

REFLECTIONS AND SUMMARIES OF BOLDT 40 FORUM

By students of the “American Frontiers, Homelands, and Empire”
program at The Evergreen State College, Olympia campus
(Kristina Ackley and Zoltán Grossman, Faculty)

Skookum Event Center, Squaxin Island Tribe, February 5, 2014

EDER NUÑEZ

Reflection

I was left with a sense of deep gratitude for the opportunity we had to attend the 40th anniversary commemoration of the Boldt Decision. I was unsure of what to expect leading up to our trip since we were prepared to engage in support activities for the event so there was no telling as to how the experience would unfold. The stars aligned, however, and the support came in the form of being guests (or at least it felt like it). It felt like a great honor given the significance and far reaching impact the decision has had on the tribes and their efforts to establish justice and sovereignty as originally promised to them in the treaties. With the presence of Billy Frank, Jr., and many of the activists who made history, it really was a unique and rewarding experience uniquely suited to our exploration of U.S./tribal relations.

Early on in the event Billy Frank addressed the Native youth: “Remember this day, remember the history, the fight never stops to preserve your culture, be proud of who you are!” To me, these words were able to capture the essence and spirit of such an amazing event. For ultimately, the fight Mr. Frank alludes to has always been about much more than fishing rights. The struggle to preserve Native culture in the face of the challenges presented by centuries of colonialism is a shining testament to the strength, willpower and vitality of the Native American people and these virtues were clearly in evidence at the event. To witness the presence of representatives of so many tribes from Washington state and beyond was a testament to the degree of unity and support that has been achieved in the past 40 years of struggle.

The panelists all brought their unique perspectives on the original unfolding of events and this allowed me to create a much more nuanced picture of the circumstances leading up to the decision and its aftermath. Their accounts reminded me that many of the freedoms we enjoy today came at an enormous cost, the result of herculean efforts and courage in the face of seemingly insurmountable acts. Therefore it is appropriate to not only celebrate the victories of the past but also to continue facing the struggles of today so that we may continue to build the nation we, and those yet to come, deserve.

Summary

Ramona Bennett was the first panelist, and she began by giving an account of the 90-year period prior to the Boldt Decision. Without a recognized legal right to fish, tribes faced constant harassment in the form of jail time, ripped nets, sabotaged canoes. Also, state game wardens would show up randomly at night to further harass fishermen and their

families with physical violence and tear gas. She went on to describe the camp that was set up in Tacoma in order to protest and draw attention to the fishing rights issue. She emphasized the importance outside groups played in support of the camp, with United churches from Seattle and Tacoma showing up to be witnesses and a woman's socialist group providing food. After six weeks, the Tacoma police showed up to remove the camp by force. She mentioned President Nixon and how he "told us we had to do it ourselves" after requesting help from the federal government. She learned of the decision while in her office and claims to have yelled "We've lost 50% of our fish!" which garnered quite a chuckle from the audience.

Leo LeClair was the next panelist to speak. He talked about his youth, when he was introduced to the issue of tribal sovereignty at the age of 16 by the women of his Muckleshoot tribe. Then he talked about his involvement in the struggle and how he, along with Hank Adams, engaged on a canoe trip from Seattle to Olympia to try and garner media attention for treaty rights. He gave us a bit of a history lesson on the treaties, reminding us that the Muckleshoot tribe signed a treaty with the United States government in 1855. Fast forward to 1962, years before the Boldt Decision but thanks to the efforts by the tribe a ruling gave them the right to fish according to treaty rights. However, in 1967 a new ruling took away those rights, and in 1971 went one step further and imposed a court ban on all fishing regardless of stipulations in the treaties.

Gilbert King George began by comparing the common experiences of oppression throughout the world. He drew parallels between the struggles of Hawaii, France during WWII, and his own tribe, the Muckleshoot: "I am proud to have been part of the Muckleshoot fishing wars." He also said that history shows us that the families who have fought in the battles for fishing rights are direct descendants of those who have fought prior battles dating all the way back to the original treaties. He reminded us how Chief Leschi rode on horseback to all of the tribes in Washington state seeking help and support in their treaty struggles and of only four tribes joining. He was glad to observe that the more recent struggle (Boldt decision) had the very positive effect of mobilizing all the tribes to fight and uphold their treaty rights. He also emphasized the help the tribes received from others "part of the message is in realizing we didn't do this alone, we've had lots of help." He drew cheers when he said "truth is we won both wars, no matter what they tell you!" The Muckleshoot have been able to purchase 96,000 acres of their original homeland. He stressed that tribes are champions for natural habitats and to continue this represents the only way into the future.

Charles Wilkinson, who wrote *Messages from Frank's Landing*, spoke during lunch. He talked about how nearly all of the information regarding the decision had to be brought to the court by the tribes themselves, stating that the decision was conceived and won by Native people. He stated that the transcendent meaning was to uphold the treaty rights of tribes in the Northwest but also of national significance for its effect on the values of the federal government, forcing it to uphold its end of the bargain. He talked about Judge Boldt and described his tone as compassionate, respectful of tribes, their culture, traditions and people. After the decision, he reminded us how the court of appeals and the supreme court recognized judge Boldt's efforts and implementation of clause to ensure respect for ruling in light of machinations by the state of Washington to continue to deny Natives their rights. He recognized in the fight for fishing rights a catalyst platform for the tribes to continue to fight for important causes that continue to this day.

DAKOTA DOMINGUEZ

Reflection

I thought that our trip to the Little Creek Casino on the Squaxin Island Reservation for the symposium celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Judge Boldt Decision was a very fitting addition to our studies in this class. For me, it was most intellectually engaging to analyze the Boldt Forum as an indigenous event. In many ways, the forum was very much unlike some indigenous events I have attended in the past, including the drum circle in the Quileute Nation last quarter. I say this because it was in many ways very formal, with the tables, lunch buffet, suits and ties. But the pace, rhythms, and overall flavor of the event were simultaneously and distinctively non-Western, although it all seemed very Westernized on the surface.

