

TWO ELDERS SPEAK

Excerpts from Clayoquot Symposium 2003 Health Across the Water

November 25-28, 2003

Tin Wis Resort, Tofino, BC

BARNEY WILLIAMS, JR.
BEACHKEEPER FOR THE TLA-O-QUI-AHT PEOPLE

AND

ROD DOBELL
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR FOR THE CLAYOQUOT ALLIANCE



Please note that the contents of this document are not exact transcriptions of what participants said, but rather a paraphrase to the best ability of note takers and editors. We have tried to maintain the spirit of lively exchange that characterized the event.

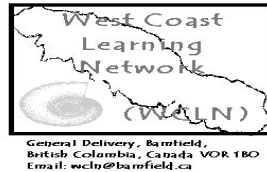
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The Organizing Committee of the Clayoquot Symposium 2003 includes the following staff of the Clayoquot Alliance for Research, Education, and Training:

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FOREWORD

The Clayoquot Alliance for Research, Education and Training is a partnership of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust and the University of Victoria, initiated under the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). In November 2003 the partners in the Clayoquot Alliance, together with other community groups and individuals, organized **Clayoquot Symposium 2003**. This community-based event was intended as the beginning of a program of such gatherings annually, representing a renewal of an initiative begun a decade ago by the Clayoquot Biosphere Project, but suspended in 1997. Though **Clayoquot Symposium 2003** comes toward the end of the initial three-year program funded by SSHRC, it was consciously designed as a collaborative process of problem identification and specification involving academic and community participants in a joint exploration of perceptions and perspectives around community health and ecosystem integrity, leading to a community-based research agenda for future years.

This event, held at the Tin-Wis conference centre, was preceded by community consultations that helped to shape the program, built around the general concern with community health in its many dimensions. A record of these community consultations, together with the proceedings of the conference itself, can be found on the Clayoquot Alliance website at <http://www.clayoquotalliance.uvic.ca/Symposium2003/index.html> .

Subsequent meetings of the community-based organizing committee settled on a schedule that focused on a general discussion of community health on the first day of the Symposium, the problems of understanding and managing the impacts of tourism in the region on the second day, and processes of coastal zone planning on the third day.

A particularly important feature of the discussion throughout the Symposium was the presence of First Nations participants. Among these were elders and others from the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, on whose traditional territory the gathering was held, but who have never formally taken up their seats on the Board of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) or formally recognized the legitimacy of the CBT as involving all the peoples of the region.

Barney Williams, Jr., Beachkeeper for the Tla-o-qui-aht, acted as a spokesperson in much of the discussion. In this note, some of his comments on each of the topics through the three day meeting have been excerpted from the full proceedings, with the identification of the setting for each.

A brief wrap-up session at the end of the third day included observations by Barney Williams, Jr. and Rod Dobell, Principal Investigator for the Clayoquot Alliance, as panellists. Stan Boychuk, Executive Director of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust and Co-Chair of the Clayoquot Alliance Steering Committee served as Chair. The interesting interplay of the independent and unscripted (but now edited) comments of these two speakers seemed worth noting for further reflection. This short record was prepared as a result of this interest in stimulating further discussion.

All of us associated with the Clayoquot Alliance hope that such conversations, and the model of the Symposium itself, can be continued and developed in the coming years.

Rod Dobell
University of Victoria
and
Clayoquot Alliance for Research, Education and Training
April, 2004

Clayoquot Symposium 2003: Two Elders Speak

**Barney Williams, Jr.
Beachkeeper for the Tla-o-qui-aht People**

**Rod Dobell,
Principal Investigator for the Clayoquot Alliance**

DAY ONE: COMMUNITY HEALTH

Barney Williams, Jr.:

[Opens with a few observations in the Nuu-Chah-Nulth language] I am speaking in words that most of you do not understand because that is how we feel about the issues you bring to us. Very often dialogue is used that we do not understand, so consequently we do not get involved. We are respectful of your knowledge and education. Many of us have spent a lot of years in earning Master's degrees in culture that are not recognized at the university. I just returned home to be with my people and share knowledge I received while being mentored by two old ladies. My mother died of TB when I was two years old. I moved between my grandmothers' houses. I was fascinated by the knowledge of my grandmothers. My grandmother was disappointed that all I got for my diploma at Malaspina was a piece of paper (laughter). There was a celebratory feast to honour me for my accomplishment, to share that it was a milestone in my life. She didn't understand it but she said "you will fly away" and "you don't forget where you come from, you carry that wherever you go."

