



Facts and Fantasy About Turtle Island’s Indigenous People

HEADINGS:

History and Culture; Religion & Education; Terms and Definitions; War and Conquering; Native Rights; Taxation; Native Lifestyle; Behaviour; Modern Times

FANTASY	FACTS
HISTORY & CULTURE	
The history of Native people began with the ‘discovery’ of North America by the Europeans	One cannot “discover” what was never lost in the first place! Unlike Christopher Columbus, Native people always knew where they were — right here on Turtle Island. It has been estimated that there were upwards of 18 million Native people living here at the time of the arrival of the Europeans who found hundreds of different culturally, richly textured settled peoples scattered all across the land, most with very complex and sophisticated matriarchal social/political organizations and belief systems (i.e. Pacific Northwest coast). What is sad, is when the Explorers and Voyageurs finally showed up, their

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

Native people originally emigrated to Turtle Island from Siberia across the Bering Strait

There is not a shred of proof to substantiate the Bering Strait (or Berengia) Theory. Academics insist on seeking an empirical comfort zone and surmised that Indigenous people of North America had to have originated somewhere **ANYWHERE BUT NORTH AMERICA!** – Asia, Africa, Europe, Siberia, with some coming through the Strait to settle in North America. At the time, the northern world was one huge glacier making it impossible to pass through, over or under. There are a number of old stories that talk about the cold, white world of the north. How an original Elder sent four animals to the four corners of Turtle Island looking for other life forms and found none. Nonetheless, the intrepid academics continue to give life to the Bering Strait Theory, and it continues to be taught as fact in most educational institutions from primary grades to universities and colleges in Canada and the United States. Most Indigenous creation stories speak to the fact that Native people came from the unseen world to settle on Turtle Island. In other words, Native people have always been here. This is just another fallacy that proves the point made by Lakota Scholar, Vine Deloria, that all other cultures have ‘real’ history and Native people have been saddled with ‘anthropologists’!

Native societies did not value or empower women

Native women, more often than not, wielded considerable power within their tribes, including ownership of all household property, including: Assuming the roles of Traditional Chiefs (Tsimshian); naming the chiefs; the ability to override decisions made by men (Haudenosaunee). Men and Women were considered equal and had defined roles. Women made the decisions; men executed those decisions. The power held by Native women prior to European contact was the kind of authority European women could only dream

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		the mists of time. In Canada, racist colonial and patrilineal laws also discriminated against women. The children and their mothers lost their status if they married non-Native men. An amendment to the Indian Act in 1985 (Bill-C31) finally restored status to these women (but not their children), but the damage was already done. Indigenous women continue to be THE most marginalized citizens in Canada. Read on.....	
	All Native people speak the same language	At one time across Canada there were fifty-three distinct Native languages that included many different dialects. In fact, each language is different and complex; some languages have a common root base (hence the anthropological language groupings) making communication easier. With the arrival of the Europeans and the imposition of the Residential School travesty which banned the practice of Native culture, including the speaking of Indigenous languages, a number of them are now extinct.	
	All Native people have “Native Names”	Most Native people normally answer to an English name; a minority also have been given a ‘Native’ name by a legitimate, pipe-carrying Elder.	
	All Natives are full bloods	The majority of Native people are of mixed-blood heritage starting with the marriages between Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunne women with French traders. The result are the Métis, the first new cultural group on Turtle Island. There are some non-Natives who also want to be identified as Native, and so often refer to themselves as Métis . This group is under siege in this regard. Although their definition has been expanded in recent years, the Métis are recognized , under the Canadian Constitution, as a distinct cultural group. They are, however, not a warehouse for alleged cultural hybrids!	

