

THOREAU, THE FUTURIST, AND THE EMERGING HUMAN:

A Synthesis of the Native American and the Mystic for the Evolution of Democracy

A Performance Piece

By Connie Baxter Marlow

Algonquin Indian from Maine playing the Native American flute and representing Joe Polis, Thoreau's Indian guide, reading from the 1000 Indian-related references in Thoreau's writings.

Richard Smith, Thoreau impersonator, representing Thoreau, also reading from the 1000 Indian-related references in Thoreau's writings.

Connie Baxter Marlow presenting information and a new perspective which synthesizes Thoreau's life-long interest in the American Indian, his epiphany on Mt. Katahdin and his belief in the human potential; proposing the relevance of Thoreau, the visionary, to the future of democracy in America.

Opening: Flute music

Richard reading 646 - Red Face of Man

Introduction of Piece

CBM Discussing Thoreau's fascination with Indians, specifically Joe Polis, and the relevance to the future.

Andrew reading three Thoreau quotes during CBM talk (3/28/59 Journal and "Contact Passage" from *Ktaadn: The Maine Woods*)

Richard reading about Thoreau's experiences with Polis. 707, 711, 830, 793, 896, 917, 724, 778, 753, 745&746, 685, 922, 923. (Numbers refer to Brad Dean's Compilation of Indian References: "Thoreau's Indians.")

CBM speaking on Thoreau/Polis/The Probable Human with quotes from the DVD series "The American Evolution: Voices of America." – Bradley P. Dean, Kyriacos Markides and Imam Feisal Rauf

Algonquin reading 532, 530, 1072, 1073

CBM comments on origin of the name Walden

Richard reading J3/28/59, 8, 13, 30, 166, 217, 592, 704

CBM Conclusion/ Awakening

NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE

RICHARD READING THOREAU

646: Ktaadn 82: THE RED FACE OF MAN

Thus a man shall lead his life away here on the edge of the wilderness, ... in a new world, far in the dark of a continent, and have a flute to play at evening here, while his strains echo to the stars, amid the howling of wolves; shall live, as it were, in the primitive age of the world, a primitive man. Yet he shall spend a sunny day, and in this century be my contemporary; perchance shall read some scattered leaves of literature, and sometimes talk with me. Why read history then if the ages and the generations are now? He lives three thousand years deep into time, an age not yet described by poets. Can you well go further back in history than this? Ay! ay!—for there turns up but now ... a still more ancient and primitive man, whose history is not brought down even to the former. In a bark vessel sewn with the roots of the spruce, with horn-beam paddles he dips his way along. He is but dim and misty to me, obscured by the æons that lie between the bark canoe and the batteau. He builds no house of logs, but a wigwam of skins. He eats no hot-bread and sweet-cake, but musquash and moose-meat and the fat of bears. He glides up the Millinocket and is lost to my sight, as a more distant and misty cloud is seen flitting by behind a nearer, and is lost in space. So he goes about his destiny, the red face of man.

INTRODUCTION OF PIECE

Connie Baxter Marlow has spent the last 15 years in close association with visionary Native American elders throughout the United States and Mexico: the Hopi, Maya, Tarahumara, Huichol, Wabanaki, Lakota and Ute and most recently the Bushmen of the Kalahari in South Africa.

She feels that in the cosmology of the indigenous people are clues to the missing pieces of the prevailing paradigm; information about the true nature of the universe.

It is her understanding that humanity is about to make an evolutionary leap in consciousness to an understanding of the loving, interconnected, abundant universe and will align itself to this reality and subsequently choose to bring peace on earth in our lifetime.

Connie believes that when we come together with the indigenous peoples as equals, as family, and we each open our hearts and our minds to the other, the melding of our gifts will bring a new perspective that is invisible at this time. To her this new perspective will allow humanity to see the path to true unity, peace and freedom.

Connie finds Henry David Thoreau an important bridge to this shift in consciousness and has produced a film series *The American Evolution: Voices of America* which weaves a tapestry of paradigm-shifting ideas with a Thoreau scholar, Penobscot Indian elders, and other important thinkers. She will be drawing from the ideas and thinkers in this series tonight.