We have learned from people who come here. But sometimes they forget to ask us what we know. So if there is one thing you learn it is that there are some of us who are very learned, and are very willing to share that if you just ask. We were and are taught to have balance in our systems. We learned these things and maintain that a big piece is the spiritual aspect of our well-being. Our people have taken your teachings too much to heart. Our challenge is to reintroduce our culture. [more comments in Nuu-Chah-Nulth language] Some First Nations do not see the use, the relevance of listening to traditional knowledge. We sit down and talk with our elders and advisors, our t'apath=si, and we talk about what was, what is, and what could be. We talk about what has sustained us against all odds. I am a product of residential schools. No one listened to us as little boys and our experiences of abuse. That's only part of it. I went to school and never went home for six years, even though it was only two miles away. I had no concept of family, discipline, so there are a lot of things I am sensitive to here.

I believe we have those issues because we have lost our identity—we don't know who we are. We have lost a sense of belonging to anybody. We are reminded of that. Racism is rampant. But this community is in denial on that as well, even though we experience it all the time. So when we speak of health, I'm glad we are thinking of it holistically. We have to recognize that someone created our world.

Why do we have to be so complicated? My ancestors lived by simplicity.

One day as a boy, I came home all excited by knowledge from school. My granddad listened and when I finished he said Huuxs%atu—"Take a rest grandson." We need to remember that in our ability to solve things. We move so fast. Hu%acac^i+—"Go back where you came from to see what you missed." That's what my elders told me. I think those are profound things. If I take time to acknowledge the presence of someone else, no matter who they are, then I show that respect for creation. The significance of each animal and place in ecosystem is important. When herring spawned on the beach, we were not allowed to play on the beach out of respect. Maintaining the balance of this place was important.

I believe it is important to have a voice, and not to take away from the panel, but to share knowledge we have as peoples, to create understanding in those of you who have the place to ask me questions, and to be able to feel a part of all of you, rather than what we have always been, in isolation from all of you. It's time to work together in a humble sense, with much respect for one another. +ekuu for listening.

DAY TWO: TOURISM AND ITS IMPACTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Barney Williams, Jr.:

I will take up the next 40 minutes! (laughter) I want to speak to my relatives on the panel in my own language and thank them. [speaks for a minute in Nuu-Chah-Nulth language.]

As First Nations we have concerns. We are in the middle as Tla-o-qui-aht. Anybody that moves here is moving through our territories. Nac^iks—"Tofino" was a village and we were asked to move. We are here to be part of the process. If anyone goes to Butchart Gardens, you have to pay. Seems like two standards for people. Here anybody can do anything; pick clams, fish, whatever. And you do it for free.

Our H=ah=uu>i is not understood by many people. We are here and we haven't moved. Haven't moved. We have accepted change at the cost of territory and land. Now we are sitting down and begging the governments for something that was ours always.

When our friends came across the water, we said they can live here because we're not living there. You're welcome. We showed you how to survive in this environment. We all know what happened. Nothing was signed. Nothing was asked. We shared. Respect:

The understanding and love of another human being. Even our word for you, *mama'n'i*, which means people coming across the water—that is a term of respect.

We're happy in our hearts to dialogue, and we're happy to be part of the process. And we would hope that from this forum you get an understanding of how we feel as First Nations. We have heard about the risks and the benefits of tourism. But we are hesitant about tourism because we are not benefiting from it. When our interests are considered it is always after the fact. That's reality from a First Nations perspective, as people that have always been here. So a lot of people have a real issue with this, and we as First Nations understand why. Tourists go into our territories. We don't have a problem with that, but as Steve was saying, they should respect our sacred places. We couldn't play on the beach when the herring were spawning because we would disturb them. It was their time. That's what the elders would tell us. That's the respect we were taught. It's not just about the money. These things are important to our people. We need to sit down and talk about the concerns we have.