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		<p>adopted by white families. It caused a further fracturing of the culture as thousands of Native children were raised 'white'. This group is considered to be non-Status because they lost their status through the adoption process. Non-status also includes thousands of descendants of families who were not included in the appallingly flawed original count by the 'Indian' Agents in the 1880s.</p>
	<p>Native people are all alike</p>	<p>In Canada alone there are currently 631 culturally distinct federally recognized tribes. There are approximately 500 in the United States. Different languages and cultural practices make individual Indigenous people unique.</p>
	<p>You can ask a Native anything because All Natives know the histories, languages, and cultural aspects of their own tribe and all other tribes</p>	<p>Due to racist driven, vicious policies and laws which resulted in theft of land, imposition of Christianity, residential school, 60s scoop, starvation and disease, fall of the matriarchy, generations of Native people could not practice their culture and were deprived of even the most basic understanding of their own people, and of the human rights generally accorded every other Canadian. As a result, to this day few Natives know their own cultural practices and history much less those of other tribes. Sadly, this includes Natives currently living on reserve.</p>
	<p>The Iroquois are a tribe of Native People</p>	<p>There is no such thing as a tribe called Iroquois. It is simply a European hybrid term derived from an Algonkian insult and a French suffix that has been adopted to describe nine tribes with similar lifestyles and languages (Huron, Peton, Neutral (now extinct), Mohawk, Onandaga, Oneida, Seneca, Cayuga, Tuscarora). In fact the word "Iroquois" is a derogatory term and should not be used. Like the derogatory names of a</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		<p>“rattlesnakes.” After the French added the Gallic suffix “-ois” and voila, the name evolved into Iroquois. ALWAYS use the correct term, <i>Haudenosaunee</i> meaning “People of the Longhouse.” ‘SIOUX’ also means “little snake” and ‘Eskimo’ means “Eaters of Raw Meat” Don’t use them – use Lakshota and Inuit respectively.</p>
	<p>Natives in the old days were dirty, and never bathed</p>	<p>Actually, it was the Europeans who seemed allergic to the idea of personal hygiene. Native people regularly bathed in water or in sweat lodge which also helped with aching muscles, stomach cramps. breathing problems, Most importantly the physical body was one quarter of the sacred human quaternary, and considered to be a temple that held the other three, spirit, emotions and mind – therefore it needed to be regularly cleaned and purified.</p>
	 <p>All Native warriors wore Eagle Headdresses</p>	<p>The headdress was originally made from Golden Eagle feathers and was developed by the Plains nations (Lakshota, Nakhota, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Crow, Cheyenne, to name a few). It was actually only a dozen or so tribes that wore these beautiful headdresses. Each feather in a war-bonnet represented an honorable act that its wearer had accomplished while defending his home or nation. Most Native people have head wear that is representative of their tribal affiliation, ranging from cloth, to elaborately decorated reed or feather hats (also called roaches). Modes of dress differed from tribal group to tribal group.</p>
	 <p>When hunting or at War, Plains Warriors wear</p>	<p>One can only imagine the average Lakshota warrior setting out to hunt buffalo, in full gallop across the plains, full headdress perched precariously on his head; trying to fit an arrow into a bow, with one hand while spitting eagle feathers out of his mouth, all the while trying to control his horse with this knees</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD



Totem poles of the Pacific Northwest Coast are a post-Columbian artifact

postcards, folks!

There was a renaissance of Pole carving in the 19th century when European carving tools became readily available as trade items, making carving much easier. The proliferation of poles during this time period has led to a belief that the poles were carved as a result of post-European contact. Native Northwest Coast oral histories speak of tall carved poles that go back to antiquity. The poles were also carved from red cedar trees, as opposed to stone or some other long-lasting element, making their lifespan relatively short, between 60-100 years. The poles are akin to any other ancient artifact of Turtle Island's Native people, i.e. Incan and Mayan temples in terms of longevity and meaning.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The meaning of the word 'Squaw'

Some Native scholars, like Abenaki anthropologist Marge Bruhac, argue that esqua, ochqueu, iskew, skwa, esquao, skwe and other variants of the word "squaw" come from the Algonquin family of languages where the root means "the totality of being female." Unfortunately, this definition was lost a long time ago, according to leaders in the American Indian Movement and many other Native activists. The French fur traders started using the word "squaw" to mean female genitalia or prostitute. In large part because the pioneers needed to dehumanize their land-grab victims, the contemptuous connotation was extended far beyond the Algonquin tribes to include all Native women. Even though there are attempts to reclaim the word in a good way, it is still considered by most to be the worst of insults and should never be used when referring to a Native woman or any woman for

