you need help or when you ask for it. A mentor is someone who aspires to inspire YOU to achieve YOUR goals and aspirations. That’s how the RBC program supports me.

Reconciliation in Real Terms

On Friday, March 15, NorQuest College closed its doors for its annual College-Wide Learning Day. The staff were treated with many great presentations, including Reconciliation in Real Terms with Charlene Bearhead. Over 100 NorQuest staff members attended the session and listened to Charlene discuss how they can move forward in their role with reconciliation.

Charlene also shared some of the work done in reconciliation across the country, examine the gaps and invite delegates to consider their own roles in reconciliation as well as that of NorQuest in terms of actual social change.

Charlene is currently Education Coordinator for the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, the co-chair of the Downie-Wenjack Fund Board of Directors, a member of the Pathways to Education Canada Indigenous Education Advisory Circle and support to the Alberta Joint Commitment to Action: Education for Reconciliation.
Conversational Cree
By Yvonne Carifelle

Tânisi! Hello!

We are now in Niski Pîsim—the Goose Moon. This is usually the time geese migrate back to the north. The Spring Equinox (sikwan) also starts this month, even if we can still get snow until Easter Sunday.

Vocabulary for this time of year:

Tânisi, piyisk Sikwan cî? Hello, it is finally Spring right?
Tâpwî, miywâsin saskan yôtin. Truly, the chinook wind is nice.
îhî, tatihkisow kôna. Yes, the snow will melt.
Niska mâna kawî pîpimihâwak. The geese are also migrating back.
Ikosi, kawâmîmitin âpisîsinâ-kîskaw. Ok, I will see you Easter Sunday.

Photos from the Month of March

From the MMIW Walk, pictured L-R: Chasitty Buffalo, Tanya Bruce, Glenda Bruce, Tracy Bear, Angie Doherty, Jolene Auger, Cheyenne Paddy-Okimaw, Elizabeth

Ryan Heavy Head, Naamilapiikkoan presenter, speaks at NorQuest College

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