Title: EDI Colloquium - Rediscovering our knowledge

Speakers: Laurie Rousseau-Nepton
Date: September 27, 2023 - 2:00 PM

URL: https://pirsa.org/23090110

Abstract: During this colloquium, I will discuss my journey in looking for astronomical information hiding in the ancestral knowledge of my community. I will show concrete examples of my findings and encourage communities to engage in similar practice to provide content that could be used to teach indigenous Astronomy in classrooms.

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Zoom link https://pitp.zoom.us/j/96069555091?pwd=dGx2b1YvOWNPK3dEOTU2K205clg5Zz09

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Bio:

Laurie Rousseau-Nepton is a new faculty at the University of Toronto and the Dunlap Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics. She comes with six years of experience working as a resident astronomer at the Canada-France-Hawaii Observatory supporting various instruments including wide-field cameras, high-resolution spectrographs, Fourier Transform Spectro-imager. She received her diploma from Université Laval by studying regions of star formation in spiral galaxies and helping with the development of two Fourier Transform Spectro-imagers, SpIOMM and SITELLE. She is now leading an international project called SIGNALS, the Star formation, Ionized Gas, and Nebular Abundances Legacy Survey, which sampled with the SITELLE instrument more than 50,000 of star-forming regions in 40 nearby galaxies to understand how the local environment affect the young star clusters characteristics.
Rediscovering our knowledge

Laurie Rousseau-Nepton
Assistant Professor UoT
Pekuakamiulnuatsh
Pekuakamiulnuatsh

Les Nations

Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

Canada
Ashuapmushuan
Ashuapmushuan
Ashuapmushuan
Find Your Path

Know where you start
Look for clues
Use all available information
Keep your mind open
Make connections
Know where you start
SANDRINE ICETA

L’ESPACE-TEMPS SUBARCTIQUE : LE VÉCU ET LE CONÇU MONTAGNAIS

Mémoire présenté à la Faculté des études supérieures de l’Université Laval pour l’obtention du grade de maître ès arts (M.A.)

Département d’anthropologie FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES SOCIALES UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

JUILLET 1997
MYTHES ET RITES
CHEZ LES MONTAGNAIS DE LA COTE NORD

par Yvette Barriault, s.c.q.

Thèse présentée à la Faculté des Arts de l'Université d'Ottawa en vue de l'obtention du Doctorat en Sciences Religieuses.

Ottawa, Canada, 1969
The Meanings and Symbols in the Sky: Mistapeo

Mishtapeu: The Great Man

In the life of a Human, there is two path.

The first is paved by our ancestors, it is heavy since deep in sadness and joy.

The second is invisible. Traced by the light of life. A human can access it from the strength of its Mistapeo.

Those two paths are linked somewhere in the world we live in and the world of the spirits which we travel through in our dreams.

Long, long ago was a time of great floods. Almost the whole world lay underwater. Wolverine was able to keep dry only by leaping from stone to stone. He said to himself: If these floods get any worse, even my stepping stones will be submerged and that'll put an end to my wandering, perhaps my life, too.

So he called a meeting of all the water animals. He asked each to help him save the world from drowning.

First he talked to Otter. “Dive down, Otter,” Wolverine said, “and bring me some ground.”

Otter dived down, but he came up without any ground. He said he couldn’t see anything down there except weeds and a few fish.

Next he talked to Beaver. He said: “If you bring up some ground, I will find a pretty little wife for you.”

Beaver also went down, but he didn’t bring back any ground, either. “I can’t swim deep enough to reach the bottom,” he gasped, “and as for a wife, I’d rather live without one than drown.”

So Wolverine asked Muskrat to bring him some ground. “I’ll try,” Muskrat said, “but only if you tie a thong to my leg.”

The thong was tied and Muskrat jumped into the water. He was down there for quite a while. I hope he didn’t drown, Wolverine thought. He pulled up the rope and when he did, up came the thong … without Muskrat.

Too bad, thought Wolverine. That means only water, water, and more water from now on.

