

Traditionally Speaking

Loco' E Ezil'd'Ka

(Painted Turtle)



CULTURAL INSENSITIVITY IS ALIVE AND RAMPANT HERE IN THE UNITED STATES

Last week "Good Morning America" was in Hong Kong doing a week of remote shows and it was while watching one of these shows that I realized the depth that our insensitivity extends. The hosts had been on a shopping spree buying different brands of wine. They had three types of wine in the studio and were making light of the fact that the wine bottles had something in the bottle in addition to the wine. One wine bottle had a lizard in it, another had a snake in it, and the final bottle had a mouse in it. The hosts went on to say that they thought that it was an unusual occurrence until they discovered that these wines were in popular demand in Hong Kong. They also laughed and implied that it was gross to even consider drinking wine with these animals in it. One of the hosts stated that many of the residents drink these special wines to help fight illnesses. Until that moment, I was operating just as the hosts were and that included making fun of this custom. I then asked myself "What is so funny about a cultural practice that we do not fully understand?" I determined that it would have been more responsible if the hosts had explained the various uses for these special wines. Had this effort been expended we Americans could have learned some valuable information concerning the role of these wines to the people of Hong Kong and we would have been wiser for the effort.

I started thinking about the standard attitudes that we are faced with on a daily basis, and concluded that it is the normal reaction of

Americans to poke fun or completely dismiss anything that we do not fully understand. This is a negative methodology that we employ without even thinking about the consequences. It is no wonder that we have a population that is extremely negative toward cultural differences in the United States of America. All of the racial and ethnic groups that are a part of this country's citizenry have unique cultural custom that are interesting and should be preserved for the future. Instead of our being intimidated or turned off by these differences, we should be thankful and try to learn and appreciate these customs that make groups of people special. It must also be remembered that all people regardless of race, creed or color are very special in the eyes of the CREATOR.

So I say to people (NATIVE AMERICANS) let us appreciate and try to understand all customs including our own and the world will be a better place in which to live. On several occasions, I have heard native people say that dancing, singing, etc. was not a part of the culture of the NATIVE AMERICANS in Robeson county, however, I disagree with this premise. The role that these activities played in our cultural development depends on the period of our evolution one remembers. I feel that it is more important for individuals to be supportive of those that wish to keep alive these traditions than to be critical and negative. So when you see young, middle-aged and older people dancing, singing and doing crafts be thankful that they are helping preserve a part of your cultural development. **BE POSITIVE, NOT NEGATIVE.**

Elders and Traditionalist Corner

Wisdom from the Country

Dear Miss Connee,
The older I get, the less things surprise me. Well, most of the time anyhow. Lately, them boys over that at the LRDA met and said that the people who are writing our constitution could not meet anymore. They said too, Miss Connee, that people could not have community meetings. Now, Miss Connee, I don't know much, but I do know that there's a piece of paper somewhere that supposed to protect us. This piece of paper is called the Constitution of these here United States. Now, I know we Indians, Miss Connee, ain't never been treated right and fair, but they tell me that the Constitution guarantees us certain rights. One of these is the right to meet when we want to. And this will shock them LRDA boys, Miss Connee, but that piece of paper says we can say and write what we want to.

Now the boys over at the LRDA has tried to order our people not to meet. All these here carrying ons by them LRDA boys, Miss Connee, is one of the reasons I agin them being by tribal government. It's enough to scare the jabbers out of we poor people. What in the name of land would they do, Miss Connee, if they really had any power? One of the amazing things about all this, Miss Connee, is that Bobby Dean Locklear made the motion for people to quit meeting. Well now, you know, I'm been told you that Bobby Dean couldn't serve on our tribal council cause he's chairman of the board of commissioners. Makes you wonder if Mr. Locklear handles our county business the same way. Can't believe some things, Miss Connee, I reckon it this here LRDA was the tribal government, they would probabli, have all the people arrested and throwed in jail. Seems to me like they just want to put a stop to every body that don't agree with 'em. Well, they may as well come and get of 'Wiz, cause I ain't about to let that crowd over there at the LRDA tell me when I can get together with the boys down at the store.

Now Miss Connee, ol' Wiz just ain't gonna pay them LRDA boys any attention. One of them delegates said, "They're legends in their own mind." I sort of like that saying and have borrowed it here to get my point across. Now, having little sayings or happenings helps to explain some things. But, now if they get to cutting out my taters over there at the LRDA, I reckon I would be upset, but still people keeps telling me these things about the LRDA.

Anyway you look at it, Miss Connee, the people writing our constitution are going to go forward with their meetings, and as soon as

these delegates have our constitution out, the people are going to go ahead and vote it in. I'm thinking that them LRDA boys are going to have a mighty tough thing on their hands trying to stop the people from meeting and voting on their constitution. I reckon they figure the people ain't all that smart, but if I were them, I wouldn't count on that. Course you get a few men together who are hungering and thirsting after power, there ain't no telling what they will put the people through to get their way. But when it comes to the ballot box, Miss Connee, we'll get our relief. And I reckon it's time for the people to get some relief from some of these LRDA boys.