Our tribe operates two tourism companies, so we are part of it. And the reality is it's a very competitive market. Understand that we're all working for the same thing: to provide our visitors with some knowledge and joy of an area that is shared. We need to respect ourselves so we respect other people. Very often this is not done. And it's sad because it's not the way of our old people. I was privileged to grow up with elders, and to learn that—*Histaks'i+-naas*—it is a gift from the Creator.

We need to talk to wise people and talk to them about why it's so important. Those of you with degrees and the ability to write and speak as experts, we all need to be reminded that sometimes the answer is in simplicity. I am both excited and apprehensive, if you may, about what direction we're going to go. But I'm going to listen and watch and maybe not agree with everything. I'm able to do that now. Before I would just accept, but now I want to say how I feel about things.

I'd like to thank the panel and I enjoyed the presentations, especially Steve. It is good to see you, my relatives, you Steve, and Anne.

DAY TWO: TOURISM AND ITS IMPACTS—EXPERT COMMENTARY

Barney Williams, Jr.:

It is becoming evident that there is a real lack of understanding about First Nations and First Nations issues. And that's good. The reason I say this is that there needs to be a real education so that people understand what *H=ah=uu>i* means, and what community means in our interpretation.

Our communities don't stop at a line, or a city limit. We speak of our territories as our community. So that's why we are concerned when people come into my chief's territory. As a child I was taught where this territory is. When I say "my territory" I'm talking

about a vast area shared with the Ahousaht on one side and the Ucluelet people on the other side. I am interested as a First Nations person living right in the middle of an area that is booming, watching from the outside as people come to our territories and visit Meares Island. That island is very special to us, and now there is a big resort making a lot of money. There are people that come into Lemmens Inlet that are benefiting from things that we hold dear to ourselves, from what our ancestors held sacred for the future. And I say that in all humility.

It was mentioned that some of the concerns are not very clear, and yet for First Nations the concerns are very clear. We have brought our concerns to the Minister of Forests and to the treaty table, only to be pushed aside. Making it sound like it's not very important. I really believe that until the two levels of government understand where the true ownership of the land belongs, we are going to be at an impasse. Tomorrow you are going to talk about coastal planning, and yet already our territory is zoned to death: MPAs, TFLs. As First Nations, we ask ourselves is this really a two-way street, or only a one-way street?

When we're asked to participate, we are hesitant. Why are we hesitant? I believe it's because of what happened in the past. Who needs to trust who here? I went to residential school around the point from Meares Island, from when I was 6, and I never got home until I was 13. One of the elders said, it wasn't a school, it was a jail. Part of that process was to eliminate our language and our way of life. So the challenge for us becomes to convince ourselves that our way of life is OK. This plays a part in the dynamics of our nations. However, there are some of us that believe that we are moving forward as a people as well. We are becoming involved in processes such as this, we are vocalising our views.

It's exciting to express what you're feeling and to actually have people listen. In the past we were told that we didn't have legitimate views. Racism still exists in this community! We as a First Nation have a really hard time getting into the tourism industry. I've got cousins that used to work in the industry, but they got out because people put sugar in the gas tanks of our boats. I haven't heard of that happening to anyone else. What's important to us is that you listen to us just as we listen to you. That's all we ask. When we say something, it's from our heart. We are not making idle talk. I am very excited about the discussion today, and I will tell my children about this. I will tell my granddaughter that I learned something today. And I know she's going to listen.

Somebody said that it's not going to go away, this tourism thing. Probably not. As a people, we have to find some way to live with it. As First Nations, we are saying that we want to be part of your processes and to help. As First Nations, we are always willing to share. But we seldom hear from you folks. We showed you where the reefs are, when the berries are in season, and what you could and couldn't eat in the woods. We shared all those things and asked nothing in return. Now we're saying, please, let us be part of your process, and we'll certainly try to be productive in what we provide for you, knowing that there are some things that are sacred to us and our families. And those are not shared.

