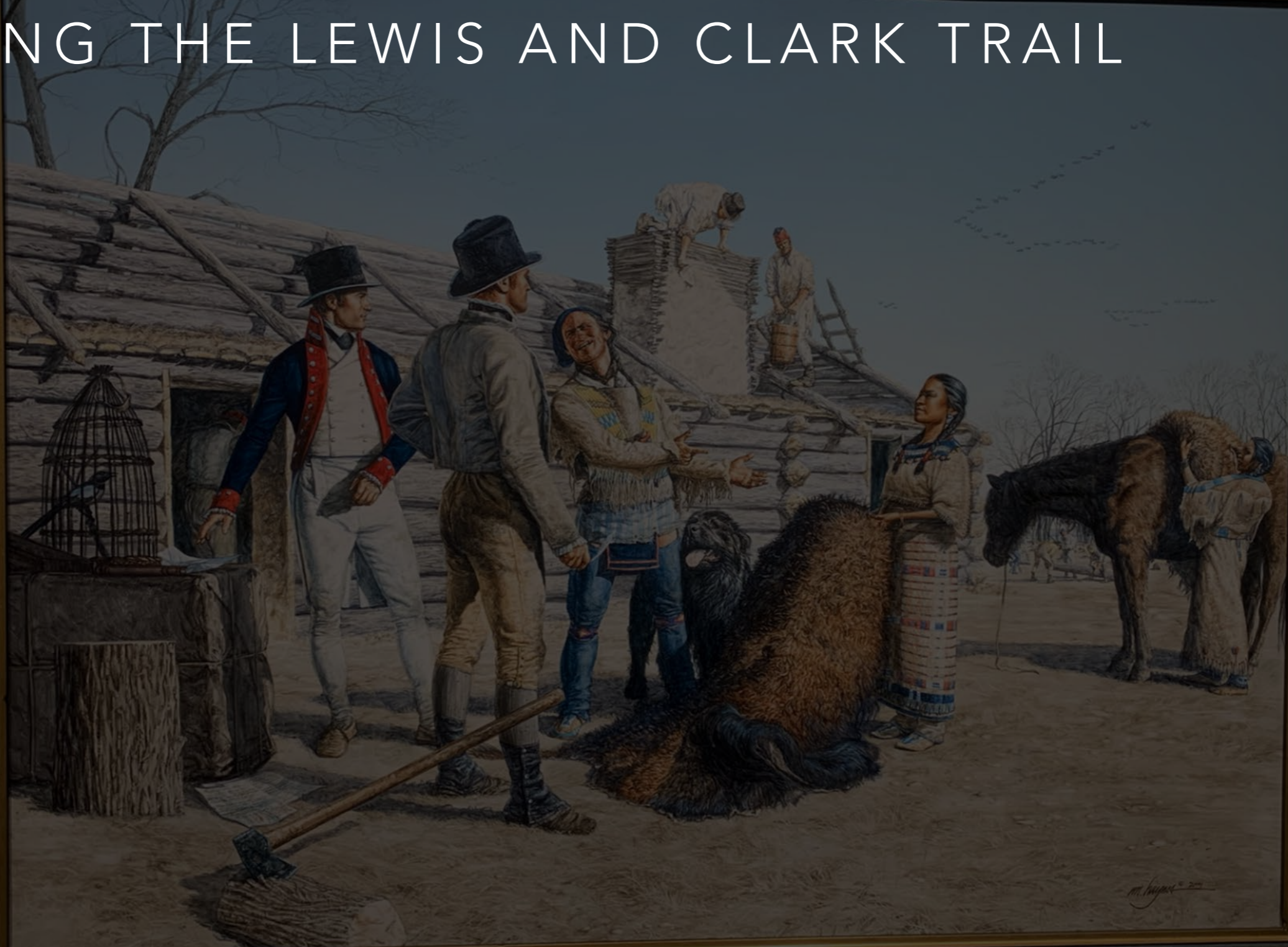


LAUREN LEFEBVRE

NEH 2019: DISCOVERING NATIVE HISTORIES
ALONG THE LEWIS AND CLARK TRAIL



JUNE 30, 2019 BILLINGS LOGISTICS

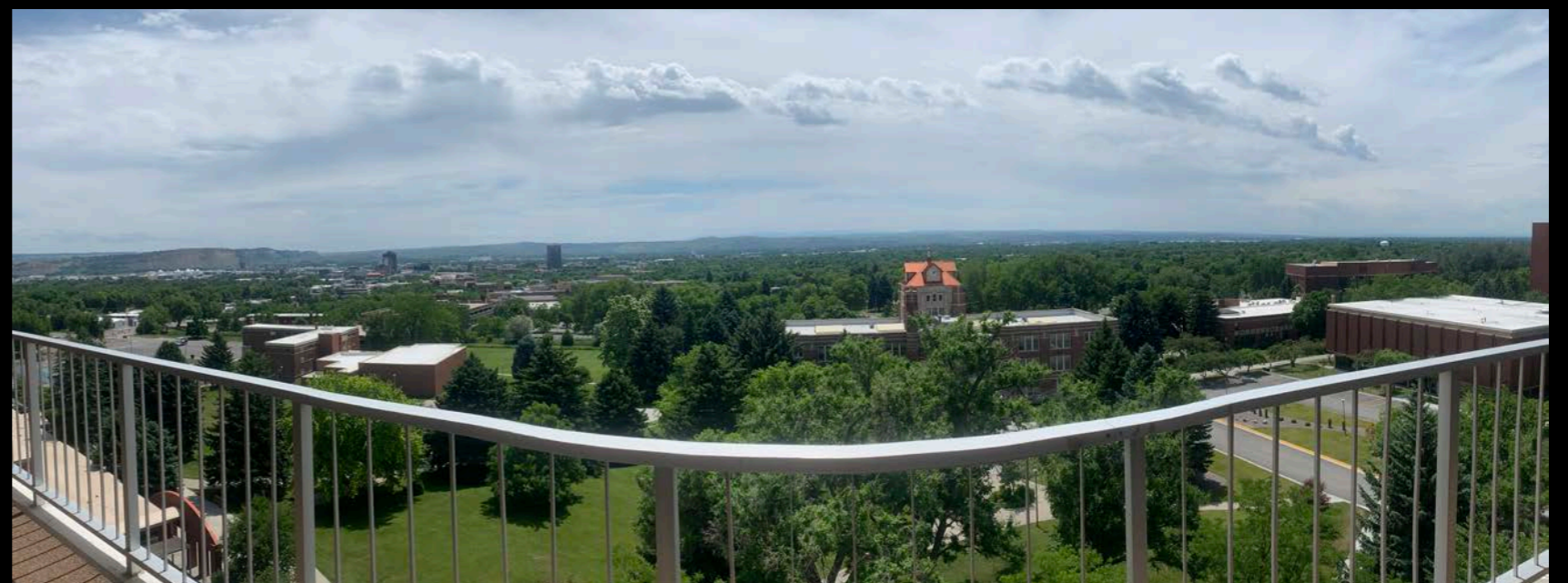
- GEG → SLC → BIL
- 110,000 population
- 44 square miles
- 3,126 feet elevation
- Miles Walked
 - Sunday: 4.5
 - Monday: 9.2
 - Tuesday: 11.8
 - Wednesday: 6.7
 - Thursday 3.8