I noticed the way that people in the audience moved about, how children and elders mingled with friends and family. It seemed as though formal dress was optional, some middle-aged people in suits, elders in sweatpants, young men in basketball shorts. All of this reminded me of tribal gatherings I have been to in the past, where your presence and your respect for the gathering is what matters most.

Of course I was also struck by the speakers. The elders who were there to speak of their experiences during the Salmon Wars were primarily the focus of the entire event, and they were given as much time to speak as they needed. None of them seemed to have prepared speeches and the way that they spoke, going between jokes, narratives, and serious lessons for youth, in a sort of broad loop, was reminiscent of many styles of non-linear indigenous oral traditions I have encountered before. The audience's response to these speakers was equally telling. If this had been a non-Native event, the speakers would not have been tolerated for their long, drawn-out style, but the deep amount of respect the audience had for these elders was palpable.

Finally, I was struck at a certain reversal of roles during the event that spoke to the incredible strides the Northwest Tribes have made in the last 40 years. Typically, at an event that looks like this one, the people on stage are white Americans and the people serving water and food to the white American audience are people of color, laboring away in the background. But here, the catering staff was primarily made up of white Euro-Americans, serving the Native guests of honor on the stage, and an audience that was very Native, but also incredibly diverse. Just these demographics and the fact that we were in the Squaxin Island Tribe's event center, gave me the overriding feeling of the distinct indigeneity of the event, and the strength, endurance, and adaptability that it all represented for Native people. It was a very meaningful event to be present for, and I am glad I had the context to truly appreciate it.

Summary

Charles Wilkinson: Professor Wilkinson started his speech by saying that Judge Boldt knew and understood the deep connection to the Northwest landscape that the Tribes have had. He then went on with the theme of deep ecological connection and imbeddedness in place and related a personal narrative of how he recently climbed a

mountain in the Northwest and achieved a magnificent view. He said this view had the effect on him of “traveling back in time, to 1700.” He felt himself immersed in the human history of place. He saw canoes, totems, longhouses. He could sense the presence of the peoples in the landscape. He could sense the overwhelming presence of the people fishing for sockeye, gathering berries and roots.

Wilkinson went on to say that Judge Boldt knew and felt this presence as well. But, he asked, how did Judge Boldt know these things? He answered that it was the Native people, who had the strategy and determination to wage a “sacred campaign” for their rights and educate Judge Boldt. He said that it was the testimonies of the elders that brought the trial together. Boldt wrote the decision, but he could not have done it without the great variety of information that the Native people had the skill to bring to the table. Wilkinson enforced that Boldt was a courageous man of the law, who had the courage to uphold true justice to a degree that the US republic should always strive for. He finished his speech by comparing the Boldt Decision in *US v. Washington* to *Brown v. Board of Education* as one of the greatest accomplishments in US jurisprudence, and then addressed the youth, telling them to never forget what their ancestors accomplished.

Billy Frank Jr.: Billy Frank spoke after Charles Wilkinson. His speech was obviously highly anticipated, but it was also one of the briefest. He spoke about how the Boldt decision is continuing to be implemented in so many ways. Specifically he mentioned the dam removal projects on the Elwha River as examples of the further implementation of the Boldt Decision. He also spoke about the importance of education, primarily of educating the masses of people who know nothing of the legal status of Native American treaties. He stressed that mistreatment follows ignorance of this history. He finished his address by telling a joking story about Hank Adams talking so long to Judge Boldt during the trial that the judge became “tired out.”

Hank Adams: Hank Adams started by telling a long story about he and Billy Frank Jr. during the Salmon Wars at Frank’s Landing, relating how he once accidentally fired his gun when the State game wardens were chasing Billy Frank Jr., and how the government and local media responded to what had really been a clumsy accident. After this Hank’s speech went on for quite a while, remembering other aspects and stories from the time of the Boldt Decision.

Stu Pierson: Stu Pierson introduced himself by talking about his experiences in Civil Rights work in the Deep South, and how during that time he found the law to be an effective instrument for creating change. He told the story of how he transferred to the US Attorney’s Office in Seattle, and ended up helping Judge Boldt have the tools he needed to make the right decision. He sought out help from professional biologists, ecologists and anthropologists to support the case. He harkened back to *Cherokee v. Georgia* in 1831, as the first court case to uphold Native treaty rights. He stressed the word “secured” for treaty rights, reminding us that the treaties secured pre-existing claims to land and resources, and did not create or grant said rights to tribes. He said that it is more accurate to understand the treaties as tribes granting rights to settlers. He told a story about seeing a Vine Deloria book by Judge Boldt’s hand during the trial and thinking that “we were doing okay.”

WILLIAM LINDSEY

Reflection

At the beginning of fall quarter 2013, I read the book *Messages from Frank's Landing* as my first assigned reading for the class American Frontiers, Homelands, and Empire. *Messages from Frank's Landing* dealt with the struggle of Western Washington's tribes for recognition of their rights as written in the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854. In the middle of winter quarter 2014, I got a new perspective on the Boldt decision and what it means for tribes both in Washington and around the United States.

On February 5, 2014 I attended, as part of the American Frontiers, Homelands, and Empire class, the 40th anniversary forum on the Boldt Decision; which was hosted by the Squaxin Island Tribe and sponsored by all the local tribes that had fought in the legal battle U.S v. Washington that led to the Boldt Decision. The forum featured speakers such as Hank Adams and Billy Frank Jr., key figures in the fight for recognition of Native fishing rights in Washington. These speakers recounted their experiences during the struggle leading up to the Boldt Decision: the injustice of Washington State, lack of recognition of tribal sovereignty, and police brutality towards Natives. The speakers also talked about how in many ways the Boldt Decision had only been the beginning of a much larger fight, a fight for full recognition of Native rights.

