

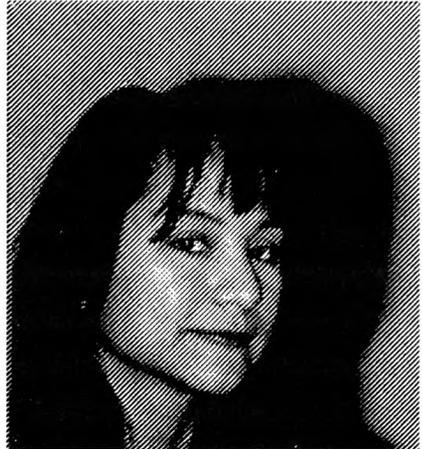
# 8 Meeting the Challenge, Overcoming the Odds: Harvard Student Panel

*Marcella Gauchupin,  
Alexandria Wilson,  
Andrew Lee,  
and Nimachia Hernandez*

---



*Marcella Gauchupin is Zia-Jemez Pueblo. She received her Master of Education in principal certification from Harvard.*



*Nimachia Hernandez is from the Blackfeet Nation. She is working on her doctorate in human development and psychology.*

The panel was introduced by James Lamouche, President of University of Alberta Aboriginal Student Council.

*Marcella Gachupin.*

I'm from the Pueblo of Zia. I come from the Coyote clan. Also I am representing Jemez Pueblo, of which I am not a member, but my mother is. I greeted you in Zia, and now I will greet you in my Jemez language, which is Toa. What I said was that I am happy to be here with each and every one of you and I am glad that the Creator has made it possible for me to be here. Before I go on, I'd like to acknowledge my friends here and everyone in the audience. I am very happy to be here and I always look back and think about the reasons why I'm at Harvard. I give thanks to my grandfather for making it possible for me to be who I am and where I am.



*Andrew Lee is a Seneca Indian. He is working on an master's degree in public policy at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.*



*Alexandria Wilson is Cree from the Opaskwayak Cree Nation. She is a doctoral student in human development and psychology at Harvard.*

Not only him, but all of those who have gone before us, and I think that is why we are all here today. We take and respect everything they have given us and taught us. This is what I live by. I also know that each of us believes we have a spirit and that our souls do communicate with one another. This is what makes us strong.

Being at Harvard is an honor, but being of and with different types of people there is very different. Some people acknowledge you. Some people respect you, and others ask you to move out of their way. That is not how we are. One bad thing I learned from being there was to cut in line in front of everybody else instead of waiting for my turn out of respect for others. You get in there when you can, regardless of who is older or younger than you are. It is sad, but I had to make the transition and just step in front of everybody else. Back home I wouldn't do that and here I do not do it either.

#### *Alexandria Wilson*

I'm from the Opaskwayak Cree Nation of The Pas, Manitoba. There are other people here from The Pas and it's really nice for me to see you here.

I started university when I was 17. I didn't graduate from high school but went straight into the pre-med program at the University of Manitoba. I lasted about two years. During my second year I dropped out, but I didn't withdraw from the university, so I had a very low GPA. The reason I didn't make it through that year was because leaving The Pas, which is a very small town, and going to Winnipeg—which is not a big city, but

compared with The Pas is very large—was hard for me. It was hard for me to leave my family and my support systems. Once in Winnipeg I started school, and I liked it and could handle the academic part, but I couldn't handle the social part of it. I could not adjust. So I quit and have been working since. I've worked in different areas. I worked in the pulp mill in The Pas for quite a few years as a heavy equipment operator, as an ambulance attendant, a machine laborer in the paper machine mill, and I've recently worked as a counselor for Child and Family Services. Finally, I decided I had to go back to school. I knew I wasn't getting where I really wanted to be.

