

Gilbert Pelletier, Norman Fleury, Sherry Farrell-Racette

Video 1

Start: 11.50.08.11 GILBERT PELLETIER - Everybody was equal then hey, I think that's why they made it so, so nice to live those days because not like today, those days everybody was happy. They all got along with you all, you know.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Métis people are known as happy people.

GILBERT PELLETIER - Yeah.

(Video Time: 11:50.24.13) 22.7 NORMAN FLEURY - They were happy and joyful. I remember when somebody come to visit, like especially my, my auntie and uncle, like Louis Fleury and my aunt Mary Fleury, they were like the musicians in their, their family. Theoren Fleury, the NHL player, well he's my first cousin's boy. And his Grandparents were very joyful and they were the musicians, so when they come at home and the first thing you'd know, there was, the fiddle was going, they were tuning up, the guitar was going and nobody didn't say, well we're gonna have a dance.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Kitchen parties.

NORMAN FLEURY – And, and it was a kitchen party and the music was on and they were jigging and that's how people shared their, actually their way of being able to do dances. It was their teaching, like those were the teachings, anything you'd done were specifically teachings, that's how I learnt because they, they taught us things, not directly, but indirectly, but you were supposed to be, actually, always paying attention to what's going on. And if you didn't pay attention, you lost out. And it was your own fault. Like when you were going hunting for instance. I remember going hunting with my grandfather as a little boy and he'd trap and he'd snare rabbits at

the same time. So, every morning we'd pick up rabbits in the snares, and I was just a little kid, and there was this rabbit in the snare, it was still alive. So, I thought, as being a young boy, well, pet rabbit. So I grabbed this rabbit and Grandpa said, "No." "No, noshom," he said. "Grand-, grandson," he said, "You don't do that, because," he said. "You'll kill the spirit of our hunt if you abuse that animal. God gave us those animals for us to, to eat, for our survival." So right away I seen him take this little rabbit and he kinda put his thumb and his finger underneath the, the ribcage and dislocated the heart of the little rabbit. Put him out of his misery.

GILBERT PELLETIER - Die innocently.

NORMAN FLEURY - Die innocently. So you did that.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - So you knew how to show mercy?

GILBERT PELLETIER - Yeah, yeah.

NORMAN FLEURY - You showed mercy, you'd never, and he, he taught me that lesson. It was a spiritual lesson, it was a way of hunting, but it was a way of saying to you, those things were provided by God, and you're supposed to take life only for survival, and you kill with mercy. Mercy killing. And that's what it was, and as a little boy, I saw that. But he also told me, he said, "Grandson, this is the way we do things." And, and then I remember, like now we're talking about different things eh. Like we're talking about hunting rights for instance for the Métis people. Well for me, hunting rights are fine and dandy but, if you don't know the conservation rules and laws of the land, what's the sense of having hunting rights, and that's why...

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - It doesn't just mean go and bang around.

(Video Time: 11:53.25.27) NORMAN FLEURY - No, no, like you have to have co-management with conservation. Like as far as I'm concerned, I wanna teach my son and my daughter to hunt at the right time, because there's migratory laws. There's times when the birds are having their young, where the animals are having their young. I remember when they'd come and visit at home on Sundays, they would, we would go hunting, like we would just say, well we're gonna go get a deer, or two deer. But if it wasn't the right time, my Grandma and Grandpa would say, "Look it you boys, it's not time to hunt now." They'd say, "They're having their little ones, so you don't go now." And it was the same thing with the ducks. They would eat duck eggs and mud hen eggs when they used to travel, they would always leave one or two eggs in the nest. They would never take them all, and that was again conservation. And that was heart feeling, the feelings for the land and for the birds and everything that was provided to us by the creator, by, like those were spiritual things.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - You're looking after it.

NORMAN FLEURY - And looking after the land, it will look after you, and, and, and see we were, I learnt those...