Speaker Gilbert King George, a member of the Muckleshoot Tribe, referred to the current national fight for Native sovereignty as "the third Treaty War," the first having been the war Chief Leschi fought in 1855 and the second having been the legal battles that lead to the Boldt Decision. The Boldt 40 forum served as both a meeting to remember the struggle for the recognition of treaty rights in Washington and as a gathering to discuss the current fight for Native rights in the U.S being fought today. In a sense, the forum brought the meaning of *Messages from Frank's Landing* into the present, the fight continues and it's up to this generation to carry it on.

Summary

My summary involves the speakers that gave their speeches between 3:15 and 4:15. While I was originally going to write about speakers Bill Wilkerson, Alan Stay, Fawn Sharp, and Bob Perciaspe I unfortunately didn't get to stay long enough to take notes in these speakers. Instead, between 3:15 and 4:15 the speakers Stu Pierson, John Echohawk, and Patricia Zell presented, so I'll summarize these individual's speeches.

The first speaker in the 3:15 group was a man by the name of Stu Pierson. Mr. Pierson was a former civil rights assistant attorney who had worked in northeastern Mississippi before coming up to Washington to represent the tribes in the U.S v. Washington court case. Mr. Pierson described the climate surrounding the case, how long the case was fought in court before the decision (7 weeks) and how Boldt viewed the treaties (as rights the tribes retained, not rights they were given). Mr. Pierson also talked about how the Boldt Decision opened the way for other court rulings, such as the ruling that Natives were entitled to 50% of all aquatic species (not just salmon) because the Medicine Creek Treaty never specified what the tribes were entitled to.

John Echohawk followed Stu Pierson. Mr. Echohawk is the current executive director of the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) which funds court cases around the United States pertaining to Native American rights. NARF fights for Native sovereignty, Native rights, and human rights. NARF was founded in 1970 and financed the five tribes that participated in the 1974 case U.S v. Washington. NARF helped pay for the attorneys and bills from the law firms. Mr. Echohawk also talked about the case itself (specifically its aftermath) such as how the Boldt Decision helped spark the modern Indian sovereignty movement we are seeing around the country (and which NARF is helping to fund these groups' legal teams). According to Mr. Echohawk, NARF is currently funding 50 legal battles this year alone, all dealing with issues related to Native Americans. As a side note, Billy Frank Jr. is a member of the NARF board of directors.

The last speaker in this group was Patricia Zell. Mrs. Zell was the former staff director of the U.S Senate Committee of Indian Affairs. Mrs. Zell was part of this committee when President Nixon launched his review of federal Indian policy; this had been the first federal review since 1937. When the review was completed in 1977, three years after Nixon resigned office, the report was given to the federal government. The report found high levels of racism aimed at Natives by non-Natives and showed discrimination against Natives socially and economically. The report claimed that the greatest challenge for Native success is the general public's ignorance of the historical relationship between Native nations and the federal government. The main way to combat these problems, the report concluded, was the education of the general public and office holders in the U.S. Mrs. Zell said that these efforts have met some minor roadblocks but continue into the present day, and have helped solve issues regarding treaty rights in states like Washington and Wisconsin.

These three speakers had enjoyable presentations that not only helped connect the themes of American Frontiers, Homelands, and Empire to real world issues but also to real world solutions.

EVA JENSEN

Reflection

The chaos of this event struck me. The welcome was supposed to start at ten o'clock. It began sometime near eleven o'clock. Many of the speakers went over time. Gilbert King George went incredibly far over his allotted ten minutes of speaking time.

And it was so great. No one was rushing through a prepared sheet of paper. No one was actively hurrying anyone else off the stage. There was so much respect and so much welcoming for the words everyone had to say. I cannot remember specifically who was talking about why this case, the United States v. Washington case, is instead called the Boldt Decision, but I connected it to the minor disarray. They said that when someone asked them that question they were at first taken aback because it seemed so natural they hadn't thought twice about it. But when they really did think about it they said because it fit more with their way of life, it was more personal, it was more like family.

Even though there were hundreds of people in that room, even though all of us were at two cramped tables all the way at the very back, even though I knew no one there aside

from my classmates and faculty, I felt so incredibly welcomed. It felt so much like family, so comfortable and personal. It was also inspiring how many of the speakers harkened back to the protocol and their ancestries and history. It did, however, make for a stark contrast with some of the signs I saw taped up around the room that read #Boldt40. I suppose that, too, is one of the really important things to take away from an event like this. In 1974 they were fighting for rights from 1854, and in 2014 they remember the occasion, all that led to it, what has come from it, and all that will come in the future.

Summary

Protocol begins, and children with signs that read “Tribal Youth” walk to the stage. Billy Frank addresses the youth. He tells them, “Remember your family and what they have done.” He tells them he couldn’t have gone to jail so many times if it weren’t for the support of his family. “Everything we did... you’ll be doing.” Billy recalls his father and how he was taken to a boarding school as a child and was not allowed to sing as the youth of today are. He says, “That was a bad time but today is a good time”. He closes, driving home the importance of remembering, because, as he put it, the fight never stops, its all happening right in front of us: “Be proud of who you are.”

After Ramona Bennett and Leo LeClair Sr. speak, Gilbert King George takes the podium. He explains that through his travels throughout the land and other countries, he learned that the thing they all have in common is that they have a history that is repeated right here in America. He speaks with strength when he says that protocol is very important to these kinds of occasions.