When I was working I made a lot of money, but I wasn't happy. At the time, something that brought this home to me was that my parents had both gotten their doctoral degrees in 1989. This has been a source of inspiration for me. In my dad's thesis, which he dedicated to us, his kids, he said that he felt bad that he didn't have enough money when we were growing up. For me that was really hard to take, because here I was trying to make as much money as I could because I thought I would be happy. I wasn't. I did what I could with my money: I bought my own business and my partner ripped me off. So I sold my business and went back to school, just recently.

My GPA from the University of Manitoba was, as I said, very low: .95, but when I went back to school I got straight A's. I worked very hard, and in my last semester I took eight courses and got all A's. I decided I wanted to go to Harvard. I looked at about 30 catalogues from different universities, and that was where I wanted to go to, and Harvard was the only place I applied to. I was accepted and I'm very happy. I will be graduating with my master's in June; a Master's of Education in human development and psychology. And I recently found out that I have been accepted into the doctoral program too, so I'll be there for a few more years. The area that I want to explore at an academic level is what we've been talking about at the conference. And my personal life affects my academic life too. Thus my choice for research is identity development in gay and lesbian Indigenous youth, because I need to understand what I went through, why I quit school, and why so many of my friends didn't make it and are still not in school. Why is it that so many of the people I know can't function in the academic system? My ultimate goal is to work on Indigenous psychologies from an Indigenous perspective—and I'm starting that now.

*Nimachia Hernandez*

*Buenos días, señores y señoras.* I wanted to say Thank you in my Native language, which is Spanish, and I think it's a good introduction to why I'm involved in my field. I am also in education and doing my doctorate in human development and psychology, with a focus on language issues. These issues include language attrition, acculturation, and the language history of Native Americans in the history of their education. My personal

connection to the topic is that my father is from Mexico and my mother is Menominee and Blackfoot. I grew up with a lot of struggle about the issue of language and how it related to how I would be educated. When I finally went to school, I didn't speak English and was put in classes for retarded children. After that, they tested me and determined that I wasn't mentally capable of school. For about a year I withdrew totally, with no friends and just hung around as if I were retarded. The word was *retarded*: it wasn't "She's handicapped, she needs special attention, or she needs another language." It was simply "She's not going to make it." My parents said, "This is not our child, we know her." They took me out of school, and subsequently they took the rest of my siblings out of school and said we would never go to school again if they could help it. Throughout my childhood, all seven of us children were dragged around the country to live in different places because when the authorities found out we were not in school, our parents were in legal trouble: a little history of breaking the law, but it's also important.

Language was important in another way. My grandfather from Mexico would never speak to us in anything except Spanish. He said, "You will understand why later on." When I was a child I would scream at him, "I know this is disrespectful but you're making me mad. I know you understand me, speak to me." I had learned English and I refused to speak to him in his Native language. Now I look at this and I thank him for doing what he did. He always said, "You will know why I am doing this, you will understand this later on." So, a few years later, I do understand, and I appreciate it. I feel that language connection has held me close to the values that my family from the Indian side always tried to teach us. This is the value of education, whether it be through some sort of institution that gives you a certificate or as in "We recognize your knowledge." I think my reason for being in higher education is to look for a way to help communities that want to maintain their languages. I hope my research will prove helpful to march about for in Washington, DC or whatever else. An extension of this usefulness would be to maintain the values, traditions, and religion from the communities in my intellectual work; and that's what I'm doing.

### *Andrew Lee*

I'm from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. It's a great pleasure to be here and it's an honor. It's not often we get a chance to come to a place like Edmonton. It is a beautiful place.

I'm going to tell you little about myself, how I ended up at Harvard, and some of my experiences there. I'll also speak about what I plan to do with my education and some of my career goals and aspirations. I am Seneca. For those of you who don't know where the Senecas are from, we are in upstate New York and southeastern Canada in the Niagara Falls area. I come from somewhat unique circumstances. I was born and raised

in Connecticut. My father moved off the reservation. He grew up in the Salamanca area and moved to Cattaraugus, and then he moved to Syracuse University to play football, lacrosse, and wrestle. I have never lived on a reservation, but I was raised with a lot of Native values, so I encounter some culture clash. I've had to deal with this especially as I get older. It's been unique.