Looking at Petro Hall Dormitory
from the Rim Rocks

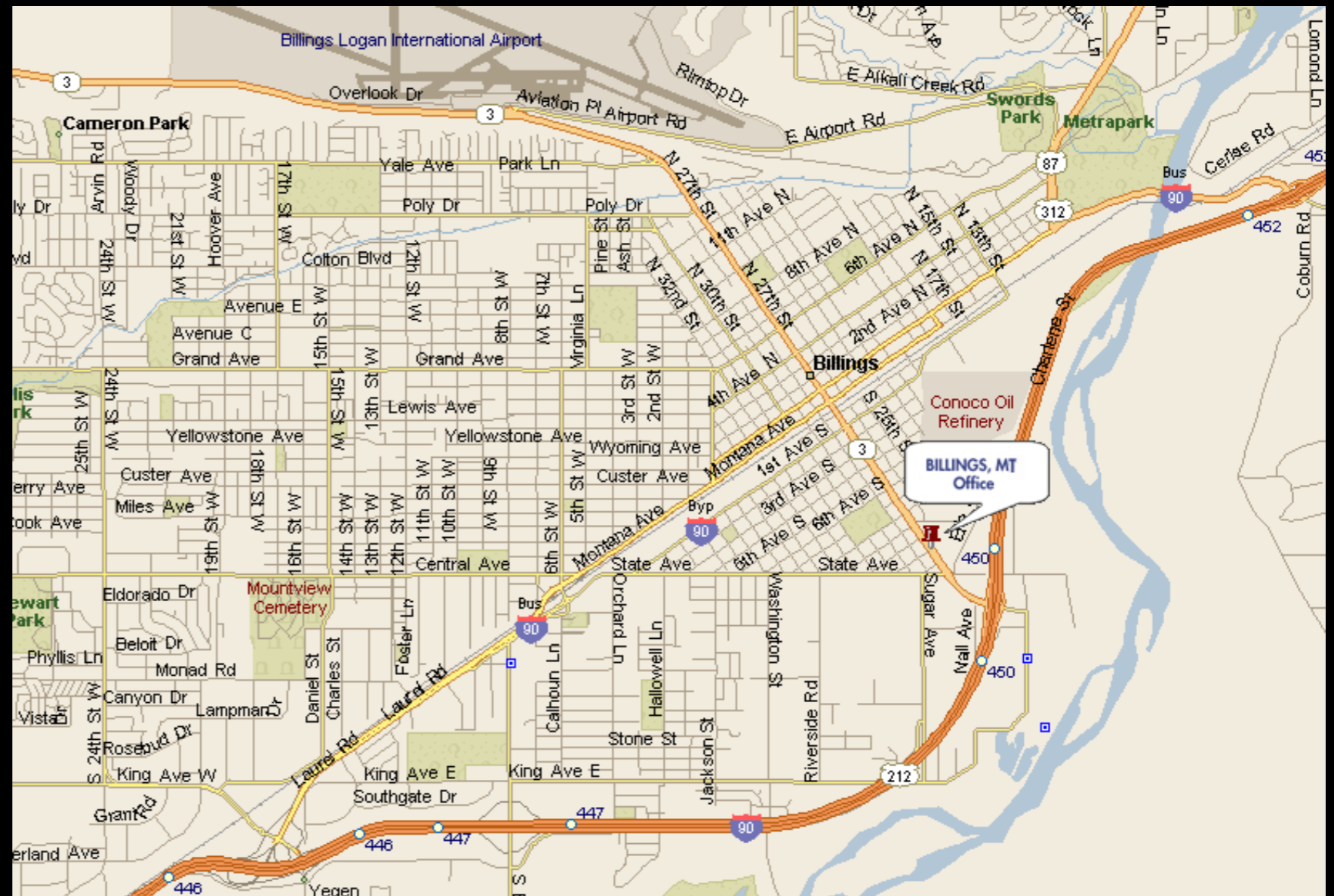


Salt Lake City Airport



MSUB Campus looking South

BILLINGS CITY LAYOUT



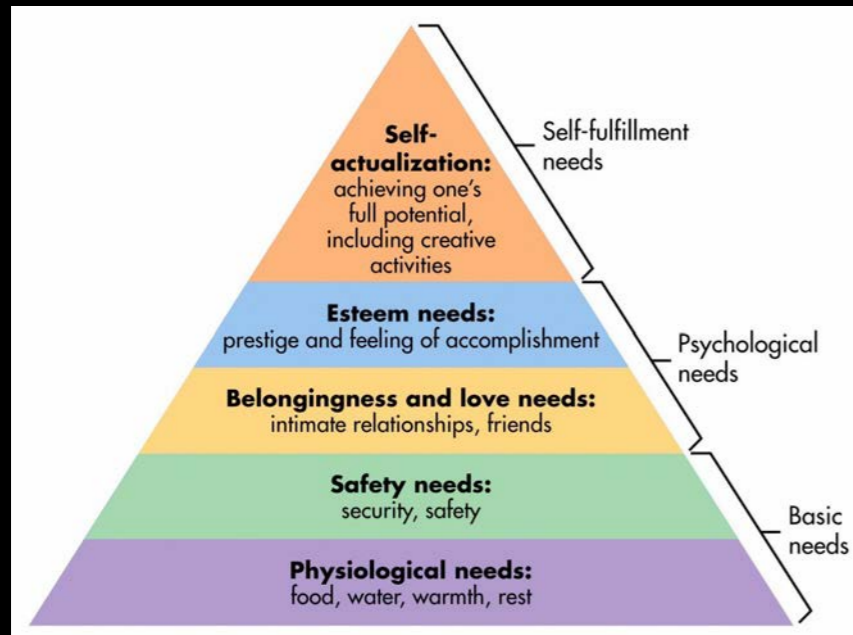
- One of the first things I notice about a new place is the layout of the city and what they do to highlight and use the natural features and resources. Billings did not take advantage of the river or the Rim Rocks in a way that I imagined. The city is organized on a half diagonal, half North/South grid with the dominant feature being the railroad and I-90 business loop. The beautiful Yellowstone River (Elk River - Apsaalooke) that was the source of life in this area was hardly accessible today! We had to have the Executive Director of the History Museum drive us through the seedy part of town, past the women's prison, over I-90, down a rail road, by a water reclamation facility (you can imagine the smell...) and to a park with a parking lot that no longer exists. There was a paved pathway for about 1/2 mile, cut off on one end by the sewage treatment plant and a KOA campground on the other.

ON REZ VS. OFF REZ

- It was brought up in conversation about how ties are maintained with Native relations as people move off reservation lands and social media clearly plays a huge role in that. I think it is important to note the experience of a Native is very different depending on where you live. As a Native that grew up far from any reservation, I was completely assimilated to the majority culture. My friends that have grown up on a reservation have struggled much more with poverty, substance exposure/abuse, and violence. I know for my family, one of the reasons we have successfully been able to avoid these