It almost sounds like he’s thinking out loud as he talks about the Boldt Decision. He starts to draw lines and make connections to the past. He calls the fish wars the second treaty war and states that the families, in most cases, who had participated in the struggles throughout the time of the Boldt Decision, are direct descendants of people who fought in the first treaty war with Leschi. History has a way of repeating itself. He makes the crowd laugh when he looks through another point of view, “The water doesn’t mean anything. Sunsets? So what? Daylight? So what? Happens every morning.” He brings it back around, “That’s us, that’s our way of life”. Another point he spends a fair amount of time on was actually a command - help relatives. He says it’s an old teaching. “Never say no to a relative.”

“Share the history, celebrate the history, identify who we are.” He talks about the truth, “Truth is, we won both wars. I was taught the truth hurts, doesn’t it? But that’s the truth. And today we are still waiting.” He refers to salmon as “little salmon people” because they’re just like us, they start out small just like us and need a place to grow us. He almost laughs a little as he says this, but it is in earnest. At this point, King George acknowledges that he has gone far over his ten-minute time limit. But he is not bothered or rushed. He speaks steadily and with dignity, “We have nothing to be ashamed of – stick to the protocol.” He tells a story of a time he was sent to D.C. and two Yakama elders spoke until they were finished saying what they had come there to say. It was inspiring. King George continues with explaining why Chief Red Cloud is his hero. He ponders the idea of fighting to the death. He follows those thoughts with a similar message to Billy Frank’s in the beginning that “Our job is to inspire the youth. Tomorrow there will be another battle. We’ll win that one too.”

BRENT OCKERMAN

Reflection

This was an amazing event to bear witness to, I felt honored and privileged to be able to witness and be present for such an amazing thing. The concept of restoration of Native treaty rights by the US government and the struggle that preceded and continues for such struggles is a critical aspect of the American landscape. The restoration of Native treaty rights and sovereignty should be one of the primary issues of our generation and previous. Hopefully in the coming years we see a continuation of the restoration of these rights and hopefully future participants of the struggle won't have to be subjected to the type of discrimination and brutality that Frank, Adams and others endured.

For me I was eager to hear the stories and witness the event unfold you could feel the magnitude of the event in the air and among the people present. I myself was elated to see many old friends and acquaintances that I have known or worked with in the past at this event, and it made me happy to see them taking place in the remembrance of this decision and taking the reins of the future. I appreciated the pride that was radiant over the event and of the cultural significance of the form. Everyone present was respectful and understood the magnitude of the setting. I enjoyed at the beginning the chairs' recognition of all the Medicine Creek tribes and then of all the tribes who had delegates present. I noticed that the opening song was the same song which we participated and heard at Quileute drum circle, I believe it was the canoe journey song but I could be mistaken. I thought that had a powerful impact and set the tone for the form aptly.

I felt that some of the important themes of this form was not only the importance of the decision and what it meant for restoration of Native sovereignty but also as a maker for some other themes. Such as the concept that was brought up on several occasions and has been addressed in several of our readings and that is the idea that "history repeats itself forever...". Wilkinson called said "...these are worthy societies with rich and accurate oral traditions." Someone said this form was an example of individuals standing up for disposed people everywhere. I was touched by the admiration and respect everyone had for Judge Boldt expressing the humbleness of his character and giving praise for his "accurate examination" of the case and "respect for the people and elders" This form was an expression of "a revival of sovereignty and culture".

We saw first hand the expression of oral tradition, both in the theme of time repeating itself and of the concept of getting a holistic account by the retelling of the stories taking into account the different perspectives each giving validation and completion to the narrative as a whole. The history repeats every generation and "every generation does what they can in their time, that way the next ones don't have to work as hard."

Summary

After the opening ceremony and prayer (which was done in Shaker tradition), the chairman gave thanks to all the peoples and representatives present, and gave us some insight into the form and what it was all about. He then called the stage Billy Frank Jr. and presented him with an eagle feather. The first thing Billy said which struck me was,

“Family” “family support, we couldn’t have gone to jail all those times if it wasn’t for the support of our families.” He then went into the importance of the next generations and passed the torch. Billy walked the crowd of youngsters lined up on the stage and presented one young girl with the eagle feather he had been given. This was important, he symbolically and actually passed the torch. In this act he gave a nod to the strength of Native culture and resilience, he also reaffirmed something Billy has always preached and that is that the future for all of us lies in the children and the next generation. He gave this symbol of fortitude and strength and power to the next generation and in doing so also wanted to validate the power of the Native woman by bestowing the girl with eagle feather. I found this to be deeply telling and tremendously important.

As he presented her with the feather he spoke on the trails of the generations before, how his father and his grandfather when they were the age of these small children they were taken to boarding schools and robbed of their culture and faced scrutiny and disenfranchisement from society as a whole. Speaking about the eagle feather Billy said “this feather, you couldn’t wave it... or have it, You couldn’t sing Indian songs our song or dance our dances.” He added “This is your way of life, right here in front of us. You’re an Indian, be proud.” he added referring all Natives involved in the struggle today “ They are our people too, they’re our relatives”. (Ramona Bennett added not much later “All of the original warriors were all related, you never say no to a relative.”)

Billy also told us much about the lasting effects of the decision today and some of the ways that aren’t so evident in the original decision such as the removal of dams and directly credited Boldt for that. Billy spoke of some of the struggles they faced after the original decision, such as the battle over state hatchery fish, “ they said we didn’t have a right to share in the harvest, we had to goto court! The state said we don’t have a right to hatchery fish!” He recalled his conversation with a state biologist who told him “ you guys get 50 percent more or less, you get less.” ... Billy then said “ I will listen to legal people not science people on what 50 percent is.”