But just when he had given up, Muskrat surfaced. His mouth was so full of ground that he couldn’t talk. Nor could he breathe. Wolverine put his lips to Muskrat’s ass and blew as hard as he could. Out came the ground from Muskrat’s mouth, more and more ground, heaps and heaps of it, seemingly without end.

This ground is the very earth we walk on today.
When Everyone was an Astronomer/Engineer

Season and Diurnal cycle

- Year = 1 winter or 12/13 moons
  
  How old are you? = How many winter are you?

- Days and long distances express in nights and moons
  
  A place can be three nights away or one moon away.

- Counting time and distances with stars motion
  
  e.g. I will be back when this star will touch the horizon
Clues

• Kuujjuaq: Great River (Inuktituk)
• Uashkaikan: Circle that we follow while dancing. (Innu)
«Et maintenant, combien y aura-t-il de lunes par hiver ?», demandèrent-ils à Caribou. Caribou répondit : «Autant qu’il y a de poils entre mes doigts de pieds !» «Ce sera trop, dirent-ils, la neige s’accumulera tellement que tu ne pourras jamais creuser assez pour trouver la nourriture. Et toi Castor qu’en penses-tu ?» «Il devrait y en avoir autant que j’ai de rayures sur ma queue» «Ce sera trop. S’il y en avait autant que cela, tu resterais pris dans la glace et tes tunnels s’englaceraient. Et toi, Geai gris, que suggères-tu ?» «Autant que le nombre de mes poils» «Ce sera trop, dirent-ils; S’il y en avait autant que cela, tes petites branches sèches seraient emportées par le vent, et tu n’aurais rien à manger.» «D’accord!», répondit Geai. Soudain Pic maculé étendit les jambes. Je crois pour ma part qu’il devrait y avoir six lunes dans un hiver! Il avait six doigts de pieds. «D’accord, dirent-ils, c’est le nombre qui convient.» C’est le nombre de lunes qu’il y a dans un hiver. Ils s’étaient inspirés des pattes du pic (Savard 1973 : 16).
«Et maintenant, combien y aura-t-il de lunes par hiver ?», demandèrent-ils à Caribou. Caribou répondit : «Autant qu’il y a de poils entre mes doigts de pieds !»—Ce sera trop, dirent-ils, la neige s’accumulera tellement que tu ne pourras jamais creuser assez pour trouver la nourriture. Et toi Castor qu’en penses-tu ?»—Il devrait y en avoir autant que j’ai de rayures sur ma queue—Ce sera trop. S’il y en avait autant que cela, tu resterais pris dans la glace et tes tunnels s’englaceraient. Et toi, Geai gris, que suggères-tu ?—«Autant que le nombre de mes poils—Ce sera trop, dirent-ils; S’il y en avait autant que cela, tes petites branches sèches seraient emportées par le vent, et tu n’aurais rien à manger.»—D’accord!, répondit Geai. Soudain Pic maculé étendit les jambes. «Je crois pour ma part qu’il devrait y avoir six lunes dans un hiver! Il avait six doigts de pieds. D’accord, dirent-ils, c’est le nombre qui convient.» C’est le nombre de lunes qu’il y a dans un hiver. Ils s’étaient inspirés des pattes du pic (Savard 1973 : 16).
The Milky Way -
Tshipai meshkanau

reminder
The Milky Way - Tshipai meshkanau

How Wolverine Tried To Destroy The World

And so Wolverine made the world. But now he tried to get rid of it. I'll tell you about that.

