

Side Notes for PowerPoint Summary Presentation - Sunday, October 24

- Slide 1: Truth and Reconciliation: Summary Presentation, Sunday October 24, 2021
- Slide 2: Pre-European Contactm, Dave Neufeld
- Slide 3: Movie images of savages on the prairies, the Iroquois as the “bogey men” we may have heard about in “Breastplate and Buckskin” – 3 generations of kids learned from this book and “Fair Domain” by George Tait, and others by Henry Miles before him.
Much mythology and just downright incorrect information coloured by Hollywood movies, romanticized artwork and yes the Ontario Education System and past textbooks.
- Slide 4: Characterized as in a primitive state – “pre-history” is a racist term.
- Described as barely Neolithic peoples -The **Neolithic** is the era when the farming of plants and animals begins, and when, as a result, humans first begin to create permanent settlements.
- Often described by Historians in the 19th and early 20th Century as being “devoid of culture” and “savages”, few in number, nomadic, making little use of the resources. Characterized as extremely “brutal” in comparison to “civilized Europeans”
- Slide 5: First Lets look at numbers and other examples:
Most recent evidence of an archaeological site in New Mexico positively dated to 22,000 years ago.
- Modern scholarship supports notion that Western Hemisphere’s pop exceeded Western Europe’s estimated 70 million in the 15th Century.
- In school we learned about Greece and Rome, but never these civilizations. Why?
- Why do we know so little about the Aztec, Inca and Mayan civilizations, and nothing about the Mississippians?
Example:
- City of Cahokia was located outside of present day St. Louis, Missouri –
- **Cahokia** was a **city** that, at its peak from 1050-1200 CE, was larger than many European **cities**, including London.
- The **city** was spread out over 16 square kilometers and encompassed at least 120 mounds and a **population** between 10,000 and 20,000 people – there is much debate on population (50,000 in suburbs)
- Slide 6: Somewhere around 150 to 200,000 people lived in the Great Lakes region prior to European contact, Wendat, Neutral, Haudenosaunee, Tionontate, Wenro and others..
Neutral -Jesuit accounts (1610) say 40,000 . In 1626 they report - 28 large semi-permanent towns and many smaller villages and hamlets. o, having gone
These cultures have been described as more like medieval farming societies, not dissimilar from a lot of Europe in the 1400 and 1500’s.. They were farmers and cultivated thousands of acres of corn, beans , squash and other crops in highly organized fashion. Had grown beans since year 0, corn since year 1,000.
Mantle Site – 2,000 people cultivated 80 sq km. (5 km all directions) size of Waterloo.
Advanced political systems, treaties and foreign policies, long distance trade.
Paul Racher quote “What this means is that much of southern Ontario (including Waterloo Region) was “managed landscape”, dotted with towns and villages, connected by trail and

road systems, and surrounded by land that was currently, recently or soon to be farm fields. Or land managed for a particular mix of wildlife and nut and berry crops.”

Much different picture than the great “primordial forest” we were taught about.

ge, I think this might be a good time to wrap up. If there is anything for you to take away from my talk, I hope it is this: That the Colonial narrative has no basis in evidence and indeed, the archaeological and historical evidence against it is both vast ...and all around us. As we try to repair the fractured relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Settler Society, those facts are going to come in handy.

Slide 7: 1491 by Charles C. Mann - Contact followed a loose pattern:

1. Disease and destabilization
2. European newcomers ally with rival nations which cause inter-group warfare
3. Result is massive population collapse
 - So what happens here? 1539 to 1701,
 - Archaeological record shows that there is a sudden and unexplained consolidation of the confederacies in the 1500s. (coincides with Hernando de Soto (1539) in the Mississippian region and Jacques Cartier's arrival (1535/6) in the St. Lawrence)
 - Wendat consolidate to Penetanguishene, Neutral to Milton and Niagara
 - Villages and towns become more heavily fortified with defensive palisades and “bastions” – suggestive of increase and intensification of warfare.
 - Jacques Cartier – 1535 at Hochelaga and Stadacona (describes Hochelaga/Montreal as having 50 longhouses – a town the size of Mantle
 - When Champlain arrives after 1603, the St. Lawrence is populated by the Algonquin and Montagnais and Stadacona, Hochelaga and the St. Lawrence Iroquoians are gone. (70 years later)
 - Champlain in the 1600s, and shortly thereafter the Jesuits recount incredible epidemics which decimate the Iroquoians – estimates of 60% of population dies.
 - Destabilization of confederacies, beaver wars or rather wars of condolence, amalgamations and re-locations.