Billy used the term “Salmon people” at times maybe referring to the people of the salmon at others referring to the salmon themselves, an acknowledgment that they are interlinked and their fates are directly related to each other, he took went into more detail at one point after eluding to it several times, “The salmon people”.. He said “the salmon are people they are related to us. To me they are people...”

This form also provided me with some information about Billy I had not previously known, like the fact that he is Squaxin and Nisqually, he father being the last full-blood Nisqually. Billy’s Suquamish grandfather Tobin was known as the “Oyster Baron of the Puget Sound.” I saw Willy (Billy's son) making his rounds around the room and the people of the form looking to him much in the same way they look to Billy, there is not doubt in my mind that Billy has passed to Willy the lessons of his battle and indoctrinated him with the knowledge of his role for himself and his people. Many of the people already look up to Willy as they see the spirit of his father in him. And holding true to the theme of the form the cycles of history repeating the torch passes and the cycles will continue.

TONY GOUCHER

Reflection

We walked into a huge event center that was filled with people from all over the state. They started by representing those who have served in the armed forces. I noticed as we were standing during the prayer the actual number of those in military uniform. The youth played a large part in this as well, considering that it was a way for the elders to educate the youth on what they had to go through to get their fishing rights. The videos displaying their boats getting confiscated gave a good visual to the youth.

The Boldt Decision forum was a cool thing to be a part of. It was really eye opening to see how many people showed up, and knowing that it more would've been attended if it wasn't for the Seahawks Super Bowl parade. It was awesome seeing how much this was celebrated. The Native peoples of the Pacific Northwest want their children and grandchildren to never forget about the Boldt Decision. Billy Frank Jr. spoke a lot about how the only way he couldn't have went to jail as much as he did if it wasn't for his family. Something that I admired from Billy Frank Jr. was his humor, and the way he conversed with those sitting up on the panel with him. I also thought that it was cool that the family of George Boldt was there in support, and as guests for the communities to see that the Boldt family was supportive of the decision made forty years ago.

I was amazed at the representation of the tribes, and the fact that Charles Wilkinson was there and spoke was really cool to see a person whose book was the first book I ever read in college was a great experience. This was something that opened up my eyes considering before all I knew about the Boldt Decision was what I heard my grandfather talk about, and that wasn't good things mostly.

Summary

Ramona Bennett: Ramona was speaking about the police and how they treated them at a fishing camp. She was talking about the brutality that the people on the river faced. The cops of Tacoma had come onto land where they had no jurisdiction and couldn't legally do anything. The cops came into the camp knowing that there was 60 plus people and among them were children. As the cops started to grab people, Ramona pushed off a cop and he slipped and fell into the river, she was then almost placed in jail for 35 years. She did nothing wrong and they tried to get her thrown into prison, but ended up not being able to since she did nothing wrong and the cops were just upset because they got their feelings hurt. I got a good laugh at how she talked about the cops but thought it was odd that when you scanned over the crowd you would see cops and sheriffs, and when they referred to cops as pigs it was really not what I was expecting at all. Ramona's story was very good to hear, I felt it was good for the youth to hear and know that they could've been a part of the violence today if the elders had not stood up and if it was not for Judge Boldt.

Hank Adams: When Hank first started talking he told everyone that they were on Indian time which meant that they were not going to look at the clock, considering that they were already running late, but anyways, Hank had this way of talking that made him an interesting person to listen to. His story about Billy and him having to deal with the game

wardens was a hilarious tale. Billy and Hank are very good friends and you could tell that when Hank said that he fell on a Pepsi bottle and cut his hand on it, Billy interjects and says that it was a Budweiser bottle and his rifle went off. And how the game wardens that were coming down the river dropped down in their boats and ended up going right past Billy and him. Hank was probably my favorite speaker alongside Billy Frank Jr.

Billy Frank, Jr.: Billy started the ceremony by metaphorically giving the children of the communities the knowledge to keep on fighting for what they have. You could tell that he was the guy, when he went to speak, the place got very quiet, and it seemed that all eyes were transfixed on Billy, and it was cool seeing the photos flash up on the projector that were on the Nisqually River and at Frank's Landing. He talked about how he had to go to Washington D.C. to get things finished dealt with, how many times he went to jail for what needed to be done. Billy Frank is the patriarch of the Nisqually and ended up becoming a well-respected voice in the Native community all across the world. Billy Frank was the one I was most excited to hear, and the way the man carried himself and he's a very important person, but he doesn't let that go to his head. He truly wants to fight for the rights of his people, and all Native American peoples that have been mistreated. It was a great experience.

LORILEE DAGUM

Reflection

This past Wednesday, February 5th, we attended the conference and ceremony that was held for the 40th anniversary of the Boldt Decision. To open the ceremony there was a procession of flags that were marched up to the stage by the tribal honor guard. They were followed by men that played the traditional drums and led the chants and songs. Then the tribal youth followed with signs. Then different speakers took the stage and told stories or recounted all that came to pass for the Boldt Decision to exist.

After each set of speakers in a time bloc were finished speaking, they were presented with tribal blankets as gifts. Everyone was very respectful and attentive as each speaker took the stage. Each speaker recalled their experiences during the fight for tribal fishing rights. Some of their stories were funny. One speaker told a story of how his hand got cut on a broken Pepsi bottle and the media thought it was some kind of gun wound. As each speaker gave their speeches the room was captivated and respectful.

I felt like the room pulsed with respect and pride for all that the tribes stood for and had gone through. You could see it in the way tribal youth marched proudly up the stage and how everyone in the room, that was a tribe member, sang along with the drummers. Before lunch was served a prayer was said over the food. After the blessing was finished the groups were released to eat. Many youth tribal members made plates and brought them to elders. There was a lot of acts of respect that were demonstrated through this conference. I loved that our class was there to witness it and hear the stories first hand.

