

Pan-Indigenusness and its Relevance for the Future: Envisioning a New World.

Open Forum November 2, 2001. University of Maine, Orono

An *International Week* Event in conjunction with the Baxter/Marlow photography exhibit: "Rhythms of Creation: A Family's Impressions of Indigenous Peoples of the World. An Exhibit of Images and Ideas."

The principles found in Indigenous thought - the way of life of the Native peoples of the Americas and the essence of most tribal or "traditional" cultures throughout the world - are principles which resonate to the deepest aspirations of all of humanity, and can thus be thought of as Pan-Indigenusness - the common thread that ties the heart of humanity together in a vision of a world in balance.

On November 2, 2001 at the Hudson Museum, University of Maine, Orono, Arnie Neptune, Penobscot Elder and Connie Baxter Marlow, writer, photographer and mother, presented opening remarks to an open forum concerning the worldview of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and how the principles contained in this worldview might be applied to life as we know it and be used to transform how we live.

They presented the following "indigenous" or "traditional" values that underlie the value structure of a large part of the world's indigenous peoples and envision a world in which these principles are applied to life as we know it today.

Sharing -

vs. Hoarding or Saving

Concern for the common good -

vs. Individualism at the expense of the common good.

Cooperation -

vs. Competition

Concern for the future impacts of present action -

vs. Instant Gratification

Respect and reverence for all of life -

vs. Dominance of concern for profit

Trust in the love of a Higher Power manifested in all action -

vs. Fear, doubt

Living in balance with the rhythms of life -

vs. Being driven by a man-made concept of time.

Understanding the interrelatedness of all things and all actions

vs. Separation

Understanding and trusting Abundance-

vs. Fear of Scarcity

An understanding of the co-creative power of thought-

vs. Random Coincidence

Equality between all aspects of life –

vs. Human dominance

Incorporation of the metaphysical into physical reality –

vs. Bound to the limits of physical reality

The forum November 2 was a time to envision a world in which these principles are put into action in the everyday interactions of humanity. The forum looked at the ways in which various cultures from around the world employ, or could employ, these principles at home, in the workplace and in schools. Following is an economic model which is based on these principles.

The dominant Western cultures currently base actions and decisions on a model of economics which has the bottom line as its principal determining factor. This is the profit-based model of a growth-oriented economy in a world of scarce resources, using supply and demand as the "invisible hand" to regulate and control the outcome, determining "profit", success and survival in the short term. This might be called "Bottom-Line Economics"

Proposed below is a model called "Top-Line Economics". This model takes the highest aspirations of humanity and places them as the dominant features in the interactions between individuals who are in the process of flourishing in a world of abundance. It is based upon the above "givens", values or basic assumptions intrinsic in indigenous thought.

"Top-Line Economics"

When the principles of trust, integrity, generosity, respect, inspiration, love, cooperation and gratitude are actually the dominant determining factors of human interaction in the workplace, at home and in schools the resulting abundance will allow all aspects of the world to flourish in a manner heretofore unimaginable.

How might we implement these principles today in our daily actions? What might our governments look like? Our schools? Our workplace? Can you think of an actual behavioral change you could implement in your life that would reflect these principles? How would the implementation of these principles affect the relationship between cultures, between nations?

Drafted by Connie Baxter Marlow
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