Slide 8: By 1701, warfare ends with the Dish with One Spoon Treaty

- Inland Mississauga were here when the Mennonites arrived around 1800
- Haudenosaunee consolidate back to traditional territory of New York, with understanding that Southwestern Ontario is a shared resource.
- The Inland Mississauga lived semi-permanently along the banks of the Grand River, and tributaries and both farmed, hunted and gathered foods throughout the area including Wilmot Township. Farms tended to be smaller, with nuclear and extended families. The “seasonal rounds” style of land use was more the norm.
- Highly valued fishing “stations” were located along the river systems. Often became European Town Sites, such as Galt.
- When the Mennos arrived there are numerous anecdotal accounts of the Indigenous people in the area. They traded in basketry, foods such as game and fish stocks. They were paid to hunt wolves, and continued to gather wild foods, again according to family accounts, through the 19th Century. Sadly interactions were not always positive, as newcomers did not recognize any indigenous right to be here.

Slide 9: Doctrine of Discovery, Ron Flaming

Doctrine of Discovery is based on simple idea that if you discover something that does not belong to anyone it can be yours if you claim it. Makes sense, right?

Slide 10: In the 15th century European sailors came across lands they had not known about. They discovered their existence. However, they found people living there, so it seemed the land might already belong to someone.

But the Church came to help. Several popes published decrees as God's representatives on earth. Collectively known as the "Doctrine of Discovery", these proclamations defined land as empty, not belonging to anyone, if it was not claimed by a Christian monarch. This doctrine defined the people living on discovered lands as lower than Europeans, worthy of being overthrown, and not worthy of the sovereignty of their home lands. The Doctrine authorized, and even mandated, European mercenaries to conquer and enslave the people living there, and to seize the land for Christendom and European monarchy. These proclamations are called a "Doctrine" because they constitute a truth declaration by the church.

This painting depicts the attitude of the Doctrine of Discovery towards people indigenous to the lands Europeans found. Here, the Arawak representative is depicted as bowing down while bringing forward an offering to the proud blond haired Columbus.

Slide 11: In a proclamation of 1455 Pope Nicholas V spoke as the key-holder of the heavenly kingdom and the representative of Christ while decreeing "ample faculty" for the King of Portugal ***to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens (Muslims) and pagans whatsoever, ... and the kingdoms...and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and ... appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms ... and goods, and to convert them to his ... profit***
In 1493 Pope Alexander VI decreed it ***is your duty, to lead the peoples dwelling in those islands and countries to embrace the Christian religion ... in order that you may enter upon so great an undertaking with greater readiness... We, ... out of the fullness of our apostolic power... [say that] any of said islands have been found by your envoys ... assign to you and your heirs and successors ... forever ... With this proviso ... that none of the islands and mainlands, found ... be in the actual possession of any Christian king or prince***

Slide 12: In summary, European powers were seeking land to conquer and colonize and wealth to extract..

The Doctrine of Discovery provided a papal blessing and Christian justification for claiming territory where other people already lived.

European monarchs, explorers and eventually colonists understood they had a divinely sanctioned right, or at least divine permission, for actions that would otherwise have been considered as injustice and theft.

Slide 13: The attitude towards Indigenous peoples championed by the Doctrine of Discovery leads to a deeply rooted disrespect and disregard of Indigenous peoples.
European and later Canadian governments felt it acceptable to make treaties in bad faith or to break treaties they had previously made. Their intent was to eliminate the people, their history, their relationship and care for the land.