Not too long ago, Miss Connee, the people over at Prospect had them a meeting on the tribal constitution. They took them a vote. My cousin told me they all raised their hands; except one of them LRDA board men. Now, my cousin told me that the LRDA board man said he weren't voting against having a constitution, he's just not voting. Well, Miss Connee, seems to me like if a man can't vote one way or the other, he's mighty slippery. But it seems like them LRDA boys sure stick together when it comes to voting. You'll find 'em ever time on one side and the people on the other side.

Mr. Michael Locklear got mighty upset, Miss Connee, cause I told the people about the meeting at Rex Rennet. Ol' Wiz is been told off before. And I expect if the Lord don't come real soon, I'll be told off again. People need to know about these things. Mr. Locklear still didn't tell us what the issue was that he voted against. And he sure didn't tell us about the time and place of these here public meetings the LRDA has. Now, as for killing our recognition, Miss Connee, these LRDA boys just ain't willing to stop at anything if they can't get their way. They want to get mad at me for telling what I know about the LRDA. But Mr. Michael Locklear wants me to call his name, and next time he does something that bears repeating, I'll try to call him by name. All this you know makes them LRDA boys look bad, Miss Connee, but they ain't gonna pay attention.

Wiz can do to help them out with that problem. Well, let them LRDA boys stand where they want to. As for ol' Wiz, I'm gonna stand with the people where I've always stood. I ain't lived here all these years to be a changing now, just because the them boys at the LRDA has it in their heads that they can tell the people what to do. Course talk is cheap. I'm got a feeling that before its over, them LRDA boys will be wishing they were standing with the people. I wouldn't want to be standing there with LRDA against the people, Miss Connee.

On The Pow Wow Circuit



- The following list of upcoming powwows is not intended to be a complete list. Anyone having information about upcoming powwows not listed is encouraged to send them to Wild Turkey, P.O. Box 1075, Pembroke, NC 28372 or fax to (910) 521-1975.
- *February 26, 1994, First Annual Native American Cultural Festival, Noon until 6:00 p.m., Cone Ballroom, Elliott University Center, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
 - *March 18-20 Pow-Wow Greenville, NC (410)788-0689, (919)257-1720
 - *March 25-26, 1994, Annual Festival of the Four Holes Indian Organization (The Natchez Kusso Tribe), Call (803) 871-2126
 - *April 1-2 NC State University Pow-Wow, Reggie Oxendine (919) 839-2214
 - *April 9, Duke University Pow-Wow, Dana Chavis (919) 613-1942
 - *April 15-17 Haliwa-Sapponi Pow-Wow, Hollister, NC (919)586-4017
 - *April 7-9 Raleigh, NC Pow-Wow, (410) 788-0689, (919)257-1720
 - *April 29-31 Harrisburg, PA (410) 788-0689 or (919)257-1720
 - *May 6-8, Metrolina Native American Association, second annual American Indian Festival and Pow Wow, 2601 East Seventh Street, Charlotte, NC Call Association 704-331-4818
 - *May 7- Hoke County Schools Indian Education Pow Wow, South Hoke Elementary School, Info: (910) 875-4106
 - *May 13-15 Lumbee Cheroak Spring Pow Wow, Robeson County Fairgrounds, Lumberton, NC. Phone: (910) 521-8602
 - *May 21-22 Richmond Community College (919) 582-7071
 - *May 21-23 Tuscarora Nation Pow Wow, Tribal Grounds, Maxton, NC. Info: 910-844-3352
 - *May 28, Upper Mattaponi Spring Festival, Sharon School, King William, VA. Info: 804-769-2408
 - *June 4-5, Machapunga Tuscarora Indian Tribal Association First Annual Native American Pow Wow, Moratoc Park on the Roanoke River, Hwy 711 S Business, Williamston, NC. Info: 910-793-6117-910-975-1473 after 6 p.m.
 - *June 16, 17, 18, & 19, Rebirth of the Traditional Spiritual Gatherings, a Tribute to the Great Spirit, Father of all Indian Nations, North Carolina Indian Cultural Center. Call Spotted Turtle (910) 521-4178, Painted Turtle (910) 521-0020 or Wild Turkey (919) 521-2826
 - *June 24-25 Allentown, PA, Pow-Wow (410)788-0689
 - *July 15-16, Charlotte Native American Community Native American Festival, Uptown Charlotte, NC 704-527-7187
 - *July 15-17 Howard County, MD (410) 788-0689, (919) 257-1720
 - *July 24, Cherokee of Hoke County and Maxton, NC Tuscaroras, Intertribal Festival, at Rockfish near Davis Bridge, NC. Contact Chief or Mrs. Edgar Bryant, (910) 875-0222.
 - *July 30-31, Third Annual Pow Wow and Festival, Rising Water and Falling Water, Showplace, Richmond, VA. 804-769-1018 804-443-4221.
 - *July 29-31 Virginia Beach, (410) 788-0689 or (919) 257-1720
 - *August 26-28 Baltimore American Indian Center Pow-Wow (410) 675-3535
 - *September 15-17 Guilford Native American Association (919)273-8686
 - *September 9-10, Coharie Pow-Wow, Clinton, NC. Contact 910-564-6909
 - *Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Indian Trail Pow Wow, Indian Trail, NC. Call Metrolina Association: 704-331-4818, Kingston Sanderson: 704-821-6461
 - *October 7-8, Cumberland County Native American 13th Annual Pow Wow, Memorial Indoor Arena, Fayetteville, NC 910-483-8442
 - *November 7-13 Great American Indian Expo (410) 788-0689
 - *November 21-27 Native American Pow-Wow, Baltimore, MD (410) 675-3535