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

<p>Why Natives are not 'Indians'</p>	<p>Indigenous people were incorrectly labeled by Christopher Columbus as 'Indians' when he thought he had arrived in India to bring back spices and other exotics to Queen Isabella of Portugal, or maybe it was Spain, or maybe Israel. Although the word 'Indian' is in the popular culture and has been embedded in many laws of the land (i.e. Indian Act), it is still an incorrect label. In Canada, preference is for Indigenous, First Nations, Aboriginal (with a question mark), Native. All references should be capitalized no matter where they appear in a sentence as they are proper names.</p>
<p>Why Natives are not 'Aboriginal'</p>	<p>The term "Aboriginal" is a disputative term. AB (in Aboriginal) in Latin means – "Away"; The word "Aboriginal" is used to describe the Native people of Canada: Indians, Inuit and Métis. As the Latin implies, it also means, 'first into a place', suggesting that Aboriginal people came to Turtle Island much like any other immigrant, except that they arrived first. The term is deliberately used by those in power because by definition it means that Native people do not have a legitimate/legal claim to the land because they 'emigrated' from some other land mass. The term further legitimizes the notion of 'manifest destiny' for the conquerors. Native People prefer the terms "Indigenous" and/or First Nations. Such terms are preferable to Thunderbird as an Instructor and Educator. See Below</p> <p>If you insist on using the term because it is embedded in the popular culture and old habits die hard, it must be used as an adjective; offence can be taken if someone is referred to as an 'Aboriginal' or 'Aborigine' The word Aboriginal should always be capitalized. (See Indigenous below)</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

	<p>Aboriginal, Native people would have a legal claim to the land, hence strict avoidance of the term by Ottawa. The word Indigenous should always be capitalized.</p>
<p>Why Natives are not 'Aborigine'</p>	<p>Just don't even go there! It is a term used to describe the Indigenous people in Australia. It is considered an insult to North American Native people.</p>
<p>All Natives continue to wear Regalia in their everyday lives</p>	<p>Thunderbird often feels it is the case because of the number of performances, ceremonies, speeches and workshops she does! However, she refrains from wearing her button blanket when shopping at Yorkdale or cleaning her house!</p>
<p>NATIVE CEREMONIES</p>	
<p>Native People all agree that the appropriation of their beliefs and ceremonies by Non-Natives is a good thing</p>	<p>Absolutely not! It is one thing for non-Natives to be invited to some ceremonies, it is quite another for them, particularly the "wannabe's" whose perceived positions of privilege allow their fantasies to take on the romantic version of being Native. The arrogance often carries into giving themselves pipes, and conducting ceremonies without a complete understanding of what they are doing. It is a lifetime of commitment to the Good Red Road. The Lakhota, with very good reason, are particularly sensitive to the theft of their culture and resent those who take their teachings and add their particular 'cultish' spin to them. In other words, taking a weekend course, or attending one sweatlodge does not a 'Native' make.</p> <p>Just so you know – if you paid money for a visionquest or sweatlodge or some such other sacred ceremony then it was not a sacred event to begin with, and like Elvis, the Ancestors left the building!</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

	<p>Keepers of Sacred Knowledge, items or regalia</p>	<p>pipe can be given in only one of two ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By a legitimate pipe-carrying Elder who knows you; 2. By a legitimate pipe-carrying Elder who does not know you! (this is how Thunderbird received her pipe, she'll tell you the story sometime). Also, the recipient of the pipe has to have been immersed in her culture and been recognized as an Elder. Following the Good Red Road is a cultural commitment which includes many years of often difficult experiences. One does not become a Priest, Rabbi, or Minister with a couple of weekend courses! Why do folks think otherwise when it comes to Indigenous Culture? <p>*Clarification – the Elder, Traditional Teacher or Spiritual Doctor must also have undergone years of training and teaching. Native people have to accept some responsibility here, because there are those who have set themselves up as spiritual leaders without having done the requisite work to have earned such titles. In other words, there is a huge difference between an 'Elder' and a "senior citizen"!</p>	
	<p>EDUCATION & RELIGION</p>		
	<p>Native people have no religion</p>	<p>Native beliefs were founded on a deeply felt, sacred circular spirituality that was based on reverence for the land and nature. The word 'religion' does not appear in any Native language because it creates an unnecessary barrier between the individual and the wonders and connections with both the Natural and supernatural world. Beliefs and practices based</p>	

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

The Churches started the Residential Schools

In fact, both the churches **and** Canada's federal government are directly responsible for the residential school tragedy. Ottawa became involved after the results of the Bagot Commission of 1842 were published, and the Gradual Civilization Act of 1857 was enacted. These documents paved the way for the establishment of government funded schools that would assimilate Native people into mainstream society by teaching them European lifestyle, with the desired goal of eradicating Native culture from the face of the earth. The first residential schools opened in Upper Canada (Ontario) in the 1840s, the last one closed in 1988!

