

Though Maslow saw full bellies, low inequality, and rates of self-actualization at 80–90%, why didn't he alert the world to all we could be learning from the Blackfoot? He clearly held them in high regard, as he indicated in journals and in his biography.

It's possible that Maslow may have faced dismissal if he had publicized Blackfoot teachings. [Dr. Richard Katz](#), author of *Indigenous Healing Psychology: Honoring the Wisdom of First Peoples*, Harvard professor, and personal friend of Maslow's speaks to this point [in a podcast conversation](#) with Scott Barry Kaufman (minutes 28:50–32:20). He says he never spoke directly with Maslow about this, but postulates that Maslow may have been concerned that elevating Siksika teachings might diminish the validity of the ideas he was putting forth. Such barriers to Indigenous contributions have remained in academia until today (Blackstock, 2019).

By offering compelling alternatives, Indigenous worldviews pose a threat to our status quo. Lakota Medicine Man John Fire Lane Deer offers one poignant contrast between the world he grew up in and the world of "the white man":

Before our white brothers came to civilize us we had no jails. Therefore we had no criminals. You can't have criminals without a jail. We had no locks or keys, and so we had no thieves. If a man was so poor that he had no horse, tipi or blanket, someone gave him these things. We were too uncivilized to set much value on personal belongings. We wanted to have things only in order to give them away. We had no money, and therefore a man's worth couldn't be measured by it. We had no written law, no attorneys or politicians, therefore we couldn't cheat. We really were in a bad way before the white men came, and I don't know how we managed to get along without these basic things which, we are told, are absolutely necessary to make a civilized society. (Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions, p. 70)

Consider Lame Deer's description and what Maslow witnessed at Siksika. Then consider the repetition of the idea that "the United States of America is the greatest country in the world" despite the facts that one in four US households experience food insecurity, 4 in 10 Americans can't afford a \$400 emergency, the richest 0.1 percent make 196x as much as the bottom 90 percent, and with 40 million in poverty, the US may be the most unequal nation in the Western world.

Source: <https://www.resilience.org/stories/2021-06-18/the-blackfoot-wisdom-that-inspired-maslows-hierarchy/>