Summary

The conference of the 40th anniversary of the Boldt decision was honored with many important guest speakers. One speaker I paid attention to in particular was Billy Frank Jr. In the opening ceremony Billy talked to the tribal youth. He told them to remember all that their family had sacrificed to have the Boldt decision come to pass.

Billy talked about how he and many others went to jail several times while trying to assert their fishing rights. He told the tribal youth that without the support of their families they wouldn't have been able to be arrested so many times. He stressed the importance of taking care of each other during those hard times because even though they were standing up for their tribal fishing rights, they still had children and spouses to take care of. Billy told the children that everything that happened is in the past but they need to remember. It's alright for them to move on but they need to always remember all that was sacrificed to get them where they are today.

Billy then went on to talk about his father. His father was taken to a boarding school when he was a young boy. Billy's father was not allowed to sing the songs of their people the way the tribal youth today are. He said that back then it was a bad time and that today is a good time. He told the tribal youth to remember this day and the history. Billy told them that the fight never stops and that everything is happening right in front of them. He told the youth to be proud of who they are and of their people.

Another speaker at the conference was Gilbert King George. Gilbert said that he has traveled through not only this land but many countries and he found that history repeats itself in America. He called the 1960s fish wars the second treaty war and said that the families who had been a part of the fight for the tribal fishing rights were descendants of those who fought in the first treaty war with Leschi. This goes back to how he stated that history repeats itself. He said several times that "You never say no to a relative," and stressed the point that family is very important.

He then talked about the salmon and said he refers to salmon as "little salmon people" because they're just like us. He states that they start out small and like us they need a place to grow. He continued on to state that there's always going to be another battle and that they'll win it too, whatever it is. He and Billy Frank Jr. are great speakers and leaders in their communities and they both had messages in their speeches to the tribal youth. Both spoke of remembering all that was sacrificed during the Boldt Decision days and both urge the youth to never give up, because more fights will come their way.

MAC MACARDICAN

Reflection

As the event started I was encouraged to see so many of the tribal youths there and taking part in the events of the day. I realize the forum was on a school day and for those children to voluntarily miss class shows the level of importance the people affected by the Boldt Decision and fish wars. In addition to the amount of time spent talking about the future, there was also a great deal of time spent talking about the past and the events that lead up to the decision. The summer reading assignment for this program happened to be *Messages from Frank's Landing* by Charles Wilkinson, and the reading was about the 1974 Boldt decision and the events leading up to it. The book mainly went over the

activism of Billy Frank, Jr., and what he and his family went through to get the issue public attention.

At the forum one of the speakers was Billy Frank himself and I felt awed and starstruck because it was one thing to read about him and quite another to see him and speak to him. The whole experience really put it into context that the ordeal was not a thing of the past and that the thing we studied as “history” was actually very recent. The entire day was very eye-opening for me.

Summary

To hear Ramona Bennett speak about the different fishing camps one of which had over 60 men women and children. She talked about she was in that particular camp when a woman came with a rifle to protect her son while he was fishing and told the others to stand back because she didn't want to be labeled as an armed mob, but the next day the camp became an armed camp where many people had guns. Then Ramona talked about when law enforcement came and raided the camp she said the “Pigs” came and used force on her, other women, and children even after she said they didn't have authority she pushed one off of her and was charged with assaulting a police officer. Her attorney said she was being charged for hurting their feelings.

Next to speak was Hank Adams, another main activist in the fish wars. Hank began by saying that we were now on “Indian Time” another way of saying we were off schedule but that it was OK. His speech was relatively short since he told a story about when he went to help his good friend Billy escape some state troopers and how when he knelt down he cut his hand on a Pepsi bottle (Billy says Budweiser) making his gun go off and making the troopers jump to the floor of their boats allowing Billy to elude them and keep the day's haul of fish.

The last speaker for my time of note-taking was Billy Frank Jr. the man himself who I had read so much about. Unsurprisingly he was very interested in making sure the youth knew why he fought and why they need to continue to fight. Also unsurprisingly he was a very important person there but he was perhaps the most genuine person to speak, talking about how many times he was arrested or how he went to Washington DC to talk to Judge Boldt and get his work done.

JOSEPH VOEGELE

Reflection

My experiences in this class have been strangely fortuitous concerning my past college studies. My original intent starting school again after a decade of stagnant, monotonous travels and minimum wage work was to go back and get my degree in History and focus on everything thus oriented that way. What I did not realize was just what history really was also I did not realize that I would be participating or at the very least being an active observer in historical events as they happened. The day of February 5 ended up being just that. The first text we were required to read in American Frontiers, Homelands and Empires was *Messages from Frank's Landing* by Charles Wilkinson (and also Billy

Frank Jr.). When reading that book I approached it as any other text I have read before, a history book, as a recollection of events in the past. I never thought that just around the corner from where I was reading that book the events in it might still be unfolding.

To think the Boldt Decision would still have so many ripples in progress 40 years later is quite astounding. That so many people would be affected in such away. It in many ways is one of the great progressions in American History, similar to Brown vs. the Board of Education, being just one of many but not nearly enough. Yesterday brought a great tactile, visceral quality to my studies greatly enhancing and reinforcing everything we have been working on as a group.

The most memorable of the day's events wasn't just hearing and seeing all these great people on stage, but probably just being allowed to share in these celebrations. Here is a list of some of my favorite moments. Not in any particular order.

1. Billy Frank Jr. hugging Charles Wilkinson
2. Billy Frank Jr. handing his torch metaphorically to the next generation of Native youth, along with the wis wisdom that he handed to them.
3. Hank Adams talking and talking and talking and talking (I loved every minute of it). Like someone said, throw your watches away.
4. Ramona Bennett speaking about law enforcement as pigs and calling western perceptions of a vanishing Indian "Bullshit" (Again, loved every minute of it.)