_____, Algonquin Indian from Maine, who has just been entertaining you with the Native American flute, will represent Joe Polis, Thoreau's Indian guide and one of three in Thoreau's pantheon of heroes along with John Brown and Walt Whitman, according to Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Richard Smith, Thoreau scholar and interpreter, will represent Thoreau himself tonight by reading some passages from Thoreau's 1000 references to the Indian compiled by Bradley Dean, Thoreau scholar who was transcribing Thoreau's 12 volumes of Indian Notebooks.

Connie is a Baxter of Maine. Her family bought and gave Mt. Katahdin and 200,000 acres to the people of Maine to be held forever wild as a public park. Her book on Mt. Katahdin is available for sale tonight. It is out of print so this is a unique opportunity to secure a copy. Her photographs from the book, with quotes from Thoreau's climb of the mountain are on display around the store.

CONNIE SPEAKING

We are here this evening to touch on a couple of little-known aspects of the life and works of Henry David Thoreau, American author and visionary: his life-long fascination with the American Indian and his life-changing epiphany on Mt. Katahdin in Maine. I believe these aspects, once understood, will be significant for humanity's evolution of consciousness. Sunday night at the library I will be screening Part 2 of *The American Evolution: Voices of America Series* "Thoreau, the Native American, Mt. Katahdin and the Future" which will cover many more details on these subjects with Thoreau scholars and Native American elders discussing these matters.

The simplest way to cut to the chase of what I am driving at tonight is to say that we will be addressing the mystical nature of the universe. "*The universe is wider than our views of it*" wrote Thoreau in the last chapter of Walden. This wider reality is the one we will be looking at. Why? Because I believe that humanity is about

to take an evolutionary leap into seeing and experiencing this reality, just as the Transcendentalists - Thoreau and Emerson - did - and the mystics and the visionary indigenous peoples of the world do.

Thoreau described himself as "*a mystic, a Transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot...*"

Let's define a few terms:

“Mystical: Of or stemming from direct communion with ultimate reality or God. of or having a spiritual reality or import not apparent to the intelligence or senses.” American Heritage College Dictionary,

“Transcendentalist: A literary and philosophical movement asserting the existence of an ideal spiritual reality transcending the empirical and knowable through intuition.” American Heritage College Dictionary

Thoreau was born, raised and died in Concord, Massachusetts. 1817-1862. He was a Harvard graduate. His life-long fascination with the Indian led him to become one of the top ethnologists of his time. The study of the "*manners and customs of the Indians of the Algonquin group previous to contact with the civilized man*" was his primary scientific focus. (Letter to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1853).

Tonight we are going to take Thoreau the next step - by looking at him, his life and his work from a different perspective - from a future Thoreau envisioned, looking back. In his writing Thoreau alludes to the future, to the possible human, and the importance of the message carried by the arrowhead from the indigenous mind. We are going to show you a Thoreau and the Indian he experienced - give you some ideas to ponder and suggest a synthesis from which we can all open to a larger reality and perhaps take the human potential up a notch to the place Thoreau dedicated his life to modeling.

RICHARD READING

As much as sportsmen go in pursuit of ducks and gunners of musquash and scholars of rare books and travelers of adventures and poets of ideas and all men of money, I go in search of arrowheads when the proper season comes round again. Journal March 28, 1859.

The larger pestles and axes may per chance grow scarce and be broken, but the arrowhead shall perhaps never cease to wing its way through the ages to eternity. It was originally winged but for a short flight, but it still to my mind's eye, wings its way through the ages bearing a message from the hand that shot it. They are not fossil bones, but as it were, fossil thoughts forever reminding me of the mind that shaped them. I would feign know that I am treading in the tracks of human game, that I am on the trail of mind. And these little reminders never fail to set me right. Journal March 28, 1859.

Why, then, make so great ado about the Roman and the Greek and neglect the Indian? Journal October 22, 1857.

CONNIE

Thoreau made three excursions to the Maine woods where he intended to hire Indian guides to "*study [their] ways*". "*Chesuncook*" *The Maine Woods*.