Something I would like to overcome is the idea that I don't have a cultural perspective. This comes from Native people and white people too. It really comes down to a choice for a lot of people: are you going to go Native, or are you going to go white? I have had to deal with this over the years. Seneca is still spoken in my house sometimes. As I said, my relatives and ancestors played a huge role in my upbringing. At the same time, I have not been with or interacted with a lot of Native students throughout my life. I've always had to search for Native friends and learn different perspectives from different nations, which has been very interesting. I am trying to bridge that cultural gap a little through my work and career goals. In 1990 I went to Hamilton College, which is in upstate New York—Clinton, New York. It was originally founded for Native students. I thought there would be a huge Native population, but was sad to find only one other Native student, a Mohawk from Akwesasne. Fortunately, we got to know each other by playing lacrosse on the same team. We were a novelty at Hamilton even though people there are fairly educated about Native ways and history. At the same time, a lot of people would say, "We have two Indians on our team, and what can you say about your team?" It has been interesting dealing with this. My sister went to Connecticut College, and the same thing happened to her. People asked her what it was like to be Native or for her perspective on different things. It seems to me that many times, as Native people, we are expected to know all about every nation in North America, and this is simply not the case. I try to explain this when I talk to people.

I started at Hamilton College as an art major. My whole family is into art: my mother, father, sister, grandparents, aunts, and uncles—everybody does art. At Hamilton I have to admit I'm a somewhat talented artist, and had no problems with my classes. I enjoyed the art, but I didn't get very good grades. I was concerned, and my parents were a little concerned. For the most part my Mohawk friend and I did not encounter any racism except perhaps for one incident. I was walking behind somebody on the way to class, a white fellow from the Salamanca area. He talked about Indians as all drunks running around in pickup trucks and shooting at things. It was really upsetting, but I didn't say anything. Now I somewhat regret not saying anything. If I could go back, I would say, "Hey, listen you! Look at the land you're living on. It's not even your land. You paid \$200.00 a year to live there, and it's the only city in America that's on a reservation." I wish I had said something like that!

My academics professors didn't know much about Native American culture or history. Only a few classes are offered at Hamilton in Native Culture, and I took them. I was something of a novelty because I could bring in different musical instruments and some new perspectives, which I think some of the students found refreshing. It was good to put a Native perspective into some of the classes. Again, my grades weren't good because I was an arts student, and for some reason I never thought academics was going to be that important to me in the future. During my junior year, I decided I wanted to go to Australia and study Aboriginal peoples there. As I grew older, I became more interested in Native American and Indigenous studies. So I left for Australia in my junior year and studied Aboriginal culture, history, and law. That place is amazing, the country itself. The Aboriginal peoples are in a terrible, terrible position there. My experience in Australia renewed my sense of having to do something for Native America. I subsequently took more Native classes. As well, I spoke to Elders in different tribes in the Iroquois Confederacy. I made phone calls to see what I should be doing and what areas needed most work. I really enjoyed government. When I was in high school I went to Washington, DC, on a prize fellowship. That was another talent I thought I had. So I took up government.

After I got back from Australia, I got a fellowship for minority students from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. I was the only Native American to be accepted into the Princeton program. There, during that summer, I found that people really were interested in Native American policies and some of the issues in Native America. This too renewed my sense of mission to do something on a government level for all Natives and for my people. For my senior year I was back at Hamilton, and I started an organization called the Native American Studies and Students' Association. Although people were interested in what was going on with Native students, there were only two of us in the whole college of 1,600, so it was an interest-based group, and we sought to educate not only people in the local area, but also some of the students and the professors. At the same time, I worked on my senior thesis, called *Native American Land Claims: Issues for Future Policy*. In accordance with my interest in public policy in government, I applied to Harvard. I really did not expect to be accepted because the School of Government is very competitive. I applied and was accepted. Once again, as at Hamilton, I expected a whole bunch of Native students to be there. There is one other at the Kennedy School, which has about 700 students.

