

1 January 2007

To the Editor of *Tribal College Journal*

I wish to thank the *Tribal College Journal* for allowing me to provide copies of Tina Deschenie's interview with Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart to my students, "Historical Trauma: Holocaust victims, American Indians recovering from abuses of the past," in Volume 17, Spring 2006, Issue No. 3. I know the students in my Educational Psychology classes at Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston, Idaho, will also be appreciative. This will be a valuable contribution to their education, and help prepare them to be more effective teachers of the Native American children they will encounter in their own future elementary and high school classrooms.

Several years ago Ms. Lisa Guzman (Nez Perce), director of the Indian Education Professional Development program at Lewis-Clark State college, asked me to collaborate with her and Prof. Bill Hayne (Assiniboine) in developing a workshop to help the Native students in that program understand the effects of intergenerational historical trauma. I am a psychologist, and although I had worked for the Yakama Indian Nations tribal schools for three years in the 1980s, and had worked as a consultant to the Nez Perce Nation's men's development program in the 1990s, I was unfamiliar with the work that had been done on historical trauma.

I began reading the papers and investigating the work Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (Lakota), Dr. Bonnie Duran (Opelousas/Coushatta), and Dr. Eduardo Duran (Tewa/Apache). Their work was enlightening to me, and helped me understand the role of historical trauma in the anxiety and depression that sometimes assaults the lives of Native people, as well as the power of healing inherent in Tribal communities. The workshops that Lisa Guzman, Bill Hayne and I conducted with Native students at the University of Idaho and Lewis-Clark State College were very well received.

I then realized that all future teachers of Native American children and youth need to understand the effects of intergenerational transfer of historical trauma. As of last year I began including a "unit" on this topic in my Educational Psychology classes at Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC). Although LCSC has one of the highest percentages of Native college students of any non-Tribal public college, nonetheless most of my students are white. It seems, however, at least as important for them to understand the effects of historical trauma on Native children and youth, as it does for Native people themselves. They will become teachers in the public school, on or near the Nez Perce Nation, and will have a big impact on the lives of the Native students that will be in their future classrooms. Although I can provide lecturing on this topic, and power point presentations, it is important for college students to be able to directly read the thoughts of the authors of the original sources of research on intergenerational historical trauma among Native peoples. This is why I was so pleased to read Tina Deschenie's interview with Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, and then receive permission to share it with my students. Again, thank you.

Sincerely,
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