things is because my grandfather and all of his siblings were able to get a college education and move into urban areas. My boyfriend regularly tells me about how he was able to buy beer and tobacco on the Spokane Reservation at the age of 14 and all the clerk would ask was if he lived on the reservation. He said yes and the clerk sold him the goods. That would have never happened in the city.

“A circle is a perfect shape.
A pyramid is built by slaves.”

–SHANE DOYLE (APSAALOOKE)



The idea that self-fulfillment is the final step in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is such a foreign concept to Native communities. In a culture that regularly uses ceremonies for self-fulfillment that involve depriving yourself of the basic needs, they clearly display that the pyramid is not a consistent format for their traditional lifestyle.

Shane talked about how a pyramid is build by slaves. When you think about what was provided to slaves, they were given basic food and a place to stay. This is similar to the Native people. Taking away the top three layers of Maslow's model turns it into a model for slavery and oppression.



DR. JANINE PEASE WOMEN IN NATIVE HISTORY

- Women often ascribed a silent status
- History follows military conflicts and male leadership
- Women had considerable power in the Native community and were severely impacted when settlers came and the traditional matriarch society was transformed into a patriarchy
- Women showed their accomplishments and abilities through symbols
 - awl - industrious
 - fire striker - hospitable
 - knife - provider
 - beaded belt - tanned 100's of hides
 - bracelet - worked a quill tent
 - ring - quill robe

“Omission is the biggest form of discrimination.”