My friend Trevor is Omaha and Cherokee. We share some of the same interests and issues and a similar sense of mission. I'm studying political and economic development at the Kennedy School, and next year I'll be working for a policy analysis exercise where I'll be studying a Native American tribe, possibly from the West, in a development issue. It will be

a client relationship, so it should be fun. At Harvard I haven't really encountered any racism per se. I mean, people don't understand the culture as much as I think they should, but there is definitely a positive correlation between higher education and cultural understanding. However, my own perspective is unique because I did not grow up on a reservation. I think it has been a little easier for me, but at the same time I share the same concerns and issues of other Native students. For me it has been a positive experience dealing with both my classmates at the Kennedy School and with Native Americans in general at Harvard.

### *Questions and Answers*

*Question:* On the issue of racism at Harvard, how many of your instructors would be Native Americans?

*Andrew:* Absolutely zero.

*Question:* You see that as perhaps a form of racism?

*Andrew:* Yes, of course, and that is a problem at Harvard. It's not just Native Americans at the Kennedy School who are in a void, it's also African Americans and women, and it is a problem. That's the implicit racism, I think, that we all deal with as a whole student body, not just Native Americans. For Native Americans, yes, it is a concern. We have a coalition of diverse units seeking to recruit more Native Americans not only to the school, but also to the faculty. And that's an issue of ours. And when I say I haven't experienced that much racism, I'm talking about explicit racism as I did at Hamilton. Of course, there are cultural biases that pervade the lives of all of us. I think I can speak for all of us when I say that. But I think that on the whole people have really tried to understand Native perspectives as best they could, and they have taken a genuine interest in what's going on in Native America and some of the issues the government faces.

*Question:* Related to that is where people are attacked and how this escalates when Native Americans or people of color push for change in institutions of higher learning, like when swastikas were chalked on our blackboard in Manitoba when we pushed for structural change.

*Alex:* I think that my experience may be a bit different because I see a lot of racism there directed toward Native people on a daily basis. I think that just because it's not explicit doesn't mean that it's not as bad.

*Andrew:* I agree with that; the racism is there. It's implicit. I mean that I personally have not experienced any explicit racism. I think a lot of that has to do with how I look [white]. That is an issue, and I'm sure that all of you recognize that.

*Marcella:* When I went to undergraduate school at Princeton University, the people at home in Browning, Montana, gave me blankets for my going away. During my first week at Princeton, I studied on one of the blankets on my bed because it made me feel as if I was home. I also had red flannel pajamas from Montana. One night, I was sitting on my bed read-

ing—I had long hair at the time, and it was all off to one side in a braid—and my roommate walked into the room, and the image struck her. She started screaming, “Oh my God! Oh my God! There’s an Indian in my room!” And it was supposed to be funny and she was laughing. I was just shocked. I didn’t know what to say. She ran down the hallway and rounded up everyone in the last two floors in our dorm and said, “Please come and look at the Indian in my room!” In about five minutes or less about 50 people were at my door, staring at me, laughing. And that was my introduction to the community. The next day I cut my hair and got a permanent, which was a bad idea because it looked really ugly. It was again demonstrative of the struggle, in the sense that I felt that I wanted to do what I needed to do and that I was obviously going to face this type of thing, but I would not let it make me go home.

A lot of my classmates from Browning went to schools in-state. They didn’t want to deal with racism but ended up dealing with it anyway. So I guess my perspective on higher education was that you’re going to deal with it anyway, so you may as well find the school you want to attend and just go for it. I applied to Princeton; I wanted to go there because I had heard of other people’s experiences within the state and within the area such as getting chased out of school and getting chased back home, you know, “Old squaw, go back home!” and that type of thing. I felt strongly that they were not going to make me go home.