The churches were charged with the responsibility of implementing an educational system that ultimately resulted in kidnapping, starvation, sexual abuse, slavery and murder/suicide of Native children. The repercussions from this savagery still echo today.

Any actual academics were taught by sub-standard teachers barely literate themselves. Most Native children did not go past grade 6.

Residential Schools continued....

Far-sighted Native Leaders wanted education for their offspring to help them cope in the new world that was North America. They had no intension of surrendering their lands, cultural traditions, language, or accepting forcible confinement of their children in residential school far from their ancestral homes, as well as forcible removal of them from the family unit by Indian Agents. In other words, they made it very clear they desired only education for their offspring, not a fundamental change in their way of life. Native people were victims; they did not willingly agree to

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		<p>150,000 children were kidnapped and forced into these schools, with a staggering 50% dying (murder, suicides) under its regime. All the Elders want today is to bring the bones of their dead children home.</p>	
	<p>Residential Schools happened a long time ago, Native should just let it go and get on with their lives</p> <p>TRUTH & RECONCILIATION</p>	<p>One can only wonder if such a dismissive attitude is working for the holocaust Jews or Stalin's Russians or the Rawandans in 1985 or the devastation in Darfur, Sudan RIGHT NOW!! (close to thirty million human beings (almost the population of Canada!) were slaughtered in these four brutal periods!) There are still former residential survivors alive today – the last school closed in 1988, therefore the abuses were not confined to the last century but well into the life-times of a lot of the gentle readers of this web site!</p> <p>Racist and assimilationist policies are still alive on the agenda of the federal government. Federal apology aside, the healing will not begin in earnest until Native people, the church and state start operating with the same understandings. Moreover, should the outside world be allowed to set arbitrary healing times for a people who have been savaged and beaten for several hundred years? Is this realistic or fair? Rape and sodomy are not easily overcome by anyone, if ever.</p> <p>The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was launched in 2008 and closed December 16, 2015. The final report included 94 calls to action to redress the legacy of residential schools. The Commission's task was to reveal past government wrongdoing in the hope of resolving deep conflicts. Colonialism is embedded in Canada's legal, political and economic contexts. This is despite government so-called commitments to strive for reconciliation.</p>	

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		<p>The terms further means when two groups become ‘friendly’ again and agree to cooperate in good and support ways. This includes total accountability for past deeds.</p>
	<p>Most Native people do not complete school</p>	<p>This is a very destructive stereotype and does not help the cause of Native people. Most tribal councils emphasize and support the need for a good education. As a result, thousands of Native children graduate from high school every year; Hundreds graduate from university and the numbers are increasing; they go on to live meaningful, successful and professional lives (physicians, lawyers, CEOs, business owners, academics).</p>
	<p>All Native people are mystical, spiritual environmentalists</p>	<p>This fantasy seems to come from the non-Native desire to believe ALL Native people view harmony with the earth as part of a spiritual culture, and as a result are extremely aware of the impact human actions have on the environment. Although there are many Native people who are walking the walk and talking the talk (the numbers are increasing all the time), and embracing the Earth as a living entity, in fact, a majority of Native people have no real understanding of this sacred connection because of racism that has oppressed Native culture for so long. As a result, many Native people have no knowledge, and no interest in the importance of the preservation of Mother Earth — just like regular Canadians! In the words of Native American Poet, Philip Whitedog, “they just want their Levi’s, Porsche and cola, too.”</p> <p>The spiritual ceremonies of Natives are complex and may be difficult for people outside to understand. The ceremonies may seem mystical in nature because of daily, monthly or annual timing, the use of ancient symbolism, the importance of the unseen world, the incorporation of the earth’s gifts and</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