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Across my Desk by Sheila Firehair

Years of letters and doing genealogy has brought with it all kinds of questions and problems, hardly any of which deal directly with the search for a name on a family tree. In doing Native American/Indian research, this is even more true. So many of our People have little, if any, knowledge of their past, their heritage, their culture...it has been covered up, lied about, hidden, denied, and lost due to age and passing of those in the family who might have known something. Often a letter that brings a simple request ends up being a long range correspondence or even telephone relationship, because answers to many things are desperately needed-wanted-hoped for.

It has become, of late, apparent that an awful lot of People are looking for a "quick fix", instant ancestry, an easy and simple way to become one with their heritage, hundreds of years of culture, history and living. Some of us (wryly) refer to this as a desire to take "Indian, 101". Too many People are out and about, looking for a Savior, and willing to grab onto all the "trappings" of Indian-ness, with little, if any, learning, listening, studying, knowledge.

When a letter comes stating that "my great grandmother was an Indian, and I want to get a card because I need Indians get to go to school for free/don't have to pay taxes/want to apply for a loan/etc. (erroneous concepts at best), my answer is immediate: "Hire someone who will do that research for you...I don't DO genealogy for cards." My intent, hope, is to help find family, customs, heritage, and give to those who come to me a sense of who they really, indeed, are.

Let's talk a bit about the ancient philosophy of all our People no matter who you are/what mix what tribe...our belief in our Ancestors. The way I have been taught, and my understanding, is this: Our Creator, all knowing, all loving, all giving and kind, bestowed upon each and every one of us a group of ancestors. As the generations pass, then, of course, the ancestral pool increases. They may often be collateral aunts, uncles, cousins, male, female, old, young. Those who choose us to go on with do not necessarily choose our siblings...doesn't THAT instantly explain differences!!! Not all are

"good". Not all are Indian. Yet, everything they did, lived, experienced, knew, is in the memory bank (brain (Einstein used 10% of his!)) and they are there for us, to guide, help, if we look inward, if we ask. Many of us are so fortunate...we are the ones a great many of our Indian ancestors chose to go forward with. Which is why, in family groups, we find those of us who will search out our Path, no matter what the relatives say in the face of those who look at us in horror, disgust, anger and embarrassment, because we persevere in our search. If we are to truly walk in ways that will honor our Ancestors, then we must make every honest effort to learn who, what, and where, they are.

Yet, every day, the stories of "for pay" sweat lodges, pipe ceremonies, medicine wheels, Shaman at Pow Wows, Medicine People coming from "out west" and teaching total strangers the "Sacred Ways" are rife. Our ancient ceremonies are being prostituted, our Ancestors treated with blatant disrespect.

Originally, these ceremonies were for very special, very religious, very meaningful, specific purposes. Not done as a matter of course. I often feel as though I am hearing...Lube job at 10, for the car, nails at noon, sweat at 2 and hair at 4. Oh, gee, maybe a pipe ceremony, and sitting on Mother Earth by sundown.