I am going to take what I've heard here back to my people; we will talk about some of these things with the elders and chiefs, and put our heads together. So when somebody asks, "What are you guys going to do," we will have an answer.

DAY THREE: COASTAL ZONE PLANNING AND SYNTHESIS

Barney Williams, Jr.:

It is refreshing to see that some of the fruits of our labour are being recognized. It is good to make the community aware of some of the things that are important to our people and what their meanings are. We are always asked after the fact and it is nice to be part of the process here. First Nations have been here all the time and are going to be here for a long time more.

In my work with the elders we have identified some of the things that are going on in our territory and the words that are used. For example, a company that was started called Iisaak Forest Products. But iisaak was never used to talk about wood; it's for talking about people. We could have been consulted on proper protocol for this name. This is the kind of protocol that is appropriate for government, or for the university. And it's appropriate for us. You must consult with people that own the land. For example, the beaches that my family has always owned. History tells me how I got that position. Our chief has carried that name for hundreds for years.

All of the things that Nadine talked about are still very important to us. We sit in consultation weekly to talk about these things. We do have some questions, but we have come to your discussion and we are here to listen and talk with respect. We are finding a voice; we are not sitting in silence anymore. We don't do things on a whim. If our ancestors had done that, we wouldn't be sitting here today. The importance of balance and spirituality has been essential to our people. The ceremonies and rituals are used so that people understand. The coming of age ceremony was performed in the Wickaninnish School a few weeks ago by the chief to honour his grandchildren. We have other ceremonies to honour burials, adoption into other nations, naming, and others. We are combining these things and we are learning from you the things you are thinking.

We have been zoned to death! We are so restricted in what we can do. We are in a process of relocating because there is no land now for me to build a house. Somebody decided a long time ago that this is enough land for these people, but did not factor in growth.

I am not sure how many of you know this. We have many problems that we have spoken about earlier, because we have chosen to be something we are not. My grandfather said, "It is okay to be a raven, if you are a raven. It is okay to be a %awaatin if you are an eagle." But never forget who you are. We have adopted a way of life that is decimating our communities.

I was at a ceremony at the Tribal Council that was celebrating people who have earned their masters degrees and law degrees. But we need to remember to never, ever leave behind our way of life. We have forgotten our language but we must not do this again. We were told that our language and beliefs are pagan and we adopted a foreign tongue. We are now trying to recapture our language and our beliefs. There is resistance even from our own people. They ask me, “Why is that important anymore?” For years our communities have been pushed back and back and back. We couldn’t hunt here, we couldn’t live there anymore. And what happened to the species we took care of? Nadine addressed that we have responsibility as people for different things. As a child I heard stories about someone fishing up Lemmens Creek, and the chief said, “You have taken enough now, it’s time for this other family to fish here.” %u%umhic^i-ak+-ick. With pain I watched on TV as we were blamed for taking too much and overfishing. My grandfather told me that we were going to lose much–“If those people don’t sit with us and learn how to manage, we’re going to lose a lot.” Guess what, folks, it’s happening.

I heard the story in a canoe, where the Creator blew life into a fish, and told it, Hu%acac^i+-ak+-ick. “It is your responsibility to come back every once in a while to feed the people. “ And we have our responsibility. The fish never said “I am too tired; I am not going to go up the river.” The fish always came back until we started messing with the river.

I say this because I want people to recognise that we know something about the environment. When a canoe was made everything was used from the tree. The territory includes the community and also the surrounding area. The territories go offshore. We know where the boundaries are. If you are hunting or fishing in someone else’s territory, you pay respect, you make a payment. That was the law. You didn’t just say “oops we went over the line”. We still follow that protocol today!