On his first excursion to Mt. Katahdin in September of 1846, the Indian guide he hired, Louis Neptune, failed to appear. Thoreau and his companions ended up climbing Katahdin without a guide - and on this climb experienced his life-changing epiphany:

RICHARD READING

--Here not even the surface had been scarred by man, but it was a specimen of what God saw fit to make this world. What is it to be admitted to a museum, to see a myriad of particular things, compared with being shown some star's surface, some hard matter in its home! I stand in awe of my body. This matter to which I am bound has become so strange to me, I fear not spirits, ghosts of which I am one, - **that** my body might, -but I fear bodies. I tremble to meet them. What is this Titan that has possession of me? Talk of mysteries! Think of our life in nature, - daily to be shown matter, to come in contact with it. -rocks, trees, wind on our cheeks! the **solid** earth, the **actual** world, the **common sense**. **Contact! Contact! Who are we? where are we?**" Ktaadn: *The Maine Woods*. " P 96. Penguin edition. Bold to denote Thoreau's italics.

CONNIE

According to Bradley P. Dean, Ph.D., Thoreau Scholar "*This important passage is Thoreau's attempt to articulate the ineffable, for Thoreau on Mount Katahdin, like Moses on Mount Sinai, had beheld God or Spirit and Nature or Matter face-to -face.*" *Voices of America Series. Part 2.*

On Thoreau's second excursion to Maine he hired Joe Aitteon, son of the Governor, as his guide on a moose hunting expedition in 1853 and this year, 2007, is the 150th anniversary of his last trip to Maine where he hired Joe Polis as his guide in 1857. He died 5 years later in 1862 after taking a trip to Minnesota where he also explored the Indian culture. The relationship that developed between Thoreau and Polis during his last Maine excursion was to solidify in Thoreau's mind the importance of the Indian experience. Thoreau had been fascinated by the Indian from childhood. Brad Dean speculates that the reason Thoreau held Polis in such high esteem was that Joe Polis was a man who, I will quote Brad: "...embodied a kind of synthesis of Native American cultures and the white culture, who could succeed and flourish in the white community, but also could keep himself alive in the woods and even be comfortable in the woods." *Voices of America Series. Part 2*

From my reading of Thoreau I will hypothesize that Joe Polis exemplified Thoreau's dream of what I am going to call the "total human" or the "possible human" - the synthesis of the mystical indigenous connection to nature, to the universe, with the worldly man who could function in the modern times. To me, this is the evolutionary leap of humanity. Thoreau saw and bemoaned the limitations of the modern society and he resonated to the expanded reality of the mystic and occasionally experienced the natural world the way the Indian did. He dreamed of a future that would bridge these realities, and Joe Polis symbolized this possibility.

In the *Voices of America Series. Part 1* Brad Dean notes that Thoreau saw a future in which humanity connects with its highest conscience and writes of this in *Civil Disobedience*. "*That government is best which governs least. Carried out, it finally amounts to this...That government is best which governs not at all.*" Brad Dean states: "...If you don't mind me putting a parenthesis to Henry David Thoreau, what you need to do is say, "*That government is best which governs not at all (because in such a government, all the citizens govern themselves).*" That's key. What Thoreau wants is self-governors. Everyone is their own king and governor and congress and senate and you do not need laws to oppress you because you have a law inwardly that manifests itself in your conduct outwardly."

I will venture to say that there is a direct link between humanity's expanded, mystical connection to the universe and its access to its highest conscience, its divine nature; that the message carried to the future by the arrowhead is the possibility of life lived in alignment with the oneness of creation and the sacredness of all things – concepts that lie at the foundation of indigenous cosmology.

The Indian... begins where we leave off and seems so much the divine; and anything that fairly excites our admiration expands us. From an August 18, 1857 letter to Harrison Blake, written shortly after Thoreau's final excursion to the Maine woods.

Now Thoreau and Polis will speak for themselves - we will take you on a little adventure into the Maine woods.

RICHARD READING

707 & 777: The Allegash and East Branch 2 & 101: MEETING JOE POLIS

The first man we saw on [Indian] island was an Indian named Joseph Polis, whom my relative had known from a boy, and now addressed familiarly as "Joe." He was dressing a deerskin in his yard. The skin was spread over a slanting log, and he was scraping it with a stick, held by both hands. He was stoutly built, perhaps a little above the middle height, with a broad face, and, as others said, perfect Indian features and complexion. His house was a two-story white one with blinds, the best looking that I noticed there, and as good as an average one on a New England village street. It was surrounded by a garden and fruit-trees, single cornstalks standing thinly amid the beans. He was one of the aristocracy. It appeared that he had represented his tribe at Augusta and also once at Washington where he had met some Western chiefs. Also, he had called on Daniel Webster in Boston.. We asked him if he knew any good Indian who would like to go into the woods with us.. To which he answered, out of that strange remoteness in which the Indian ever dwells to the white man. 'Me like to go myself; me want to get some moose'; and kept on scraping the skin. Edited/compiled by CBM

711: The Allegash and East Branch 8: BAGGAGE

Early the next morning (July 23d) the stage called for us, the Indian having breakfasted with us, and already placed the baggage in the canoe to see how it would go. My companion and I had each a large knapsack as full as it would hold, and we had two large India-rubber bags which held our provision and utensils. As for the Indian, all the baggage he had, beside his axe and gun, was a blanket, which he brought loose in his hand. However, he had laid in a store of tobacco and a new pipe for the excursion.