*Question:* I think that we have to go beyond telling stories or experiences, which are important, to what are the solutions to this? Here in Canada we have Indian control of Indian education and this is what seems to me what we are about. And I think that we also have to realize the importance of this, the development of this PhD program, that is happening at the University of Alberta. How do we ensure that we will have input, so that we don’t have to sit in universities and be the butt of racism—marginalization and exclusion. Let’s talk about some issues. You’ve been talking about stories and experiences for too long.

*Question:* You said your native language was Spanish. When we think about the whole context, I’m thinking if you could relate back to some of the comments that Carlos made yesterday about understanding our histories—understanding the products of what has happened to us—so I was surprised to hear you say your native language was Spanish. Spanish is a colonizer language, as English is. So that’s a part of how we’ve internalized issues of racism, oppression, and self: sort of self-mutilation and self-hate. And we don’t even recognize this. I heard you say that your mother is Aboriginal. You know, for me, that [the Aboriginal language] would be my native language. I think we have to recognize that. I think that’s what happens in terms of racism and some of the issues that our colleague Priscilla raised. It’s subtle, but it is there, because as Aboriginal people we need to recognize we are bringing a certain rhetoric, a certain

idea, a certain philosophy that very much goes against the grain of what universities are all about. I think that's what we're struggling with understanding—just who are we as a people culturally, socially, personally, linguistically, that does not fit with the university?

The other issue in terms of racism is how visible we are as Aboriginal people. And this is where sometimes biology plays into it—skin color—because skin color is a big issue in racism, and we need to recognize it. I hear a lot of Aboriginal people say, "I don't personally experience racism in terms of a personal contact," but when they hear ideas on that, they know there isn't a fit. So we should not say that racism does not exist, because it does exist. It exists in every layer; add that to sexism against women and prejudice against certain sexualities—so many things that we are confronted with as Aboriginal people. We need to be mindful of those different layers of oppression and how to deal with them. How do we connect with our experience as we try to be academics without forsaking our cultural heritage, our Aboriginal heritage? And, of course, many of us are mixed, and we need to acknowledge that.

*Nimachia:* I would like to address the first part of what you said. To me Spanish is my native language not because I chose it, and not because my grandfather from Mexico chose a colonizer's language. I recognize that it is. I also recognize that he and the way he saw himself and the way he saw our family and our people was 100% Native American. He was from Sahatekas, the last holdout of Aztecs who never were assimilated because they were so warlike. I also realize that the status of Spanish speakers in this country in many cases is very much the same as that of many Native Americans with regard to language. That is, you need to learn English, and you need to leave behind who you are. I recognize that I can't go back 500 years and ask my grandfather to teach me the language of my name. Also my mother's side of the family, which is Native American, married into an English and Scottish family (my grandfather's), who said you are not Native American and you will never say you are. So although I would agree with you, I think that my identity as a Native person is linked to Spanish, whether or not I like it.

*Question:* I would like to thank you; and as an Aboriginal student I was wondering what has been your biggest support at Harvard or at an institution of higher learning?

*Answer:* Well, there are 160 Native students at Harvard, and we have created our own community, and this is our support. There's a Native American program there, but unfortunately it is running out of funding and the program does not provide financial support or offer any courses.

*Question:* I am Executive Director of the National Native Economic Development Association, and I am delighted to see that you are going to be part of this program. We're doing some work with Harvard now. Our national office is here in Edmonton, and I want to commend Harvard, and

Andrew in particular, if you're in the John F. Kennedy School. One of the issues we have had to face as a national organization: our membership, our economic development officers in Native communities—and many of them are well educated—have difficulty being accepted in their old communities given their postsecondary education and whether they are white, or whether they are traditional. If you can, comment a little about how you can maintain your Aboriginalness at the same time as getting a postsecondary education and whether that enhances your ability. There have been some comments about it helping you to understand your cultural positions and your own history. Comment about the future within Canada of the First Nations. I'm also interested in the plans by the government of Canada to devolve program delivery to the local First Nations governments and with land claim settlements, and with the move toward self-government and sovereignty for some of the First Nations in the treaty areas. There have to be institutions and people in communities who want those institutions. They cannot be imposed, but must have a cultural match.

