

## An Interdisciplinary Journal

*Honoring the Voices, Perspectives and Knowledges of First Peoples through Research, Critical Analyses, Stories, Standpoints and Media Reviews*

## Youth and reconciliation

Erin Samant, Daxton Rhead<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Etudiant/Student, Glebe Collegiate Institute, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

### Abstract

*On Monday, March 6, 2017, students from Glebe Collegiate organized a demonstration on the steps of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario. The students called on the Prime Minister and other elected officials to treat Indigenous peoples with dignity and respect and to immediately cease discriminatory practices. The students named this event Youth and Reconciliation. Erin Samant and Daxton Rhead helped organize and lead Youth and Reconciliation. What follows is a transcript of their statements to fellow students, allies, Members of Parliament, and Indigenous organizations that were present during the event.*

**Keywords:** *youth, reconciliation, Parliament Hill*

### Erin Samant

Bonjour et bienvenue. Avant que nous commençons, nous aimerions reconnaître que nous sommes, en ce moment, sur la terre traditionnelle du peuple Algonquin. Mon nom est **Erin et j'ai créé "Youth and Reconciliation" avec Daxton.** Ceci a commencée comme un projet de classe pour **notre cours de "Native Studies",** mais heureusement est devenu quelque chose de plus **grande avec l'aide de la Société de soutien à l'enfance et à la famille des premières nations du Canada.** Nous sommes très heureux de vous accueillir ici, sur la Colline du Parlement.

**Selon nous, l'éducation est la première** étape nécessaire pour atteindre la réconciliation. De nos jours, il y existe encore de la discrimination contre les peuples Autochtones. Malheureusement, plusieurs canadiens ne sont pas au courant du racisme et aux autres problèmes sociaux que les personnes autochtones doivent combattre à chaque

[Translation] Hello and welcome. Before we begin, we would like to acknowledge that we are, right now, on the traditional land of the Algonquin people. My name is Erin and I created "Youth and reconciliation" with Daxton. This started out as a class project for our Native studies course, but fortunately has become something bigger with the help of the First Nations child and family Caring Society of Canada. We are very pleased to welcome you here on Parliament Hill.

[Translation] We believe that education is the first step necessary to achieve reconciliation. There is still discrimination against Indigenous peoples today. Unfortunately, many Canadians are not aware of racism and other social issues that Indigenous people have to fight on a daily basis. We hope that by sharing our knowledge with you we

**jour. Nous espérons qu'en partageant nos** connaissances avec vous, on peut tous aider à créer un meilleur avenir pour tous les peuples du Canada.

Nous aimerions **vous remercier tous d'être venus aujourd'hui pour apprendre à propos des** problèmes dont les peuples Autochtones font face. Nous espérons que vous avez appris quelque chose **de nouveau et que vous allez continuer l'éducation** en apprenant aux autres ce que vous sachez. Nous aimerions aussi remercier tout le monde à la **Société de soutien à l'enfance et à la famille des** premières nations du Canada qui nous ont aidés à réaliser ce projet.

can all help to create a better future for all the people of Canada.

[Translation] We would like to thank you all for coming here today to learn about the problems that Indigenous peoples face. We hope that you have learned something new and that you will continue teaching others what you know. We would also like to thank everyone at First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada for helping us with this project.

## Daxton Rhead

**To me, reconciliation is community. It's building bridges and mutual respect. Reconciliation** is not about divisions, it's bringing people together and finding common ground. In this world we need to stick up for one another. We need to recognize our differences and take responsibility for our Canadian **history. It is each and everyone's** duty to learn about the effects of colonization and the inter-generational trauma it has caused.

I was fortunate enough to learn about residential schools when I was quite young, but for many Canadians, this is new information. We need to spread awareness and stand together to move forward as a nation.