- Janine Pease

THE POWER OF THOUGHT AND WORD

- In Native culture, words had power and were used sparingly, as if they had a cost associated with them.
- Words could:
 - bring rain
 - heal the ill
 - bring victory
 - teach

CONNECTION:

Our culture has lost this respect for language and use it too freely. I think we have been raised that we as individuals are important which means anything and everything we say is important. Honestly, that has probably never been less true. Our modern culture is overrun with useless events getting attention on the media and stealing the light from things that are in need of attention. In a world where words are so abundant, the quality and impact has suffered.

JANINE PEASE

"MEN TEND TO FOCUS ON MEN."

I love how this painting by Karl Bodmer illustrates the progression of trade goods acquired by the Natives. Starting at the far left, you can see a man without any Western Influence. By the time you reach the man in the top hat, there is evidence of guns, steel, a peace medal, and beading.



Notice the complete lack of women physically present in this painting. Even the people peaking over the fort walls appear to be males. It is evident by the lack of women in writings and paintings that they were not seen as important members of the Native community by the settlers. However, I love how Janine pointed out that even though we do not see women in these photos, we do see the impact of women. The clothing, the homes, the braids. All of these would have been owned, created or maintained by a women.

WESTERN

RENCONTRE DES VOYAGEURS AVEC DES INDIENS MEUNTARRI

MEETING WITH MINATARRE INDIANS.

near Fort Clark.

près du Fort Clark

LOREN YELLOW BIRD

NATIVE STRUGGLES, LANGUAGE, AND FINDING POWER

Today really shocked me. On a trip that is focused on the Native experience during the period of Lewis and Clark and beyond, I assumed more people would be aware of the current conditions of Native people and the racism and hardships they still face today. Hearing about Loren's brother that attempted suicide, the struggle with alcohol, the comments made when at a store or on other sacred land, were not surprising to me. I see this with my friend whose little brother recently committed suicide on the Yakima reservation. I see this with my cousins as they struggle to get help for addiction. I see this when I walk around the mall with my Native friends or in the off-hand comments people say to me. The thing that shocks me, is that this trip is about being more aware of these issues and the events in history that led up to it and **people have no idea these things are happening**. I think what is even more disheartening, is the fact that people in our group are unaware that some of the comments they make are offensive and part of the problem we are trying to fix. Just because you have spent time with Native people or on a reservation does not give you the right to give people an Indian name. It does not give you the right to say that their skin is pretty much darker than mine so they might as well be an Indian too. It does not give you the right to say people earned their spot because of diversity, oh and that doesn't mean you're not smart. Learning about Native history does not make this a shared experience with the Native people. Reading and being told about something is not the same as living it.



THE NATIONAL PARK MESSAGE

- Hearing our Theodore Roosevelt park ranger, Gianna, talk about the history of the park and the founder was fascinating because she identified the type of narrative that they typically give visitors and the one we received. There were multiple points where she said that it was never explicitly told to them during orientation, but there was a very specific narrative of Teddy that was expected. This narrative was about how wonderful this man was for conservation, the influence that North Dakota had on his life, and what an inspiring man he was. It was refreshing to hear her recognize the fact that he was a privileged racist that actually spent only about 6 months in North Dakota and hired people to do the hard work. This just goes to prove that the history the general public is being told is not always the truth. As a society we like to hear the romanticized versions of stories and sometimes that means the tough details (AKA the truth) are left out so people don't feel offended.