830: The Allegash and East Branch 191: POLIS AS A DOCTOR

Our Indian said that he was a doctor, and could tell me some medicinal use for every plant I could show him. I immediately tried him. He said that the inner bark of the aspen was good for sore eyes; and so with various other plants, proving himself as good as his word. According to his account, he had acquired such knowledge in his youth from a wise old Indian with whom he associated, and he lamented that the present generation of Indians 'had lost a great deal'

793: The Allegash and East Branch 122: POLIS CALLING MUSQUASH

Just before night we saw a musquash, (he did not say muskrat,) the only one we saw in this voyage, swimming downward on the opposite side of the stream. The Indian, wishing to get one to eat, hushed us, saying, "Stop, me call 'em"; and sitting flat on the bank, he began to make a curious squeaking, wiry sound with his lips, exerting himself considerably. I was greatly surprised,—thought that I had at last got into the wilderness, and that he was a wild man indeed, to be talking to a musquash! I did not know which of the two was the strangest to me. He seemed suddenly to have quite forsaken humanity, and gone over to the musquash side. The musquash, however, as near as I could see, did not turn aside, though he may have hesitated a little, and the Indian said that he saw our fire; but it was evident that he was in the habit of calling the musquash to him, as he said. An acquaintance of mine who was hunting moose in the woods a month after this, tells me that his Indian in this way repeatedly called the musquash within reach of his paddle in the moonlight, and struck at them.

896: The Allegash and East Branch 300: POLIS AND THOREAU RACE

We carried round the falls just below, on the west side. The rocks were on their edges, and very sharp. The distance was about three fourths of a mile. When we had carried over one load, the Indian returned by the

shore, and I by the path; and though I made no particular haste, I was nevertheless surprised to find him at the other end as soon as I. It was remarkable how easily he got along over the worst ground. He said to me, 'I take canoe and you take the rest, suppose you can keep along with me?' I thought that he meant, that while he ran down the rapids I should keep along the shore, and be ready to assist him from time to time, as I had done before; but as the walking would be very bad, I answered, 'I suppose you will go too fast for me, but I will try.' But I was to go by the path, he said. This I thought would not help the matter, I should have so far to go to get to the river-side when he wanted me. But neither was this what he meant. He was proposing a race over the carry, and asked me if I thought I could keep along with him by the same path, adding that I must be pretty smart to do it. As his load, the canoe, would be much the heaviest and bulkiest, though the simplest, I thought that I ought to be able to do it, and said that I would try. So I proceeded to gather up the gun, axe, paddle, kettle, frying-pan, plates, dippers, carpets, &c., &c., and while I was thus engaged he threw me his cow-hide boots. 'What, are these in the bargain?' I asked. 'O yer,' said he; but before I could make a bundle of my load I saw him disappearing over a hill with the canoe on his head; so, hastily scraping the various articles together, I started on the run, and immediately went by him in the bushes, but I had no sooner left him out of sight in a rocky hollow, than the greasy plates, dippers, &c., took to themselves wings, and while I was employed in gathering them up again, he went by me; but hastily pressing the sooty kettle to my side, I started once more, and soon passing him again, I saw him no more on the carry. I do not mention this as anything of a feat, for it was but poor running on my part, and he was obliged to move with great caution for fear of breaking his canoe as well as his neck. When he made his appearance, puffing and panting like myself, in answer to my inquiries where he had been, he said, 'Locks (rocks) cut 'em feet,' and laughing added, 'O, me love to play sometimes.' He said that he and his companions when they came to carries several miles long used to try who would get over first; each perhaps with a canoe on his head. I bore the sign of the kettle on my brown linen sack for the rest of the voyage.