<p>WAR AND CONQUERING</p>	
<p>Natives were conquered because they were considered inferior</p>	<p>In fact, Native warriors were superior foes with superb physical and tactical skills. Many military officers had great admiration for the superiority of Native warriors. They did not very often lose a battle even when vastly outnumbered. Native people were conquered for a variety of reasons including: lack of immunity to European diseases; destruction of food; downfall of the matriarchy; land appropriation; Indian Act, residential schools, 60s scoop, imposition of Christianity. All of these oppressive tactics deprived generations of Native people from living their culture.</p>
<p>Natives lost all the battles with the soldiers</p>	<p>Au contraire! As noted above, Native Warriors seldom lost a battle and triumphed despite the superior weaponry of the soldiers, i.e. Oglala Lakota Leader, Crazy Horse, Nimipuu (Nez Perce) Leader, Olikut, Shawnee, Tecumseh. Their intimate knowledge of the land and superior war tactics made them formidable foes. In modern terms, advance and rearguards, skirmish lines, field fortifications were common strategies. Some of the strategies of the great war chiefs are still taught at West Point! In the early years of post-European contact (up to 1812), such warriors were highly sought as allies. Turtle Island was being conquered and settled by warring Europeans.</p>
<p>A united Native front could have prevented a European invasion</p>	<p>Tribes were too different culturally and lived too far apart on a vast land mass to fight together as a cohesive unit. There were rare occasions, when large fighting forces were amassed such as the Battle at Rosebud Creek and the Little Big Horn River</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

<p>There was no such thing as “Red” slavery in America</p>	<p>Beginning on May 4, 1493, a <i>Papal Bull</i> (means a Declaration by the Pope) “Inter Caetera” was issued by Pope Alexander VI to the king and queen of Spain which established Christian dominion and called for the subjugation of non-Christian peoples (“barbarous nations”) and their lands. “All conquests are justifiable as long as one of their aims is to convert the ‘savages’ to Christianity,” resulting in an upsurge in Native slavery and brutally treated; it created a boon in Native slavery in, for example, the United States. It lasted until 1864 in the United States when slavery was abolished by the thirteen amendment.</p>
<p>Natives were savages, war mongers and treacherous</p>	<p>No more so than any other civilization on earth (past and present) who fought hard to defend its rights, lands, sovereignty and way of life. This is another Hollywood myth!</p>
<p>Natives raped, pillaged, murdered, scalped</p>	<p>Native warfare consisted of “Warrior to Warrior” combat; there was a tacit agreement never to harm women and children, except to take them as hostages or slaves. Women were highly valued and many such ‘hostages’ went on to marry their captors, raise families and take leadership roles in their adopted tribes. Rape and scalping were savageries introduced by the European invaders. The early westerns on Television and movies are to blame with their stereotypical portrayal of Native warriors as savages.</p>
<p>NATIVE RIGHTS, TAXATION, POLITICAL PROCESS</p>	
<p>Natives get a free ride from the Government</p>	<p>The benefits, such as they are, come from treaty agreements, and other legislation such as the Canadian Indian Act. First</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

	<p>benefits above other Canadians</p>	<p>Constitutionally protected Native rights exist, First Nations people do have priority over others, one example is the right to hunt and fish for subsistence, but even these rights are subject to regulation (e.g., conservation issues).</p> <p>IMPORTANT NOTE: Keep in mind the tremendous human cost that was paid by Indigenous peoples for the few rights they do have. Those that came to conquer instead of parlay refused to accept or understand that at the outset Canada's First People should also have been accorded the same rights as everyone else, instead of being viewed as an impediment to progress, and something to be destroyed. More importantly, life on many reserves is very difficult with people living well below the poverty line, with no electricity or running water and this is in the 21 century!</p>	
	<p>All Native people do not have to pay tax</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If only that were so. Native people working on reserves are not considered a part of the Canadian labour force (by government statute; when they work off-reserve, they become part of the labour force and are subject to taxation, the same as non-Natives. 2. Status Natives do not pay federal or provincial sales taxes on personal and real property on a reserve. Reserve Land is "Crown Land" – in other words owned by the Canadian Government on behalf of the Queen. Why would anyone think that Natives should pay property tax on land they are not allowed to own? 3. The federal Goods and Services Tax (HST) does not apply to on-reserve goods or to those goods acquired by a Status Natives off-reserve. 4. Inuit, Métis, and non-status Natives are required to pay tax. 5. Income earned by registered Natives working on reserve for 	