We had keepers for everything. We had a system for everything. So when we say today that you are in our H=ah=uu>i , in our land, we are serious! You are in our territory. It is ours and we want it back. We are still sitting at the treaty table and they are trying to decide what to do: talk or return to the past treatments. We do listen, but very often the other side doesn’t! Rather than saying “we don’t understand what you are saying, could you explain more.” It is difficult to translate some of the things we say in our own language with the same power and meaning. The idea of “Nuu-chah-nulth nations” came out of a discussion to identify with the coastal community, but we are not, we are Tla-o-qui-aht. And even within our tribe, we have a number of houses and names.

I needed to make these points so that you could understand that these things are important.

C*uu. Thank you.

SYMPOSIUM WRAP-UP

Rod Dobell

We've had some fascinating discussion at this gathering. At the celebratory dinner last night, I made a few comments, basically just asking what we were celebrating. I answered my own question by suggesting that we were really celebrating a mood, a buzz, a sense of progress toward a better understanding of where we are all coming from, a sense of coming together a bit in a common effort.

As part of that process, Barney has been speaking from the heart throughout this symposium. I am going to try to show my respect to you all, and for his gift to our conversation, by attempting to speak in the same manner. Unfortunately I don't have the same tradition of powerful oratory as the Nuu-chah-nulth elder. Usually I speak from printed pages, maybe backed up by Powerpoint slides. (Indeed, I guess I'm exactly the sort of person targeted by Mrs. Annie Ned, an elder from a Yukon First Nation, quoted by Julie Cruikshank in her book, *The Social Life of Stories*. She commented on visiting academics at a story-telling session, asking

“Where do these people come from, outside? You tell different stories from us people. You people talk only from paper. I want to talk from Grandpa.”

Barney, of course, can talk from Grandpa, as he has done these last few days. I have some trouble doing that. But at least I'm not going to attempt any summary of key themes from my fifty or sixty pages of notes from our discussions over these past days.

There's another cultural limitation as well. Among my people I'm just old, not an elder: in my community, those of us who age don't get to be elders. We don't get any respect – so we don't learn to talk with the force of tradition and historical perspective that Barney can deploy.

And a third problem: Among my people, things from the heart are generally unsaid; indeed speaking too intently from the heart could be considered an embarrassing departure from protocols intended to buffer conversations. So I'm trying to do something a bit different here, something that is not part of my traditions or my usual experience. And that's a real challenge for me. But anyway, let me try.

There's been a lot of discussion here about the importance of place, of rootedness in place as being essential to a real community, and a full appreciation of the world around, of the dynamics of the local ecosystems, if you like. Now I am an outsider to this region, the Stranger from outside, not part of the community (although some of my grandchildren are growing their roots here). But in the tradition in which I grew up, there was also an ideal of a world community, one in which no one was truly a stranger. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights captures that kind of vision. It describes an image of a world in which there can be mobility, but still community, one in which all humans share an essential common humanity.

A similar image is captured in another line from a while ago that influenced my generation greatly, though it is from a different setting. That was the famous ‘I have a dream’ speech of Martin Luther King:

“I have a dream. I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Like all of us here, my people have been somewhere since time immemorial. But I’d have a tough time telling you where my ancestors came from.

In the ancient literature of my people, there is a well-known declaration about the importance of family, even in the face of mobility. It runs

for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried.

(Interestingly enough, these are not intended to be lines used at weddings, though they often are: they are a profession of loyalty to a mother-in-law. But they do express sentiments of a people who know they may be on the move.)

And we do have hundreds of millions of refugees in our present world—environmental refugees, convention refugees, economic migrants. Somehow we have to reconcile our ideas of place with the claims of all these others.

So the idea of exclusion worries me. Enclosures movements worry me. We know that the effectiveness of traditional resource management regimes, just as that of individual property regimes, hinges on the ability effectively to exclude the non-member, the Stranger. But how—on what basis—can we justify outright exclusion? Another important quote from our old literature:

“How can a man or a people seize an immense territory and keep it from the rest of the world except by a punishable usurpation, since all others are being robbed, by such an act, of *the place of habitation and the means of subsistence which nature gave them in common?*” (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in *The Social Contract*). (Emphasis added.)