Slide 14: The Doctrine of Discovery is not an event in the distant past.

It is at the foundation by which the Crown, the federal government, claims the land that is now Canada.

The Doctrine justified the domination of many Indigenous peoples by the European people of Christendom.

The Doctrine declares the Western Christian world view and values as inherently true and Indigenous values backward and impediments to progress. For example, in the West we believe that water and land have their highest value as economic resources, rather than as relatives who sustain us and keep us alive.

Slide 15: Crown land belongs to Canada because England claimed it. The Crown sold that land to European settlers and gave them deeds to the property.

The validity of our property deeds today depends on the legal history and chain of deeds stretching back to the “original” crown claim to the land that is still recognized today.

In 1990 in the case called “*R v Sparrow*” about Indigenous fishing rights in B.C. the Supreme court of Canada stated: “*while British policy towards the native population was based on respect for their right to occupy their traditional lands, [...]there was from the outset never any doubt that sovereignty and legislative power, and indeed the underlying title, to such lands vested in the Crown.*”

<https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/609/index.do>

In the 2014 decision regarding Tsilhqot’in Nation versus British Columbia, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled: “*At the time of assertion of European sovereignty, the Crown acquired radical or underlying title to all the land in the province.*”

“Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia,” Supreme Court Judgements, <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14246/index.do>, par.69.

Slide 16: The 49th Call to Action of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission final report in June 2015 said:

49. We call upon all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to *repudiate* concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.

A quick internet search comes up with a variety of synonyms that help define what “repudiating” something means: to repudiate is to reject, abandon, refute, disclaim, set aside, rescind or retract.

I think repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery means letting go of the Doctrine as the basis for relations on the land of Canada. I think of Paul’s letter to the Philippians (RSV) in which he said Jesus “did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself”, or “let go” of his power.

We can’t replace history or turn the clock backwards to a former time. But we can let go of the attitude that justifies our dominance over others. We can treat people with the same respect we want to be treated. We can honour the treaties that exist.

Slide 17: We can move forward from the way things are now on a new basis. We can acknowledge the current structures and patterns that have obvious and hidden roots in the Doctrine of Discovery. Then we take the next steps to forge different ways of living together on the land. Mark MacDonald, Indigenous Bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada, said “don’t only advocate, but walk with us”.

That is the path of reconciliation. It is a path which proceeds by respecting the people and the treaties that have been made.

This image depicts the first Euro-Indigenous treaty on North America – the Two Row Wampum agreement between the Dutch and the Haudenosaunee. It suggests a perspective, a way forward, on the path of reconciliation. The two purple stripes representing two peoples travelling side by side sharing the river of life in peace and friendship, forever.

Slide 18: Residential Schools, Bernie Burnett (Slides 18-28)

Slide 29: Understanding Our Worldviews and Concepts of Land, Anne Brubacher

Slide 30: These past number of years, we have been hearing a lot about Land Back. There's 1492 Land Back Lane in Caledonia where Waterloo North and other churches have been taking meals. Then there was the Landback Camp that was next door here at Laurel Creek. You may wonder what is it that the Indigenous people want and there is no doubt that Land Back can mean different things to different people both within the Indigenous community and within our own Settler communities.

But before going down the Land Back road, I believe it is important for us to understand that we all tend to come to the question of land from very different perspectives or worldviews and in order to move forward in reconciliation, it is important for us to understand these differences.

As a white colonial settler, I want to be careful about speaking on their behalf. Much of what I am sharing is speaking in generalities.

Slide 31: If you have ever attended an Indigenous gathering you will know that most of them open with a Thanksgiving Address. The Address is not just a rote list of gratitudes. It has a format and structure. As the opening of a ceremony, it can go on at length, for an hour and even longer. If we are not prepared for it, it might feel off-putting. "Let's get on with the agenda," we might think. But for the Indigenous people, the Thanksgiving Address sets the tone for what is about to happen.