Summary

(We left technically before my assigned portion was being presented but I will do my best to reflect on a different time from my brief notes). I remember the basic gist of the topics discussed, events, and visual setup. On each side of the room long tables where food is set up and Welcome statues mark each end of banquet tables. There were Black/white/red tablecloths. On front stage were two photos of Judge George Boldt. Two large display screens showed many photos seen in *Messages from Frank's Landing*.

Billy Frank Jr. one of the first faces to be seen welcoming people as they come into the building. He speaks first during this panel. He relays a story of Hank during pre-trial proceedings. Hank Adams has large stack of papers and when finally given chance to tell the stories of the rivers and important Native leaders speaks for hours, so long so that Judge Boldt had to stop him for the day as he was the first one who ever tired the "Old Swede" out. He was allowed to continue the next day. Also the successes since the Boldt decision and how Boldt's legacy has inspired many other Judges to act in a fair and just way. Judge Rafeedie rules 100 % in favor for tribes in shellfish gathering rights.

Hank Adams (originally from Montana) tells a story of Billy Frank and himself out on the river during their earlier struggles with game wardens. Hank tells how the gunshot that riveted the Olympia newspapers was in fact an accident. Hank fell upon a broken Pepsi bottle and cuts his hand at the same time accidentally hitting the rifle lying on the ground making it discharge. The game wardens coming up the river dip down and drive boats blindly. The main game warden calls for calm. Hank gets patched up and Billy gets to keep the fish that day. Hank relays the deep connections to the rivers and streams and the

many whose lives were unfortunately cut short due to the rivers. Chief Charlie, Valerie Bridges too many more.

Stu Pierson, Former Assistant US Attorney, gives a detailed account of his perception of the historic U.S. v. Washington court proceedings.

John Echohawk, Executive Director, Native American Rights Fund, speaks a little of his experiences with the organization as well as his view point of the historic events as they happened and the continuing successes as they have been happening.

Patricia Zell, former Staff Director/Chief Counsel, U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, expands upon the successes and or failures of certain Native rights laws that were implemented over the years. She spoke of an (often racist) opinion of how due to the age of treaties that somehow means they are no longer viable legal documents.

VICTORIA LAMP

Reflection

On February 5, 2014 the program American Frontier's: Homeland and Empire at The Evergreen State College was invited to join a 40th anniversary celebration. This celebration was in honor of the ruling by Judge George Boldt in the court case of US versus Washington. The case was over Native Americans' treaty rights at risk. The ruling that the judge made was the start of a national movement.

I thought that the opening of the ceremony by the tribal youth was neat. I admire how the Native American community works to involve and educate the youth in their culture. Billy Frank Jr. talked to the youth and told them the responsibility that they will have to take care of their culture when they become adults and elders. For example Billy Frank Jr. said, "The fight for your way of life and culture never stops." This made me feel that he was talking to the entire audience not just the youth.

Another one of the speakers said to the audience something like, this is a day of reflection of the struggles and success that the Native American community has had (Boldt 40, 2014). This reminded me that everyone has struggles regardless of who they are. Overall, I felt lucky to be able to attend this milestone celebration with the Native American community.

Summary

The fortieth anniversary of Judge George Boldt's final ruling of the U.S v. Washington trial was a very nice event. After the opening ceremony Ramona Bennett, Billy Frank Jr. and Hank Adams and more people told their personal story of how they were involved in the case.

Ramona Bennett: At the time of the decision Ms. Bennett was the chairwoman for the Puyallup tribe. She talked about the issues that were happening in the Puyallup area and reservation during the time of the court case.

Billy Frank, Jr.: He talked about what life was like growing up on the Nisqually Reservation with his father Billy Frank Sr. and how he learned the importance of fishing. He talked about the arrests and other events that happened during the Fish Wars. Around thirty tribal youth paraded up to the stage and Billy told them “The fight for your way of life and culture never stops.”

Stu Pierson: Assistant US Attorney at the time. Pierson was the only person in the office who had experience in the area of tribal law.

Bill Wilkerson: At the time of the case Bill Wilkerson was the director of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. In 1983 when Wilkerson was appointed director he put an end to the fish wars. “When I became director, I’d pretty much had enough. Wilkerson helped organize the co-management by the treaty tribes and the state.

John Echohawk: Echohawk started his career with the Indian Legal Services Program. Currently Echohawk is the executive director of the Native American Rights Fund (NARF). He started out offering legal advice and other help to Natives who did not have any legal help.

Patricia Zell: Before telling her story Zell started off with a quote from President Johnson: “We must affirm the rights of the first Americans to remain Indians while exercising their rights as Americans. We must affirm their right to freedom of choice and self-determination.” She worked with the U.S Commission on Civil Rights and came to Washington State to see if there was any illegal discrimination against the Indians.

ELLIOT SHELLER

Reflection

Overall, the judge Boldt 40th anniversary was tight and right on. I was impressed with Little Creek Casino hosting all us people in such and elegant manor. There must have been at least 40 staff working most of the day to facilitate. Did it cost money? I didn't pay to get in.

It was a cold day and I thought about how strenuous, uncomfortable, and maybe rewarding it must have been living as a Native person without modern amenities in this area. Thinking about the battle for fishing rights it seems like the Boldt decision was too little too late. The 90-some year period where treaty rights were the most crucial. I don't know how many Natives were killed while going about daily life. Those are people and culture that we will never get back. People who are not accurately represented in today's society.