917: The Allegash and East Branch 327 [326 in text]: THOREAU'S INDIAN NAME

He had previously complimented me on my paddling, saying that I paddled "just like anybody," giving me an Indian name which meant 'great paddler.'

724: The Allegash and East Branch 26: THOREAU'S WISH TO LEARN LANGUAGE

I observed that I should like to go to school to him to learn his language, living on the Indian island the while; could not that be done? 'O, yer,' he replied, 'good many do so.' I asked how long he thought it would take. He said one week. I told him that in this voyage I would tell him all I knew, and he should tell me all he knew, to which he readily agreed.

778: The Allegash and East Branch 102: POLIS IN THE CITY

I was surprised to hear him say that he liked to go to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, &c., &c.; that he would like to live there. But then, as if relenting a little, when he thought what a poor figure he would make there, he added, "I suppose, I live in New York, I be poorest hunter, I expect." He understood very well both his superiority and his inferiority to the whites.

753: Allegash and East Branch Penquin Classics p 251: POLIS FINDING HIS WAY IN THE WOODS

I asked him how he guided himself in the woods. He replied. 'Great difference between me and the white man.' It appeared as if the sources of information were so various that he did not give a distinct conscious attention to any one, and so could not readily refer to any when questioned about it, but he found his way very much as an animal does. Perhaps what is commonly called instinct in the animal, in this case is merely a sharpened and educated sense. Often, when an Indian says, 'I don't know' in regard to the route he is to take, he does not mean what a white man would by those words, for his Indian instinct may tell him still as much as the most confident white man knows. He does not carry things in his head, nor remember the route exactly like a white man, but relies on himself at the moment. Not having experienced the need of the other sort of knowledge, all labeled and arranged, he has not acquired it. Edited by CBM.

745 & 746: The Allegash and East Branch 59: 1000 REVELATIONS TO THE INDIAN

The next day the Indian told me their name for [the phosphorescent] light [I had seen in the night], —Artoosoqu', —and on my inquiring concerning the will-o'-the-wisp, and the like phenomena, he said that his "folks" sometimes saw fires passing along at various heights, even as high as the trees, and making a noise. I was prepared after this to hear of the most startling and unimagined phenomena witnessed by "his folks," they are abroad at all hours and seasons in scenes so unfrequented by white men. Nature must have made a thousand revelations to them which are still secrets to us.

It suggested, too, that the same experience always gives birth to the same sort of belief or religion. One revelation has been made to the Indian, another to the white man. I have much to learn of the Indian, nothing of the missionary. I am not sure but all that would tempt me to teach the Indian my religion would be his promise to teach me his.

A scientific explanation, as it is called, would have been altogether out of place there. That is for pale daylight. Science with its retorts would have put me to sleep; it was the opportunity to be ignorant that I improved. It suggested to me that there was something to be seen if one had eyes. It made a believer of me more than before. I believed that the woods were not tenantless, but choke-full of honest spirits as good as myself any day, - not an empty chamber, in which chemistry was left to work alone, but an inhabited house - and for a few moments I enjoyed fellowship with them. (Penguin edition 249)

685: Chesuncook 78: LANGUAGE

While lying there listening to the Indians, I amused myself with trying to guess at their subject by their gestures, or some proper name introduced. There can be no more startling evidence of their being a distinct and comparatively aboriginal race, than to hear this unaltered Indian language, which the white man cannot speak nor understand. We may suspect change and deterioration in almost every other particular, but the language which is so wholly unintelligible to us...took me by surprise, though I had found so many arrow-heads ...[that had} convinced me that the Indian was not the invention of historians and poets. These were the sounds that issued from the wigwams of this country before Columbus was born; they have not yet died away; and, with remarkably few exceptions, the language of their forefathers is still copious enough for them. I felt that I stood, or rather lay, as near to the primitive man of America, that night, as any of its discoverers ever did.

922: The Allegash and East Branch 334 [333 in text]: POLIS' WIFE/HOUSE

[At the end of the journey]we stopped for an hour at [Polis'] house, where my companion shaved with his razor, which he pronounced in very good condition. Mrs. P. wore a hat and had a silver brooch on her breast, but she was not introduced to us. The house was roomy and neat.

923: The Allegash and East Branch 335 [334 in text]: LAST SAW POLIS

This was the last that I saw of Joe Polis. We took the last train, and reached Bangor that night.