It speaks to their deep connection to the land because after all, that is where all life comes from.

Land for them, is a very broad term. Creation might be a better one. It is everything that is part of the natural world so the Address includes gratitude for:

... the land and the waters

... the 1-leggeds, meaning the trees

... the plants, including the medicines they provide...

... the animals and the birds that feed us...

... the sun, the moon and the stars

... the 2-legged, meaning those of us and we are just one part of this larger creation

... Then there is gratitude for the Creator who made it all happen.

There's a relationship between every part of the land because it is what supports us and everything else. There's a reciprocity in it all.

Many of you have read *Braiding Sweet Grass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. She speaks of this integral relationship when she says "In some Native languages the term for plants translates to "those who take care of us." I like this quote because it speaks to humility, wisdom and respect that are part of the Grandfather teachings.

Slide 32: The Grandfather Teachings come out of the Anishinaabe sense of gratitude where all of creation, including each other are treated with:

1. Humility
2. Truth
3. Honesty
4. Wisdom
5. Bravery
6. Respect
7. Love

Perhaps you have read Indigenous stories or watched movies of a hunter who is about to kill a deer. At the last moment, the deer stops and looks the hunter the eye as if to say “you may take me” and with gratitude, humility and respect, the hunter releases his quiver.

It is with gratitude that Indigenous offer tobacco ...in recognition of the gift that has been offered ...whether that gift is a teaching from another person ...or if it is from the garden that produced a picking of beans ...or the deer that will feed the hunter’s family for the long winter ahead.

Slide 33: We all have worldviews. It’s how we have been taught to relate to the world and to each other. There is lots that we have in common with other cultures but there are also places where our understandings differ significantly and so it is with the Indigenous culture. These are but a few differences and again I emphasize that they are very general. I have bolded 3 that I think speak to our understandings of land, possessions and what’s important:

Indigenous: Land is sacred and for the benefit of all creation – the waters, the animals, the trees, the plants ...and humans too

Western: The land and its resources should be available for development and extraction for the benefit of humans.

Indigenous: Human beings are not the most important in the world. There’s a relational circle.

Western: Human beings are most important in the world. We’re at the top of the pyramid

Indigenous: Amassing wealth is important for the good of the community

Western: Amassing wealth is important for the good of the individual

Slide 34: Back in the fall of 2019, before the pandemic, Darren Thomas was one of the Third Age Learning speakers at RIM Park. He spoke about 2 distinct views about land held by Indigenous and Western peoples which I found very helpful. He boiled it down to 5 points or generalizations:

Indigenous: Land collectively belongs to future generations

Western: Land is an individual’s private property

Indigenous: Everyone should benefit from the land

Western: Land is viewed as a commodity with equity for the person/group who owns it

Indigenous: Take what you need but use all that you take

Western: Land is for personal benefit. What can I get from it or what can we as a corporation earn from it.

Indigenous: Respect what you take from the land

Western: Land can be manipulated, controlled and exploited for economic progress

Indigenous: Land is to be shared

Western: Land is to be owned.

Slide 35: I want to conclude with 4 general points.

The concept of **7 generations** is central to Indigenous decision making. As Settlers, many of us have now been on this land for at least the 7 generations and now we are facing the realities of climate change and the earth's pollution. I would argue that we could learn much from the Indigenous perspective of gratitude and respect for all of creation.

Indigenous connection to the land, including its waters and its animals is not so much one of **ownership** as it is one of **stewardship**. In fact I just recently read one writer speak of Land Back not so much about returning land per se as it being more about being able to decide about the stewardship of the land for the future.

Finally, the comparison of land or all of creation to an umbilical cord makes a lot of sense to me. It is the means of nourishment. It's literally our life source and it all comes from the Creator.

Taking only what we need is a huge challenge for us. Someone within my Mennonite circles (and I don't remember who it was) just recently wondered aloud, "whatever happened to the concept of simply living?" Can we now hear that challenge from our Indigenous neighbours?