CULTURE OF CONSUMPTION

INSPIRED BY THE KNIFE RIVER INDIAN VILLAGES AND FORT CLARK

- I never thought about a Native society having garbage. Yes, I thought about compost, but not as a form of garbage. I guess I assumed that since they lived so closely with the land, all of their waste would return to the land rather quickly. Seeing the amount of pottery and bone shards around the Mandan and Hidatsa homes was astounding! It really gave me a sense of what a bustling community this was and how they managed the byproducts of this society.
- This also made me think about what would be left behind if our homes were abandoned. If we could tally up just the waste produced on this trip, it would be so much greater than what years of Mandans left behind (and their clay and bone are biodegradable so it's okay!). The amount of plastic cutlery, paper plates and cups, packaged food wrapping, and so much more is sickening. My dad coined a great term for some of the people that keep talking about being environmentally friendly and care about things like sustainably harvested palm oil but use plastic bags when they go to the grocery store: a hippy-crite. I thought this was so fitting! This trip has inspired me to return to my earth friendly habits not just because it's "cool" now, but because the amount of environmental damage that has happened in the last 150 years is absurd! Natives lived on this land for 13,000+ years and were still able to drink from the rivers. We got outside in Watford City, North Dakota and I can't even breathe the air for an hour without getting a sore throat and headache. Clearly, either we have forgotten how to live properly or the Natives were wise beyond comprehension.

JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE VILLAGE



I never thought about how some of the tribes viewed their encounter with Lewis and Clark. For many, this was not the first time that white men had come through and to them it seemed like just another day. The changes that occurred in a single lifetime for some of these Natives began with that nonchalant visit from some strangers. Can you imagine inviting someone into your home or just letting them pass through your city and then a few decades later having your entire lifestyle ripped apart? How was anyone supposed to foresee the radical changes that would take place?

THE "WOKE" EFFECT

Definition of *woke*

chiefly US slang

: aware of and actively attentive to important facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice)

I'm struggling to understand how others are experiencing this journey. I have been noticing that people are having what I would call the "woke effect". They have been exposed to a topic of social injustice that they previously were not very versed in, and now they are seeking to point out that injustice, or ones that appear to be injustice. I noticed this today when we were at On-A-Slant Indian Village and listening to the young ranger give his tour of the okipa ceremonial lodge. Immediately after he was done, people were talking about how they disapproved of his contradictory presentation because he did things like use the Hidatsa pronunciation of Sakakawea but the Shoshone story. Others were blatantly unimpressed during the Custer house tour because of Custer's role in the killing of Natives and some of his unpopular actions. Just because you don't agree with the history a ranger is sharing or don't like the historical figure does not mean that *learning* about them is bad. It is good to hear the narrative that is commonly told so you know what you need to do to correct it. It is good to learn about the villains in history because they still played a crucial role in the outcome. I think it is too easy to impose our modern day biases on historical figures and events. Just because something is acceptable today, does not mean that is the way it always has been. It is difficult to put ourselves in the mindset and time frame of these events but I think you need try to truly understand the internal (or external) conflict that people went through. Just because you have studied Native Americans in two states does not make you "woke" to all Native issues currently or historically.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN A MODERN WORLD

- When we pulled over on the side of the road to view the sites of the origin stories, I was shocked. I thought for sure we would be going to a park or something but they weren't even accessible for us. It made me think how our modern world has literally paved over these places to make building infrastructure more convenient. As Alisha said, this happened on the East Coast where they had ditches from the Civil War and people just put their driveways right through it! We have such different priorities and it shows through the things that we recognize in our society. Clearly, things of religious significance that are not of the dominant culture are not seen as places that should be saved from the infiltration of society.

“We don’t get lost in life if we know where we are
in relation to the creator.”

— DAKOTA GOODHOUSE

MAJORITY CULTURE TYPICALLY DECIDES WHAT TO PRESERVE

“Why does a site need to be important to Americans in order for us to preserve it?”

- Dakota Goodhouse



Prime example:
Pompey's Pillar



William Clark's Signature

DAPL

- It was so powerful going to these sites, especially after reading the majority of Nick Estes' book, *Our History is Our Future*. This book talks so passionately about how so many historical events led up to DAPL and the impact on the Native people. One thing that really stood out to me is the resilience of the land. The location of the main camp, which held 10,000 people at one point, looks like a clean, rolling field with birds and insects filling the air with their songs. Even the highway wide space where the pipeline was buried looks just like every other cattle farm in North Dakota. The ability of land to recover from trauma is amazing and it gives me hope for people as well.
- The most difficult part of the whole DAPL is that IT IS NOT DONE. There are still lawsuits that need to be settled and other communities fighting similar battles.



"No Spiritual Surrender" sticker on gate outside of the main camp.

