

Gilbert Pelletier, Norman Fleury, Sherry Farrell-Racette

Video 2

Start: 15:17:53:29 SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE – Was there any protocols around story telling and learning to tell stories, you know, like there is in First Nations tradition? Do you recall?

0.2 NORMAN FLEURY - Well if you did exchange, like gifts, well we never were never made aware of it. Like if you were, you were always supposed to be sharing and giving. You just, you didn't just do it for specific reasons in the Michif world, especially where I grew up. Like if, if Grandma and Grandpa, or whomever, thought you deserved a story or some really, something that really they shared and they would cherish and they would share it with you because you deserved it. You know they would know to share with you. Like if you brought Grandma and Grandpa's wood in for instance or you did certain things, those were some of the protocols. Like if you went and got some wood that day together or you went hunting with them or trapping or doing something with Grandma and she felt that she should share something with you and there was a need, it was based on a need, that's when they'd actually do it. Like a bedtime stories, you know, those kinds of things. But you had to deserve those kind of things too, like I mean if, in terms of protocol people didn't just give you anything just out of the blue. It was something that they wanted to share with you and it was part of the teaching.

1.7 GILBERT PELLETTIER - Yeah, and I think it was the same for us as well. It was the same for just about all over, wherever the Michif, the Métis were. You know, the same thing was, went for us as well.

(Video Time: 15:19.32.22) 1.9 SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - So if someone felt that a child had earned a story or the occasion sort of required it. And then plus, did you find that the stories were also used to create bonds

within the family. That when storytelling was a way of sort of making family?
Do you know what I mean?

2.3 GILBERT PELLETIER - Well I think it did. It really did, you know, it really bonded families together all these stories tell them. 'Cause a story meant something, it always have to mean something. You know, it wasn't just a story. They didn't just tell a story for the sake of telling a story. You know, it had, it had a meaning.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - It was always a reason.

GILBERT PELLETIER – There was always a reason behind it.

2.8 SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - When you were little did you always know the reason behind it or did that come to you later?

2.9 GILBERT PELLETIER - Well no that came later. No. We were just, when we were just young kids that were just interested in listening, you know, that, 'cause I was always interested in stories regardless who told them, you know, especially stories about years ago, way in the past, and things that happened. I was always interested in that.

3.1 NORMAN FLEURY - It was entertainment. It was a form of entertainment, but I think I know with my experiences and even with myself today, you never invent stories or you never try to invent or create an, an environment or an atmosphere, there's gotta, and in order to do that there has to be a special time in your mind and your heart and then it'll come out, it'll flow.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - And it just sort of ...

NORMAN FLEURY - It just comes out. Like, I, I can't just go and talk about something just like that at the spur of the moment. There's gotta be, you'd call it an atmosphere, it's gotta be the right time, it's gotta be prime, and then you talk about. It's like talking about for instance at home with my, with my Mom and her sisters, they would talk about different things, but their healing and their wellness was each other. Like, I could see those ladies, they'd cry together, and it was normal, it was totally acceptable. Nobody says what the hell are they crying for, you know, and stuff, nobody...**(Inaudible)**...it was part of our growing up, it was the way that was part of their healing and they would say **(speaks Michif 4.6 – 4.7)**. You know, you gotta, like putting a fire out, whatever's in your heart you gotta learn to heal. You know and, and we were, we were, like that was part again of I guess, psychiatry. They were therapists, that was our therapy. And, you know, and, that's how they did it at home, that's how they're, that's how they healed when they were hurt.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - See that's what I, I...

NORMAN FLEURY - The crying was an emotional time and you had to cry because that was in you and you had to get that out because that was a load that was there and it was in your way, you had to get it out of your mind. And people were willing to talk about things more in those days. At the dinner table was a right place...

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Around like when you're...

(Video Time: 15:22.52.25) NORMAN FLEURY - Or together, or in the evening or if you were just visiting, you know, if you were playing cards they might just joke, that night will be all the joke night, it'll be just joke night. Another night somebody will be, and they'd stop and say, **(speaks Michif 5.7 – 5.8)**. You know, something's bothering me, I'd like to talk to you about it. And they, that's when it would, it would come out, you see those

were the kind of things you could not invent those kinds of things, it was a purpose was there for that time and place, and I remember those times were there. And I remember another thing that they do is when they were singing songs like at certain occasions and those songs brought back memories and some of them would laugh, some would cry. It was all the time of a therapy, as this therapy they were doing it was a healing process. We talk about healing today, well that's how people healed, that was there wellness. Like that's, that was the way they worked you know, so like I mean, when you talk about protocol or we're talking about protocol here, that was sometimes those kind of things occurred at the special time eh?

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - But it couldn't be predicted?

NORMAN FLEURY – No, no, no.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - And it couldn't sort of create it artificially?

NORMAN FLEURY - No, no cause it wouldn't work.

GILBERT PELLETIER - It wouldn't.

6.7 SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - It was just sort of when the occasion was right when that person felt like speaking or when that story was appropriate?

NORMAN FLEURY - Yeah. Exactly.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - I would think too that as, like as if you describe yourself both as you know, as children interested in learning about history and interested about, you know, time before, that the adults then would have known that you were interested in learning about the past. And so when they would see you, you know, they would have maybe a story that

they would be ready to pass on to you because you'd see that interest you know. So you're the student and they're the teacher, this one wants to learn our history so then we're gonna teach, teach this one.

(Video Time: 15:24.53.00) 7.4 NORMAN FLEURY - I notice the old people at home didn't fool around. They had no time of the day for you if your just gonna take their time and fool around they didn't want you there.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Oh is that right?

NORMAN FLEURY - They'd say, **(Speaks Michif)**, but if they knew you were interested, especially the older people, they would open up and share with you. If they knew that this person is interested and this person will learn from what, they were more than willing to share.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - How would they know?

NORMAN FLEURY - They seemed to have sensed it.

7.8 GILBERT PELLETIER - Well they can sense it, well you know, they can sense when somebody's not serious and when somebody's serious, they can sense that. And I think it's easy to tell.

8.0 SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Show your respect.

GILBERT PELLETIER - Yeah, yeah.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - Be helpful, like you talk about, bringing in wood, hauling water is one that I've heard. You know, you go and kind of work for that person, be, be good to that person and then be rewarded with those teachings that you were demonstrating an interest.

8.3 NORMAN FLEURY - Exactly, that's the word, that you're rewarding. Yeah they would reward you with something. Or I remember they would even feed you eh?

GILBERT PELLETIER - Oh yeah, oh yeah.

SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - They'd feed yeah?

NORMAN FLEURY - They'd feed a little kid come into their place and they'd say, **(Speaks Michif)**, you must be hungry, this little boy, feed him. So they'd, they'd feed you whatever. It didn't have to be sweet. It could be anything that they had, but they would feed you.

8.8 GILBERT PELLETIER - Whatever they had, whatever they had. If all they had was bannock, that's what you'll get.

NORMAN FLEURY - And tea.

GILBERT PELLETIER - That's all they had, bannock and tea, if that's all they had then that's what you'll get. They'd give you whatever they had. They'll share with whatever they had.

9.0 SHERRY FARRELL-RACETTE - So whenever people were together like eating food, playing cards or sitting around visiting around, you know, a fire or something then, then that would probably be the time of the stories.

9.2 NORMAN FLEURY - It would trigger off whatever was gonna have to transpire yeah.

End: 15:26:34:23