*Marcella:* I'm in the Principals Program at Harvard and I have been teaching for the past six years in New Mexico for Jemez public schools while stationed at Jemez Pueblo, which is five miles from a public school. And these are my people. I graduated in 1988 from a college in Santa Fe, and then I went back to the reservation and became a teacher just like my grandmother and my mother. I watched my family go to college—my grandmother and mother both have their master's, my grandmother at the University of New Mexico. (I called her my grandmother; actually she's my great-aunt, but in our Indian ways she is my grandmother.) I thought, "Well, gee, my grandma's getting her master's at this age, what about me? I'm young." I thought, "Well, you know, she can do it, anybody can do it." So I went ahead and I found out about Harvard and decided, "I'll apply." I went there in October 1993 as a recruit. I shared it with others through prayer, but I didn't tell anyone what I was doing. When I received my letter of acceptance, my mom and I had a private celebration, crying, laughing, joking around, and so on. And I was unhappy that I was one of the few out of 28 grandchildren to go on to graduate school. I thought, "I'm not doing this for myself; I'm doing it for everyone here and my people back home." So I always say my success is your success because it's through your inspiration that I'm learning who I am and what I'm doing. And when I finish my principal certification I plan to return to my pueblo to be principal at a school that Zia Pueblo is building that will be ready in two years.

*Andrew:* I also would like to comment on the question, How do you deal with the cultural sensitivities of going into what I consider a white world of government? Not a day that goes by when I don't think about that question. It has become an enormously important part of my career

path. Two areas that I'd like to explore are a further examination of the United States 1988 Gambling Act, and land claims.

Coming from a mixed background, I think it's especially important for me to get along with both sides. I have a Native American side and an Anglo side. I chose when I was about 18 that I was going to go with the Native American side, and inside me I have Native American values. I consistently try to keep up with what's going on on the reservation, which is an essential part of what I will be doing in government. If I had a solution to these problems, I would have written books by now.

*Alex:* I think both questions are related and that the reason we're telling our experiences is because we have all have faced problems like that. At a conference like this we can sit and talk about Native epistemologies and pedagogy. We know those words and we can talk like that, but we choose to talk about our experiences because that is important to us. We try to bring that into all the papers that we write and it is a challenge. We have to face this academic institution every day by trying to relate our real experiences to our academic life, to our academic careers, and research.

*Andrew:* I agree that both questions are linked as Alex said. But I also believe it is difficult because we are such a small population in the institutions. As we struggle to hold onto a sense of identity or language or anything else of who we are, it is in relation to the larger picture of what we are perceived to be or of what we are perceived to be capable or incapable. There is an assumption that once you are indoctrinated, learned, and have that certificate, you will not return to the community or that you will sell out and take a high-paying job in some big city. So we struggle to remember, when you go back to the community to work, that the reason you sacrificed seven or five or 10 years of your life was to be better able to do so.

*Question:* While at university, did any of you have the opportunity to have an Elder work with you to talk with you, to share with you, in your studies, to help guide you?

*Answer:* A couple of people are doing that right now. They are not students and they are not official, and they're not representatives of the university. They are part of the larger community of Native people to which we have personal connections.

*Answer:* I have found it harder to connect. I do look to older students for guidance, people in their late 50s and 60s. We also have Elders who come to talk to us and welcome them.

*Answer:* As I told you earlier, I always communicate with the spiritual beings. I often call my grandmother at home no matter how much it may cost.

*Question:* I am a graduate student here at the university in fine arts. I will comment, and then ask a question. Referring to the question about Elders, many of the comments are indicative of what goes on on this

campus. One woman said, "You know, you have to ask questions and we need the answers." The answers are with these students. The answer is knowing that there is somewhere to go when we are having a hard time—when we can't make the last four months of the semester of our degree, when we want to give it up, when we have nothing left to give this institution, and when we need someone, someone to be brought in, to settle us down, to say, "You can do it; we're proud of you; you are our children." My mother's family is in Ontario; only my blood family is here, and what I have gathered as a traditional family. I need to know that there are people out there who are proud of what I am doing and who care about what I am doing.