CONNIE

This experience with Polis was so significant to Thoreau that he would not immediately publish his account of the excursion for fear of offending Polis. On his death bed, Thoreau's last words were "Indian" and "moose."

Thoreau and the Indian transcend the experience of the everyday man. Thoreau saw salvation in this transcendence. It allowed him to see the human potential. He was not, however, a stranger to the shadow side of the Indian nor of the white man. He had an extraordinary insight into the human condition, its limitations and its possibilities. His dream was to inspire his readers – the human race - to a higher place. The truth will

set us free and each race must acknowledge the dichotomy of its light and its shadow. Thoreau expresses this dichotomy in the following passage.

RICHARD READING

387: JOURNAL December 30, 1856 (p. 1103 Dover, Volume 9) LIGHT AND SHADOW

What an evidence it is, after all, of civilization, or of a capacity for improvement, that savages like our Indians, who in their protracted wars stealthily slay men, women, and children without mercy,... what a wonderful evidence it is, I say, of their capacity for improvement that even they can enter into the most formal compact or treaty of peace, burying the hatchet, etc., etc., and treating with each other with as much consideration as the most enlightened states. You would say that they had a genius for diplomacy as well as for war. Consider that Iroquois, torturing his captive, .; and now behold him in the council-chamber, where he meets the representatives of the hostile nation to treat of peace, conducting with such perfect dignity and decorum, betraying such a sense of justness. These savages are equal to us civilized men in their treaties, and, I fear, not essentially worse in their wars.

CONNIE

Every race, every human, has a light and a shadow side. We cannot burden anyone with the idea that he has no shadow. Each race has passed through dark hours in our evolution. Without rose-colored glasses Thoreau could see beyond our limitations to the higher truths, because he shared a reality with the Indian from which he could see possibilities. Sunny will now read Thoreau's writings that indicate this transcendence.

ALGONQUIN READING

. 532: Sunday 12 *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* CIVILIZING THE INDIAN

We talk of civilizing the Indian, but that is not the name for his improvement. If we could listen but for an instant to the chant of the Indian muse we should understand why he will not exchange his savageness for civilization. By the wary independence and aloofness of his dim forest life he preserves his intercourse with his native gods, and is admitted from time to time to a rare and peculiar society with Nature. He has glances of starry recognition to which our saloons are strangers. The steady illumination of his genius, dim only because distant, is like the faint but satisfying light of the stars compared with the dazzling but ineffectual and short-lived blaze of candles. We would not always be soothing and taming nature, breaking the horse and the ox, but sometimes ride the horse wild and chase the buffalo. The Indian's intercourse with Nature is at least such as admits of the greatest independence of each. CBM edit.

530: Sunday 11. A WEEK... THE WHITE MAN COMES

The white man comes, pale as the dawn, with a load of thought, with a slumbering intelligence as a fire raked up, knowing well what he knows, not guessing but calculating; strong in community, yielding obedience to authority; of experienced race; of wonderful, wonderful common sense; dull but capable, slow but persevering, severe but just, of little humor but genuine; a laboring man, despising game and sport; building a house that endures, a framed house. He buys the Indian's moccasins and baskets, then buys his hunting-grounds, and at length forgets where he is buried and ploughs up his bones. And here town records, old, tattered, time-worn, weather-stained chronicles, contain the Indian sachem's mark perchance, an arrow or a beaver, and the few fatal words by which he deeded his hunting-grounds away. He comes with a list of ancient Saxon, Norman, and Celtic names, and strews them up and down this river,—Framingham, Sudbury, Bedford, Carlisle, Billerica, Chelmsford,—and this is New Angle-land, and these are the New West Saxons whom the Red Men call, not Angle-ish or English, but Yengeese, and so at last they are known for Yankees.

1072:EARLY ESSAYS June 2, 1837.

*The savage is far sighted, his eye, like the Poet's,
'Doth glance from Heaven to Earth, from Earth to Heaven'*

He looks far into futurity, wandering as familiarly through the land of spirits as the civilized man through his wood lot or pleasure grounds. His life is practical poetry—a perfect epic; the earth is his hunting ground—he lives suns and winters—the sun is his time-piece, he journeys to its rising or its setting, to the abode of winter or the land whence the summer comes. He never listens to the thunder but he is reminded of the Great Spirit—it is his voice. To him, the lightening is less terrible than it is sublime—the rainbow less beautiful than it is wonderful—the sun less warm than it is glorious.