(Video Time: 11:54.36.13) 27.3 GILBERT PELLETIER - I, I, I guess it was, that was the difference them days than today. Today people shoot things for no reason. We never did kill anything just for the fun of killing something. When we killed an animal we made use of it. You know, we didn't kill for the fun of it, but we didn't kill just to, you know, when we go out and kill a deer, we made use of everything. My Grandma used to tan the hide, and, you know, you'd make different things out of, out of whatever it is. Whatever you could use out of the deer you used. You know, we didn't just shoot it and leave it there. You know, the meat was eaten, the meat was shared by, to everybody that was around. You know, we didn't just, not like today, today you kill some, people kill something and they just leave it to

rot. We never did that, I never, never seen anybody do that. When they killed something, they made use of it.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - When you were like, so people taught you, like by their example eh? When they would have you beside them, but did they also teach you through stories?

NORMAN FLEURY - Oh yeah.

GILBERT PELLETIER - Oh certainly, oh certainly, yeah, a lot of it was done through stories.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Can you, can you think of one? Can you think of one just off the top of your head?

(Video Time: 11:55.44.24) 28.5 NORMAN FLEURY - Well there was, like stories for me I guess, if you want to talk about, it depends on what kind of story you'd like to, like we'd like to talk about here, I guess, it depends on, like is it survival techniques or...

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Well there's all kinds of different stories aren't there.

NORMAN FLEURY - Yeah, like, like, like I know we just sit around and tell different stories but there would be stories more or less about the importance of being a human being and being a Michif person. And the survival techniques was, and if we're talking, you know, of the hunt, you know, and, like I know they used to tell the stories about buffalo hunt.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Oh did they?

NORMAN FLEURY - The stories of the buffalo hunt, like my grandmother and Grandpa used to tell me the stories of the buffalo hunt when I was just a kid. And they'd tell me how, you know, when they first started off on the buffalo hunt, they said it's not, it's not as simple as you think, because what you were saying, somebody had to know how to repair those carts.

GILBERT PELLETIER - Well yeah.

NORMAN FLEURY - And somebody, you had to know how to take care of those horses, you had to know how to tether those horses at night and those cows, and you had to keep them so they, or those oxen, so they wouldn't wander off. And they had to eat also, so you had to take time to feed them at certain time of the day, and that's when you broke up for camp. And that's when different things they would do, like they would, they'd play games. The kids would have to have entertainment, and some people actually, you talk about daycare today, well they had their own daycares. They, the elderly ladies took care of the kids. Those that couldn't do anything as part of the camp work anymore, they would take care of the kids and the boys would take care of the horses. They would, they would be the herders. They would take care of the horses, they'd take care of the cattle, and some people, if the harness broke down, there was somebody there that knew how to repair a harness. So those kinds of things. And they also had to be very careful when you're on the hunt and those days it was, my grandfather used to say, it was the endangered times also because there was other tribes, like that were out there that might come and, and attack you. Or they might come and take your goods, you know. So if you seen a wolf, it was not always a wolf, it was a man that was dressed as a wolf and he was coming out to sneak and...

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - To scout.

NORMAN FLEURY – ...scout and see where you were

GILBERT PELLETIER - Scout, yeah, scout the camp.

NORMAN FLEURY - So like those, we're talking, things of many, many years ago now, we're talking about the 1860's. You know, like those, those, that was a long time.

(Video Time: 11:58.19.02) 31.2 GILBERT PELLETIER - You also had to know how to hunt buffalo. You don't just, you know, it's not as simple as just getting on your horse and chasing a buffalo and going right beside it and shooting it. Those buffalo could turn around and charge the horse eh? So you had to be very careful, you had to know how to do it, you don't just ride up to the buffalo and then shoot him.

NORMAN FLEURY - Spook.

GILBERT PELLETIER - It wasn't that simple like they, they have on TV, I guess now, but, you know, people, people had to know how to ride. They had no saddles so you had to be able to ride a horse with no saddle. And, you know, hanging on with just your knees, pressing your knees on the horse and then having your two hands free to shoot it.

End 11.58.51.05