In fine arts at present there are no Aboriginal graduate students. And I am not doing Aboriginal art; I am doing abstract sculpture, because that is what I want to do. It is not because I have red blood in my veins and a certain name, and I have beaded jewelry, moccasins, and everything. Students' needs have to be heard and met, and it's the students that should be asked what the problems are. We need support on campus in Native Student Services, student councils, and other student bodies. There is no Aboriginal Art Students' Association. There is an Aboriginal Law Students' Association, and a Medical Students' Association. Where are the Native engineering students? They disappear.

Students like you come from the outside world of the Ivy League. We appreciate this so much. You are functioning and succeeding. You have had hard times and you are not giving up. You give me inspiration and hope. Some of the things I hear walking through my faculty are amazing. Somebody wants to see an eagle carved in my sculptures. That is racism. "Well, how come there's no eagle or turtle there?" Why do I have to carve eagles or turtles? We must respect these students for being individuals and for persevering.

My question is: Are there times when you are ready to say, "I just can't do it any more"? And when you go to get help and the help is not there? If this happens at Harvard, how do you handle it? Do you have an office of Native student services? Is there someone there who brings in Elders for you? Because I think that if you're going to have a Native body on campus and a proud Native body, that's the foundation you have to start with. Even if it's with every program on campus there should be that foundation. If you don't have that, how do you retain Native students?

*Andrew:* It's not a rich place, as Alex just said, but the people in the Native American program are very bonded together, and I feel that I could turn to them. The issue you raised is extremely important; I remember when I was in Hamilton, there was only one other Native student there and he ended up quitting. If I have questions about my culture, I call home, I call my grandmother, I call some of the tribal Elders, I call my grandparents, whoever's there: they can provide that for me. But a lot of

people don't do that; they may not have the resources, or the ability for whatever reason, to get the resources and social support they need to stay in university. But at Harvard we have each other and we are a strong support to each other. There is no complete answer, but we have ourselves as a resource—a group of Indian students who stick together for mutual support.

*Answer:* I wanted to mention the problem of being so long in a place like that that you can lose the perspective of why you are there and who you will be when you finish. During my undergraduate years I saw many Native American students return home, and I always felt bad for them because they were giving up such a chance. I think I've changed—listening to my Elders say that every person has something to contribute to this fight, and will do it in his or her own way, and that they can do it without the acknowledgment of an institution. So if they need to go home, that's fine. And for those of you who continue struggle the best way that you know how, that's fine too.

*Audience participant:* I want to say that as fellow brothers and sisters you carry yourselves well. And you don't know how that makes me feel, because my wife and I have been on this journey for a long time. For my wife it has been even more difficult. But she is now going to graduate with a law degree from the University of Calgary. I have learned to understand just what kind of cry this is, because of the pressure of her feelings. I think we have to talk more about this. I know and I feel that there is that other side in all of you too, the side that says, "I can't do this any more, and I'm scared." I am proud of my wife, and I look at you and I say, "I'm with you. I feel with you and I'm proud of you."

*Audience participant:* I feel for you young people, especially when I hear you say that you are taking your direction from the heart. So many of us as Aboriginal people and others think we are God's gift to the world, that we did it all. We forget that we are taking up the fight for our ancestors who went before us, and this is what I hear from all of you, and I am proud of that. I admire your feistiness, that you are going to finish and do what you want to do after you're finished. You'll get that piece of paper. My son graduated from high school at the age of 16 and went into an honors math and physics program, and in the third year he finished his exams and dropped out. I didn't know why until after he was married and his wife told me. It was because after he wrote his exams his professor told him he would never make a first-class mathematician because he was too intuitive.