The savage dies and is buried, he sleeps with his forefathers, & before many winters his dust returns to dust again, and his body is mingled with the elements. The civilized man can scarce sleep even in his grave. Not even there are the weary at rest, nor do the wicked cease from troubling.

1073: Ibid (p. 110).

The savage may be, and often is, a sage. Our Indian is more of a man than the inhabitant of a city. He lives as a man—he thinks as a man—he dies as a man. The latter, it is true, is more learned; Learning is Art's creature; but it is not essential to the perfect man—it cannot educate.

1068: Musings. April 20th 1835 (p. 16)

CONNIE

I thought I might tell you a tiny bit of information you might enjoy: How Walden Pond got its name: Thoreau tells us in *Walden: My townsmen have all heard the tradition, the oldest people tell me that they heard it in their youth, that anciently the Indians were holding a pow-wow upon a hill here, which rose as high into the heavens as the pond now sinks deep into the earth, and they used much profanity, as the story goes, though this vice is one of which the Indians were never guilty, and while they were thus engaged the hill shook and suddenly sank, and only one old squaw, named Walden, escaped, and from her the pond was named.* 606. The Ponds 12

Richard will continue with a few thoughts from Thoreau.

RICHARD READING

JOURNAL October 11, 1840 (p. 187 Princeton, Volume 1) 8: TRUE MAN OF SCIENCE

The true man of science will have a rare Indian wisdom—and will know nature better by his finer organization. He will smell, taste, see, hear, feel, better than other men. His will be a deeper and finer experience.

April 26, 1841(p. 304 Princeton, Volume 1) 13: CHARM OF THE INDIAN - FREE

The charm of the Indian to me is that he stands free and unconstrained in nature—is her inhabitant—and not her guest—and wears her easily and gracefully. But the civilized man has the habits of the house. His house is a prison in which he finds himself oppressed and confined, not sheltered and protected. He walks as if he sustained the roof—he carries his arms as if the walls would fall in and crush him—and his feet remember the cellar beneath. His muscles are never relaxed— It is rare that he overcomes the house, and learns to sit at home in it—and roof and floor—and walls support themselves—as the sky-and trees—and earth.

JOURNAL: [Variant of previous passage: 1837-1847 (pp 129-130 Dover, Volume I)] 30:

For the Indian there is no safety but in the plow. If he would not be pushed into the Pacific, he must seize hold of a plow-tail and let go his bow and arrow, his fish-spear and rifle. This the only Christianity that will save him.

His fate says sternly to him, "Forsake the hunter's life and enter into the agricultural, the second, state of man. Root yourselves a little deeper in the soil, if you would continue to be the occupants of the country." But I confess I have no little sympathy with the Indians and hunter men. They seem to me a distinct and equally respectable people, born to wander and to hunt, and not to be inoculated with the twilight civilization of the white man.

The Indian, perchance, has not made up his mind to some things which the white man has consented to; he has not, in all respects, stooped so low; and hence, though he too loves food and warmth, he draws his tattered blanket about him and follows his fathers, rather than barter his birthright. He dies, and no doubt his Genius judges well for him. But he is not worsted in the fight; he is not destroyed. He only migrates beyond the Pacific to more spacious and happier hunting-grounds.

A race of hunters can never withstand the inroads of a race of husbandmen. The latter burrow in the night into their country and undermine them; and [even] if the hunter is brave enough to resist, his game is timid and has already fled. The rifle alone would never exterminate it, but the plow is a more fatal weapon; it wins the country inch by inch and holds all it gets.

166: JOURNAL February 14, 1852 (p. 347 Princeton, Volume 4) INDIVIDUAL

But this points to a distinction between the civilized man and the savage & No doubt they have designs on us in making of the life of a civilized people an institution in which the life of the individual is to a great extent absorbed, in order perchance to preserve & perfect the race—but I wish to show at what a sacrifice this advantage is obtained and to suggest that we may possibly so live as to secure all the advantage without suffering any of the disadvantage.

217: JOURNAL February 23, 1853 (p. 467 Princeton, Volume 5) SALVAGES

I think myself in a wilder country and a little nearer to primitive times when I read in old books which spell the word savages with an l (salvages) reminding me of the derivation of the word from Sylva—there is some of the wild wood & its bristling branches still left in their language The savages they describe are really salvages men of the woods.