It was winter, and very cold. Wolverine didn't have any wood, so he was burning bones for their fat. Then he ran out of bones, too. Well, he said, maybe I can find some sort of female who'll keep me warm. A while later a pretty young girl showed up at his camp. Wolverine invited her to share some caribou hearts with him. Only if you cook them, she said. I don't have any wood, he replied. No bones, either. Well, she told him, if you won't cook them, I'm not going to eat them. And off she went on her snowshoes. Now Wolverine was so angry that he started tearing up the earth, grabbing it and throwing pieces into the sky. Most of these pieces just came back down again, they're the mountains. But some stayed up there forever. That's the Milky Way, isn't it wonderful how things came about!
The world’s oldest story? Astronomers say global myths about ‘seven sisters’ stars may reach back 100,000 years

December 31, 2020 5:23pm EST
The world’s oldest story? Astronomers say global myths about ‘seven sisters’ stars may reach back 100,000 years

December 21, 2020 5:23pm EST
The world’s oldest story? Astronomers say global myths about ‘seven sisters’ stars may reach back 100,000 years.
Motion in Time
Woolly mammoths may have shared the landscape with first humans in New England

Woolly mammoths may have walked the landscape at the same time as the earliest humans in what is now New England, according to a Dartmouth study published in Boreas. Through the radiocarbon dating of a rib fragment from the Mount Holly mammoth from Mount Holly, Vt., the researchers learned that this mammoth existed approximately 12,800 years ago. This date may overlap with the arrival of the first humans.
Tshakapesh

http://www.native-languages.org/stiflegged.htm
http://www.bigorrin.org/archive109.htm
Marie-Clara Jourdain de Uashat
http://histoires.tshakapesh.ca/Stories/browseby/Pour%20tous/levels:3

Woolly mammoths may have shared the landscape with first humans in New England

4 March 2021

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The Constellations

Big Dipper = Utshek (Fisher Cat), front paddler
Orion = Kuekuatsheu (Wolverine, Carcajou), steersman, back paddler
• The two are in a Canoe that rotates in the night sky from the North to the South, every night and every year.

reminder
The story of the Summer Bird

... A long long time ago in an eternal winter
The story of the Summer Bird

... A long long time ago in an eternal winter

Joséphine Bacon

http://www.namtauinnu.ca/en/culture/spirituality/detail/61
The Constellations

A Common Story to All

Joséphine Bacon
Outside Influences
La Chasse-galerie also known as "The Bewitched Canoe"
The Constellations

By: Wilfred Buck, Annette Lee and William Wilson
Where Thunder Comes From

Long ago no one knew where thunder came from. Maybe clouds did it, maybe the stars. Maybe the moon did it, maybe the sun. Maybe Tciwetinowninu himself did it, after eating a bad piece of meat.

One day a mistapeo shot an arrow into the sky and an enormous goose fell from the mists. This goose honked so loudly upon approaching the earth that human beings had to cover their ears or they’d burst. It fell into a lake and made this lake so hot that all the fish burned up. Thought the mistapeo: It seems I’ve done a bad thing. So he pulled the arrow from the goose, whereupon the bird made a loud BOOM! and returned to its home in the sky.

Since then, nobody has tried to bring down thunder again.
Supernova?
Supernova?
Supernova?
Short-mid Term Weather Forecast

Moon Halos
Stars Twinkling
Sunset colors
Seasonal Haze
Aurora’s motion
Kids behavior
Long Term Weather Forecast

Ojibwee
The Wintermaker

Orion
Long Term Weather Forecast

Ojibwee
The Wintermaker
Projects
Astronomy in Indigenous Communities
(Ismaël Moumen et al.)
Transforming Lives Through Technology

Fostering student engagement and enhanced education outcomes in remote Indigenous communities.
Translation
Innu
Mi’kmaq
Inuktitut (Nunavik)
Cree - James Bay
Inuktitut (Baffin - Nunavut)
Ojibwe
Oji-cre
Swampy Cree
NFB Webseries: North Star
One Sky Project

7 Planetarium Film Shorts

7 films that touch on the topics of finding patterns and building tools that foster connection to the sky and leverage astronomical phenomena to advance societal goals.

Finding Patterns: The White Tiger
Finding Patterns: Celestial Canoe
Finding Patterns: Wayfinders
To Seek Far: Thunderbird
To Seek Far: Jai Singh's Dream
Finding Patterns: The Samurai and Stars
Piko O Wākea
Equinox
‘Ale‘ale‘a Heiau
March 20, 2023
Concluding Remarks and Questions?

Thank You!
Tshinashkumitin!
Mahalo!