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		pay provincial sales tax. (less than 3%)	
	<p>The terms “Aboriginal” and “Native” and “Indigenous” are used to define one homogenous group of Native people in Canada</p>	<p>Turtle Island's Indigenous people are the only ones on earth who have so many descriptive terms applied to them. These terms are used as general terms to collectively describe three distinct cultural groups recognized under the Canadian Constitution known as the “Inuit”, “Métis” and “First Nations”.</p>	
	<p>Natives cannot vote or hold office</p>	<p>Natives represent a powerful voting bloc in elections as numerous Natives hold tribal, provincial and federal offices. In 1990, NDP member of the Manitoba Legislature, Elijah Harper (Cree) stood up in the House of Commons, holding an Eagle feather for strength, voted no to a procedural vote to extend the discussion of the Meech Lake Accord recognizing Quebec as a distinct society. The Accord went down in flames. Ontario's first Indigenous Lieutenant Governor was the Hon. James K. Bartleman (Ojibwa) Interesting note: Status Natives only received the Canadian federal vote in 1960!</p>	
	<p>Everything is free on a Native Reserve</p>	<p>If it were only so! Native people pay for their lifestyle much like any other Canadian. Those pesky retail outlets do insist on cash up front for goods purchased!</p>	
	<p>Natives should just assimilate; they are no different from any other Canadian</p>	<p>Native people, like any distinct cultural group are unique with different languages. Moreover, we are recognized by the Canadian as distinct (First Nations, Métis, Inuit). Canada opens its doors to a diverse group of the world's cultures and celebrates cultural diversity. There are no requirements for Egyptian, Spanish, Italian or Greek people to leave their languages and beliefs at Canadian Immigration before entering Canada! Why must it be so for Native people who are</p>	

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		Caucasian Act. In South Africa there was Apartheid; in Canada Indigenous people are governed by the Indian Act .
	All Natives are “Status Indians”	The majority of Native people are non-Status, although recently (2013 acknowledge by the federal court as “Natives” under the Canadian Constitution.
	NATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS	
	Native people have done little to contribute to Canada's heritage	Our contributions are enormous, without us, there would be no Canada. Our country's name comes from the Haudenosaunee word 'Kanata' which means 'community'. We saved many European lives with our natural medicines to combat their diseases that ultimately killed so many of us. Click: Native Contributions
	NATIVE LIFESTYLE MODERN TIMES	
	Native people continue to live in longhouses and tipis, ride horses, wear braids and full regalia while doing everyday tasks like shopping and working	Native people 'on-reserve' work in normal business enterprises and live in normal modern housing – just like regular folks! Most Native people, however, live and work off-reserve in urban centres and live in apartments, condos, houses which makes it difficult to ride a horse down a Toronto city street unless you are a police officer! Most Native people do not know how to ride anyway. Regalia is confined to occasions such as powwows and special ceremonies; Braids are optional anywhere.

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		entrepreneurs in businesses ranging from grocery stores and multimillion dollar businesses to arts and crafts, tourism, retail, computer technology and natural resource management. Thunderbird owns her own Production Company, <u>Teya Peya Productions</u>
	First Nations peoples are better off than most Canadians	Lets' get real here! Although the United Nations ranked Canada as number one in 2001 as the best place in the world to live, the fact remains that many First Nations people live well below the standard of living of most Canadians and some third world countries for that matter; some reserves are still deprived of basic necessities such as: electricity, running water, paved roads. Suicide among teenagers in some remote regions such as Nataushsish, formerly Davis Inlet is five times the national average.
	CIRNAC All Natives get free housing no matter where they live.	<p>Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) dissolved in August 2017. In its place CIRNAC was created consisting of two departments: (a) Crown-Indigenous Canada and (b) Northern Affairs Canada. This is the latest attempt to renew nation-to-nation, Inuit-Crown, government-to-government relationship between Canada and First Nations, Inuit and Métis; modernize government of Canada structures to enable Indigenous people to build capacity and support their vision of self-determination; and lead the Government of Canada's work in the north.</p> <p>One of their responsibilities is to provide funding to support on-reserve housing-related activities, including the construction of new houses and renovation of existing units. The program is administered by Band councils or their designated housing authorities who establish comprehensive, community-based housing plans to meet the needs of their</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