So how do we reconcile this vision of universal membership and rights to mobility with the feelings we heard here about essential difference, and rootedness of particular groups to a specific place? How do we recognize different cultural traditions, different origins and backgrounds, and yet a common humanity? We have to build bridges across gaps in visions, in modes and styles of thinking. Somehow we have to be able to see important group rights and cultural identities within the common universal rights, to see our families and our communities nested within this larger community.

Nadine told us this morning a very important story about the long-established and carefully structured mode of Nuu-chah-nulth traditional governance and society. The importance of her message is that we start to recognise the legitimacy of that culture and

way of governance, both in its own right and as a key to responsible resource management. Nadine noted that the Nuu-chah-nulth tradition builds in an essential spirituality at the heart of governance, while we outside pursue the separation of church and state. That's true in a way, but it is not really the main point. It doesn't mean that spirituality does not play as strong a role in non-aboriginal cultures of management as in First Nations. Spirituality and ethical choice play their role in individual interpretation of collective intention and collectively negotiated text. It's a question of different ways to build a responsible governance structure that fully embraces individual responsibilities for stewardship of a common heritage of humankind. There is, in the non-aboriginal tradition, thousands of years of debate about the ethical issues and moral responsibilities involved. I'm not sure we've yet found a shared context in which these differences between the two approaches can be effectively articulated and bridged.

Actually I'm not really sure that the bridging metaphor is the right way to think about this question anyway. We heard some comment about the need to marry two cultures and the task of finding how to do it. This is somewhat wrong, I think. I don't think we can hope to marry distinct cultures and live in mutual harmony with full and easy resolution of conflicts. Perhaps a more important question is how do we manage to live together when we know that we can't meet the needs of everyone? That is a question of conflict resolution, among many other aspects. But it is more than just that. I want to come back to this question in a minute, but first want to think a bit more about the role of stories.

The question is: How do we find sufficient shared context to allow us to build processes that are culturally relevant and accepted as legitimate as a way of resolving inevitable, unending conflicts?

We have heard that translation is hard. It is hard to find words that mean as much or have the same power in one community as another. There is no shared context for those words, no stories in common, no history of interaction that gives shape to the language and helps us to find or negotiate some common meaning. It seems to me that in this symposium we have been trying hard to build some shared context where there has not been one. That's what I've seen happening over the last three days--the attempt to build some stories in common, to find a common understanding of home.

Stan also took a phrase from Barney – talking about ‘what was, what is, and what could be’. I've been musing a bit about a book by Ted Chamberlin, which is titled, *If this is your land, where are your stories?* He suggests that we have to talk about ‘what was and was not, what happened and didn't happen’. He refers to Scott Momaday in pointing out that you have to be able to hear the difference between “what matters” and “what really matters”. And if you can't find that out, if you can't appreciate that distinction, Momaday argues (through Chamberlin), you cannot hope to understand or learn from First Nations traditions and perspectives.

Chamberlin asks: “Can a place be home to more than one culture?” I think we have to take that same question to a bigger scale and ask whether our Earth—our one small blue planet—can be home to all people. I'd like to argue that the answer to that question is

“Yes”. But, with Chamberlin, I have to argue that it is possible only if we can learn to re-imagine the notion of “them” and “us”. How would we know what was, what is, what could be? What is the reality? We have to be able to live with our very contradictory stories of what was and was not.

Just as an aside, I wonder whether there is some transition occurring in the way we negotiate meaning and build understanding. Listen to our language as we talk within this symposium. People talk about seeking a voice, wanting to have a say, recognizing that it is even better to get a hearing. We ask “Do you hear what I’m saying?” These are the words of an oral tradition, of stories and narratives.