Now Natives have the right to fish in common with non-Natives. Our sacred waters are now polluted with lot of poo, nuclear radiation, and basically the worst chemicals we can manufacture. Dirty water, fish, upset stomach. I feel like there should be a modern movement of people taking a stand against industrialization and trying to reverse pollution. Protecting our water, air, and land should be the main concern of contemporary government because it is the only way to ensure the survival of plants, humans, and all other living beings.

I was moderately surprised when I saw so few young people in attendance. How do we get young people to care about what's happening, because the fight is not over.

Summary

Billy Frank Jr. was the first introduced by the MC, and he spoke briefly of his fight. His main emphasis was the younger generation. He told us the fight never stops, and now it is our turn. When you fight for culture and way of life, you embrace your people.

Ramona Bennett, Puyallup: Spoke of the 90-year period of unrecognized treaty fishing rights and the brutalities Natives faced. Ramona was part of the camp which moved under the 99 bridge in Puyallup. This was a peaceful fishing camp of locals, AIM, some people from Alcatraz, men, women, children, and others. Some were, "rude, crude, and tattooed." They peacefully fished for 6 weeks until they were forcibly busted up by 550 "Pigs, and NRA men." Ramona threw a police officer into the water in self defense and faced charges of up to 35 years. She said it was because, "She hurt the pigs' feelings." She got these charges. She said it was legally a long fight with no help from Nixon.

Gilbert King George, Muckleshoot: Gilbert said that 1970s Puget Sound Natives were fighting same fight as Leschi. He said both times have had some incredible warriors. Being actively involved in habitat restoration is the way into good future. Maybe modern warriors are those protecting environment. He also said something about Chief Yellow Wolf of the Nez Perce tribe.

Charles Wilkinson, author of *Messages from Frank's Landing* spoke just after/during lunch to the noise of people talking and clinking. I was listening to his poetic visions of what he imagined the San Juan Islands looking like pre Euro contact. He honored Judge Boldt saying he felt his respect and hard work.

Billy Frank Jr. Spoke again briefly paying respect to Judge Boldt, and also talking about Judge Martinez and the Culverts case.

Hank Adams told us about the King salmon run in August and told us about the Jx1 joint exhibit map of Puget Sound drainage, and reservations. I'll check it out. He spoke about the ways First Nations of Canada are maybe more respected than Native American tribes. He also spoke of the broken treaties between government and the Cherokee, and how treaties should have been respected as supreme law of land. He also said that treaties were grant from tribes to U.S. (not the other way around).

Pat Zell was a very distinguished articulate speaker as she told us of President Johnson and his cabinet's attitude toward the "Indian problem." Pat, Hank Adams, others around the country, and representatives from Congress founded the American Indian Policy Review Commission in 1975 to describe conditions of Indian country. She spoke of the Indian self-determination acts which are still backbone of Indian policy. What resonated most with me was her stance of addressing the level of ignorance of non-Natives thinking of Indians as people of the past, and how it is my duty as an educated, articulate individual to share the truth.

KAYLA BASKETT

Reflection

Reflecting on the field trip to the Boldt Decision event, it was quite a privilege for our class to be able to attend. I was so surprised to see the number of people that were there for the event. Going into the field trip I did not expect the event to take place in such a large room and for there to be as many people as there were. The entire event I was looking around the room and seeing all the different people there and was consistently curious as to what their reasoning for being there was. There were so many different groups of people there which took me by surprise. What kept me curious about this was that there would be many people with badges or nametags like ours and then many people without them. What was interesting to me was analyzing all the different types of people there, and wondering what that event meant to them.

What I most enjoyed about the speakers was how many of them spoke with stories. I thought that was a great way to capture how important this event really was to them. The speaker that I most enjoyed listening to was Ramona Bennett. She gave her speech as a story because she told what had really happened to her and her people. This put perspective on the meaning behind the Boldt Decision. She portrayed passion in her words. What I enjoy most is watching or listening to someone with passion for something that is truly important to them. That is what I saw and experienced through her.

LINDSEY LESTER

Reflection

I appreciated the opportunity to attend the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Boldt Decision. This court ruling was vital to the sustainability of the Native Nations in Washington. The forum I attended was a celebration of Tribal sovereignty, and the influences of local Native Americans who actively protested civil injustice.

The forum commenced with a procession of tribal drummers and singers from different Native Nations. While admiring the procession, I understood the significance of this event for the Native Nations of Washington. This event brought several tribes together in a celebration of their success in upholding their tribal sovereignty for forty years, and represented an important display of their success in civil justice and Native resilience.

Several Elders from the Native communities spoke on their experiences during the salmon wars, and the need for continued support among the tribes of the Pacific Northwest. Billy Frank Jr. spoke directly to the tribal youth saying, "You have to remember what we went through." The Tribal Elders emphasized the importance of the younger generations to continue to embrace their tribal rights, and to continue the traditions and sovereignty given to them. Billy Frank Jr. expressed the importance of family, and spoke of his father's experiences in a Native boarding school. He reflected on a time in Washington when there were no Native rights and Native identity was compromised. He said, "It was a bad time, . . . today is a good time." He continued with powerful words directing the tribal youth to remember their histories, asking them to be proud that they are from an Indian tribe, and closed saying, "They are all our relatives."

It was in this moment I felt the importance of this event. I understood how symbolic this gathering of Nations was to the tribes of the Northwest, and I was humbled to experience the celebration with them. Among the speakers there were also non-Native affiliates, and as they expressed the actions taken to re-establish Native treaty rights, I reflected on the path from conflict to cooperation from Zoltan's lecture. What I witnessed among the different forum speakers was an example of the path to unlikely alliances, and the incredible strength and resilience of Native Americans that resulted in the restoration of salmon species in Washington. Being present at this forum, and having the pleasure to hear Billy Frank express his experiences was a once in a lifetime event, and I am honored to have been present.