704: Chesuncook 109: POETS ON THE INDIAN TRAIL

...These remind us, that, not only for strength, but for beauty, the poet must, from time to time, travel the logger's path and the Indian's trail, to drink at some new and more bracing fountain of the Muses, far in the recesses of the wilderness.

592: Economy 110: WALDEN: REDEMPTION

If, then, we would indeed restore mankind by truly Indian, botanic, magnetic, or natural means, let us first be as simple and well as Nature ourselves, dispel the clouds which hang over our own brows, and take up a little life into our pores. Do not stay to be an overseer of the poor, but endeavor to become one of the worthies of the world.

CONNIE

Thoreau's political life, his life in society, his role as an author exemplify the mystical connection to the universe. Thoreau WAS the probable human – his ability to see and experience an expanded reality drove his actions on a day-to-day basis – he acted according to his inner knowing, his conscience – and changed the world through modeling and communicating what he saw and resonated to. He dreamt of a nation of individuals operating in freedom that would actualize on earth the highest human potential and the power of the universe. Brad Dean states Thoreau's essence: *"the inward journey, the inward voyage...it's all inward. It's all spiritual.*

It's all at that level of the higher law [law of conscience, as opposed to constitutional law]. [This] was really important for Thoreau." Part 1& Part 2. *Voices of America Series*

Kyriacos Markides, Author, Sociologist at the University of Maine, not far from Indian Island, home of Joe Polis speaks of this in Part 3 of the *Voices of America Series*. “

The idea that all human beings are created equal and they are endowed by certain rights. This is what John the Evangelist would say in the gospel, that all human beings have the Christ within, all human beings, that come to the light, the light of every human being that comes into the world, which means that the individual is sacred and we find that notion in the American Constitution. America is a place where one can freely express his or her views and ideas. And in this open system, human nature can find a fertile ground to express itself. What am I saying? I'm saying that the openness of American society is conducive to the emergence of a spirituality that could have been suppressed in earlier periods and in other societies.

As does Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, author: *America has established a framework where the human spirit and the human effort can blossom. It requires a sense of freedom, it requires the sense of the honoring of the rights of every human being so that a human being's individuality can emerge. The sense of you can be who you are as long as you honor the rights of the others. It is the development and articulation of what we call a social contract, which means those written and unwritten rules of behavior that govern how we live as a society, how we respect the other, and yet at the same time, be respected.* Part 3. *Voices of America Series*.

Thoreau desperately wanted the world to see what he could see and believed that one day we would, it was only a matter of humanity waking up to its true nature. On the title page of *Walden* Thoreau writes: *"I do not propose to write an ode to dejection but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning if only to wake my neighbors up."* Brad Dean explains *"it's an ethical awakening. He's not talking about a physical awakening and getting up in the morning and raising your head out of the bed, that's not what he's talking about. He's talking about the effort, as he puts it, to throw off sleep, moral lethargy...the effort to become truly alive."* Part 1, *Voices of America Series*

A lot of people live in two realities. One reality is the reality of their every day world and the other reality is a more inner reality that they're afraid to articulate because our culture has shut its doors to inner realities, and we need to open them up and incorporate these understandings... pointed out Kyriacos Markides, Part 3, *Voices of America Series*

I, for one, believe that Thoreau, the futurist, SAW, SENSED the evolution of consciousness that humanity was to undergo, the merging of the inner and outer self, and knew he was a front runner. It's time for Thoreau, for the American Indian, for the heart of humanity and the true destiny of America to have a day in the sun.

"So, we saunter toward the Holy Land till one day the sun shall shine more brightly than ever he has done, shall per chance shine into our minds and hearts and light up our whole lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on the bankside in Autumn."

**Conclusion of
Walking Henry David Thoreau**

THANK YOU.

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Originally Presented in Sedona, Arizona:

Well Red Coyote Bookstore Speaker Series

Sedona, Az

Friday, March 16, 2007

Originally titled: "Thoreau and the Native American"

(revised to include new thinking that evolved during the evening)

With:

Sunny Heartley - Algonquin Indian from Maine playing the Native American flute and representing Joe Polis, Thoreau's Indian guide.

and

Andrew Cameron Bailey - representing Thoreau, reading from the 1000 Indian-related references in Thoreau's writings.

And

Connie Baxter Marlow