But there is also a different vocabulary creeping in. “Do you see my point? Do you see what I mean? Can we come to a common view?” This is the language of visualization, imaging, scenes and scenarios. It opens up the idea of maps, and mapping as an empowering activity. It suggests the possibilities of interactive mapping and the construction together of scenario generating capacities as ways to build a common view of this place. It suggests exploring such images as boundary objects, helping to construct among us some common vision, some common approach to framing the challenges faced in this place. We all know that how a problem is framed determines the answers offered. We also know that questions can be reframed, that good things can happen when people come to say “I see what you mean, I see your point of view, I see that we could look at this question this other way.”

In my remarks at dinner, I suggested that next year we again need our artist-in-residence, but also need to remember the suggestion for a youth forum with an art competition for children and youth. We need to see some new angles on our world and its challenges.

Contrary to an earlier suggestion here, I don’t see a vast unbridgeable gulf between a people rooted in place, and a culture of constant movement. We all do live in families. And in communities of some kind. And the inescapable fact is that we can’t hope for stability and the absence of change. None of us can insulate an unchanging way of life from the external winds of change. We respond now to a world that is constantly changing and profoundly uncertain. The challenge is in how we embrace that uncertainty, how we adapt to that changing context, in a way that emphasizes fairness. We need to look for the resilient response, whether we are prepared to move, or prepared to pay the costs for not moving.

We have to be looking for the answer to this question of how we live together when the world is not going to make it easy—or even possible—for us to meet the needs of all peoples or all cultures. Someone said during the first day of our conversations here that this community is like a family, with its interminable squabbles. In the end, we learn to live with each other, accepting the limitations we all have, and respectfully enduring the errors we all make, sharing the burdens of those errors, and of the shocks from outside.

To deal with this, it seems to me, we are going to need two things: I said a minute ago that we are going to need culturally relevant and legitimate institutions for dispute

resolution as we face an increasing scarcity of resources relative to the scale of our demands. But underneath these institutions we are going to need stories and insights, shared narratives, and shared visions, to build and maintain our shared context, shared understandings, shared meaning.

The Clayoquot Alliance has been working to support mutual projects that help to find that shared context, to facilitate the continuing endless discussion that is our only alternative to irremediable conflict. I hope we can continue that work, and I'm grateful to you for the opportunity to work with you in it. We all have much to do and you all have the responsibility of continuing to challenge us academics coming in with our paper.

I can't resist two final quotations from the written tradition that has shaped my views, my visions, that is in a way my substitute for Grandpa.

In opening the preface to her book, *The Social Life of Stories*, Julie Cruikshank quotes Greg Sarris

“How do scholars see beyond the norms they use to frame the experiences of others unless those norms are interrupted and exposed so that scholars are vulnerable, seeing what they believe as possibly wrong, or at least limited?”

In ending her book, she comes back to that thought, insisting on the need for interactive collaboration, continuing work together, to ensure that interruption and vulnerability, the recognition of the risk—indeed the fact—that all our fancy theory might be quite wrong and needs to be corrected by more work together, here on the ground, in place.

But also, remembering Rilke as quoted by Hugh MacLennan in his famous book,
"Love consists in this, that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other."

We from the university community look forward both to your greetings, and to your challenges, in the future. Working together, perhaps we can become something other than only, merely, two solitudes.

Barney Williams, Jr.:

I want to acknowledge our elder who is sitting here with us. It would have been respectful to break for lunch when the elder was hungry.

I'd like to start with a story about my grandfather. He helped to raise me to who I am today. He passed away when I was 19 years old. He never went to school, spoke very little English, but he left a legacy with me. Once I introduced him to a friend who said "he's Indian". When I translated that for my grandfather, he said, "Tell him we are all people." I say that because we often, even as First Nations, talk about difference. But our blood is the same, our skin tone different. That's what our elders say.

Our elder said to me today that he was excited and sees us working toward unity. His prayer and hope is that we continue that process.

First Nations understand many things, and we understand even more when they are explained to us. Until aboriginal rights are recognised we will fight to be a part of this universe. And I question in my mind that we are all created equal since that hasn't been the case. Some people have been less than equal.