When any of us partake of a ritual ceremony it is imperative one is mentally, spiritually and physically prepared, and in tune, for such an experience. One also needs to know who is in charge, who will be there, and know them well enough to trust them totally. You do NOT do any ceremonies, if you have any sense at all, with strangers. Even more importantly, perhaps, if you are about to call up the Ancestors...which is what these ceremonies are basically all about...then you had best know pretty much who they were, and how they live, who their enemies were. The Ancestors, by our traditions, are bound to answer you when you call upon them. They, in turn, rightfully expect you know how to welcome them, and hear them, when they answer. If you are not ready, you have turned your ancestors loose, perhaps amongst their enemies. Worse, with family that knows them,

not at all, and is not ready for them. You can do a sweat, by yourself, in your own home, bath, workroom, wherever. You do not need so called Holy People (the real ones do not proclaim themselves, ever)...all you need is yourself, the Creator, and privacy. If you have wish/need to do the pipe...make/buy yourself a personal one, and do your own ceremonies, where you are at peace with yourself and your surroundings. You want a medicine wheel...build your own, in a favorite spot...and use it. The Creator is there for you, so are the ancestors. The knowledge you want/need, is within yourself...and with this comes peace. Some of the most honored and traditional People it has been my privilege to know speak with...have never been to a sweat lodge, never done the pipe with anyone outside the immediate family.

A revered woman who has been invited all over the U.S., Canada, is asked to speak, teach, said "If, in my lifetime, I have met three Medicine people, Holy Ones, then how fortunate I am." Chief Big Eagle (Aurelius Piper, Golden Paugusset) said, several years ago "Beware of those who proclaim their wisdom and traditional ways. Anyone can grow their hair long, cross a state line, and say they are a pipecarrier, a Medicine Man, a Shaman. Be careful of those from far away who come to share their knowledge to strangers...why aren't they at home helping their own People?" A recent letter from a Shoshone, directly descended from Sacajawea states "An awful lot of western Indians like being set up as tin gods to those on the East Coast, who look to them in awe."

We should honor and respect the ways of our sisters, brothers, but we here on the East coast have our own history, our own culture, our own traditions...they can be found, by reading, studying, absorbing, sorting, learning. We do not need to copy anyone. Even if we do not learn exactly who each one of our ancestors were...we can know about where they lived, who was in that area at that time, and what events were happening that affected their lives. Often, when we make this effort...the Ancestors, who will tell us what they want us to know, when they want us to know it...begin to talk...big time. Until later, Peace and Balance!

The Way I See It

by Dr. Dean Chivers, President Native American Scholarship Fund Albuquerque, NM



I was known as a field pea grower when I was 10 to 15 years old. Every year I had a sandy field somewhere to grow them. Most years it was in a small V-shaped patch in front of the tenant house.

Peas won't grow well in rich soil, or dark soil. But they will grow well in sandy soil. They don't need a lot of fertilizer, either, just a moderate amount.

Later in life, I read a history of Indians in North Carolina written by John Lawson. In the book, he describes a chief of one of the tribes who would eat "pease" a lot. A little later, he would pass flatulose and laugh about it. It reminded me of some of the chiefs I knew around Pembroke. Peas will give you gas, but I love them to death. I have some in the refrigerator now. All you have to do is stick them in the microwave for a couple of minutes and they taste fresh-cooked.

The best thing you can put in a pot of peas is a hambone. If you don't have a hambone, some side meat, or some salt pork will do. You can put some bacon and onions in them, too. We used to can a few dozen jars of

them every year. I don't know how many hundred hours I have spent shelling peas. Now, we buy some from the farms out here each year, and freeze them. I always loved shelling peas, and my three girls don't understand why. I have to beg them to help me.

I used to sell a bunch of peas in town as well. Back then, they went for 50 cents a peck, or \$2 a bushel. Now they go for \$15 a bushel. Quite a difference.

I like to cut up a spring onion, or scallion, really fine and mix them in with peas. This takes some getting used to. If a piece of that pepper hits raw skin, it will set you on fire.

To this day, my favorite vegetables are peas and corn. Throw in some squash, and you have a meal, with some hoe cakes. Those vegetables will stick to your ribs, and not leave you hungry in a little while. We all probably ought to eat more vegetables, and less meat.

For the past 15 years, every year, I have had a garden. I went about 17 years without having a garden, 1962 to 1979. But since 1979, I have had a

garden every year.

When we lived in Broken Arrow, 1981 to 1985, I had a 9600 square foot garden, the largest one I ever had. I could grow everything there except pumpkins and potatoes. I would have to plant the potatoes two or three times to get them to come up, and the squash bugs were all over the pumpkin plants.

Peas would grow fairly well there, but not great. Still, we would get five or eight bushels of peas from the garden in Broken Arrow.

(Talk about corn growing as high as an elephant's eye. One year I had corn that topped 12 feet, and had two ears for almost every stalk. Corn loves that thick clay soil in Oklahoma, but peas don't.)

The two places we have lived in Albuquerque are good for peas, but we don't have much room. When I get rich, I am going to buy a big place, and grow all the peas I want.

Peas are good for you. Out here, they also make me homesick. But at least I don't have to go back to Pembroke to gas up.

Rebirth of the Traditional Spiritual Gatherings

GATHERINGS

A Tribute to the Great Spirit, Father of all Indian Nations

June 16, 17, 18, 19, 1994

North Carolina Indian Cultural Center