<p>All Native people live on reserves</p>	<p>Most media images and history books about Native people suggest that they live only in the western part of the U.S. and Canada, and on reserves. The reality is, a majority (upwards of 60%) actually live in urban areas throughout both countries. These published images usually ignored the thousands of Natives who resided east of the Mississippi or Manitoba in the early 19th Century, surviving the slave trade, disease and land grabbing immigrants. Today, more Natives live off-reserve, than they do on reserve, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg being three of the highly populated areas.</p>
<p>Inuit people still travel and hunt using dog sleds and live in igloos</p>	<p>First Nations and Inuit people stopped living in long houses, tipis and igloos many, many years ago. In the north, the Inuit live in settlements and communities with normal housing. For travel and hunting purposes, the igloo has been replaced with a lightweight tent (in case of an emergency); dogsleds have been replaced with snowmobiles. The dogsled, is still use because it is popular with tourists or for sporting events such as the famous Ididerod race. Native culture is nothing if not evolving and adapting!</p>
<p>NATIVE BEHAVIOUR & ATTITUDE</p>	
<p>All Native people greet each other by holding up an arm, palm out and saying 'How.'</p>	<p>Actually, 'how' was introduced by the Europeans because of their inability to discern different sounds within a wide variety of Indigenous languages. The sound was also reinforced by the early racist television shows and films of Hollywood. Many Native languages or dialects require the use of sounds that are not produced in the English language. These sounds are usually made at the back of the throat or through the nasal passages and they communicate wordless expressions of</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

	English language for communicating with nontribal people – when in doubt, “Hello” usually works!
All Natives are drunks and alcoholics or have some sort of substance abuse problem	<p>Native people are no more pre-disposed to alcoholism or other substance abuse than members of any other ethnic group. For thousands of years, Native culture was based on trading. Alcohol was deliberately given to Native men during the fur trade years as a means of control and to take advantage of very sophisticated Indigenous and savvy traders. Cultural genocide attempts such as the introduction of alcohol are the principle cause of great despair among Native people the resonates to this day.</p> <p>Most reserves across both Canada and the United States are at the same subsistence levels as third world countries with poverty and strife being the norm rather than the exception. It is little wonder that despairing people turn to artificial means to mask their fear and anger....at least for a little while, just like a lot of other Canadians! Having said that, thousands and thousands of Native people have fought hard to save their own lives, and now have satisfying personal and professional lives.</p>

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

abusers, then they are

all saintly Elders

in terms of being a cultural guardian, there is a huge difference between an **Elder** and a Senior Citizen! Very few of the elderly can be referred to as an **Elder**, because they do not carry the language and traditional knowledge having had it beaten out of them in residential school. These are people who come from an extraordinarily difficult past; who fought hard to save their own lives and they deserve just as much respect and honour for surviving the sheer brutality of colonialism.

**Native people like
having their
photograph taken**

Most Native people went to the “Crazy Horse School of |don’t take my picture lest the camera steal my soul”. This is way there are no photos of Crazy Horse. Most Native people find the process intrusive. However, at powwows or other public celebrations, if you ask politely, we will usually co-operate.

**Indians are stoic and
have no sense of
humour**

There hasn’t been a lot to laugh at in post-European contact history; nonetheless, Native people are endowed with a rollicking good humour. The quiet, wry sense of humour from some Elders can result in “rolling in the aisles laughter“ from the listener. Humour is what gets a lot of us through the tough times; Oral narratives are full of humorous and comical tales. Native people have to trust you first before you see this side.

**Native people are
‘shifty’ they never
look at you when they
are talking. They
must have something
to hide**

The eyes are the windows to the soul. In the tribes, it was a sign of disrespect to look at someone directly; it was viewed as trying to steal the soul. It is a learned behaviour for us to look directly at you. Even so, it is still in the gene pool of most modern Natives to look just past the ear when speaking. **It is respectful**, not disrespectful. Employers, for example, need to understand and accept this time-honoured cultural behaviour.

SHANNON THUNDERBIRD

		<p>explorers who destroyed the integrity and character of Natives by portraying them as dishonest. Native leaders came to the negotiating table standing in their own truth, but were greeted with a staggering amount of lies and subterfuge. All of the early treaties that gave away almost two-thirds of Canada's land mass were based on theft which were based on lies. Even in the presence of the eagle feather and sacred pipe, which represented the "straight truth", promises were routinely broken, by the Government, Treaty Negotiators (Indian Agents) and European Traders. Dishonesty rests with those responsible for the debacle in the first place, not Indigenous people!</p>
		<p>WILWILAAYSK, ALL MY RELATIONS</p>