We remember the things said to us but what about the things that we said—even here in this forum? We move in the direction that you say you want to move in, and we are interested to see how it evolves. So we want you to know we will be watching. Because everything that happens in this biosphere directly affects First Nations. We have not given up our H=ah=uu>i and territory—Kennedy Arm, Kennedy Lake, Deer Creek. It is ours, it belongs to our chiefs. Our history tells how these places came to be through wars and violence. And after a while we stopped warring, and we began to share through intermarriage, through invitations to share ceremonies. We began to share what our governance was, to show people what Nadine explained today.

There are a lot of things to be learned from what we do today, when people ask and you explain. It's really exciting to be asked, because I can say, "I'm really glad you asked that. Sit down and I'll tell you." I have had the privilege to work with children to show them our sacred things, songs. And I make it clear that this is not just show and tell. It's special things passed on by generations. It's not something we just decided to do tonight because it looked good or felt good. Recently I was in hospital, and when I got out I had a ceremony with family, to thank the creator for giving me life. And to share that: That's very important that it's not just me when we do that.

I am thankful that I'm able to share what I learned from my elders, the wisdom. The gift of presenting thoughts in a way that is respectful to all people, and especially myself. I was fascinated by the knowledge of the people that were here. They were eloquent. I am also interested in trying to grasp what was really being said, so that when I get together with my elders, my %iic^um, I can give my impression of what was heard here so in turn they can advise me and I will have some information for you when next we meet, at another symposium.

I believe in my culture, my people. And I remember who I am, where I'm from. My H=aw`iih= and my relatives. Because the old people told me how important it was to keep hold of these things. Some of you have spoken about really learning about First Nations—and I hope you mean it. If we are hesitant it is because of the trauma we suffered at the hands of the missionaries in residential school. They told us that they would beat the crap out of us if we spoke our language. Some of us were beaten. I was giving a talk one time at a university, and someone said I sounded funny when I spoke my language. I smiled and said how do you think we felt when you landed? We forget that there must have been some question in our minds as well. We are on a two way street

As a people, we have had to live with change. We sometimes find ourselves trying to be ravens when we're really eagles. Health is a big issue for First Nations, and some of our leadership doesn't realise that. To have strong leadership, we need to have health and move in a good way. We have lived with change and have suffered. But now we have a

voice. We don't sit quietly any more. We have to believe that we have a human right to say "I don't understand," and "no, I don't agree." Not because I'm less-than, but because we need to have a voice.

Sometimes people say they want to know about our culture and we know that the heart is not there. You have that choice. We never had that choice. That's the reality, I'm not saying this to feel sorry, but that's the way it is. We were damaged by residential schools and some of us are lucky to be alive. Some people still deny this happened. The reconnection is really important. We need to get the young people educated so that they too can come and sit with you and speak on your level. Most importantly, we also want our children to learn about the First Nations world, our feasts and ceremonies, which once were illegal. Destroyers came down the coast and old people went to jail. Masks were taken and sit in Ottawa. During the start of the war, we had a chief that gave the government use of our land for an airport, understanding that it would be given back when the war was done. And he never put that understanding on paper, because that is not our way. And we never did get that land back.

Now we play the wait and see game. It's nice that we are doing this to be unified and that you are making us a part of your process. There are some of us that are just waiting to be asked to share. We hope the communication carries on and that you are sincere about getting to know about our people. And there are certainly some of us that are willing to provide that.

I never was one to do notes. When I was at the Residential school, the nun said to me she liked what I said but would only give me an "A" grade when she saw what I had written down. But my paper had nothing on it so I didn't get an "A".

I want to talk about my grandmother and grandfather, who were wonderful people. There was a big meeting at Opitsaht, and I was translating. I was sitting with the old-timers—I love to be around old people. I was speaking English, and Tommy Curley's grandfather says to my grandfather, C~amih=-taa-is^-nan`aa%a- "Boy, he really knows his stuff". And my grandfather said, "me too"—H=aay`uu-k#aasis^. So the others said, ku-wi>i%i- "okay, go ahead". And grandpa said "a,b,c,d..." in English, and they said ani-ick—"boy you really do know your stuff!"

I always speak what is in my heart. Thank you for listening.