

RACIST TWEET SENT FROM FORMER LONG- TIME BROCK PROFESSOR'S ACCOUNT



BONNIE HESLOP

Friday, August 10th 2018 - 10:55 am

<http://www.iheartradio.ca/610ctb/news/racist-tweet-sent-from-former-long-time-brock-professor-s-account-1.5425756>



Garth Stevenson



Aug 8 at 5:35pm · 🧑🏻

Yesterday I attended a play at the Shaw Festival and before it began I had to endure one of the actors standing on the stage and reciting a tribute to the aboriginal people who supposedly lived in Niagara on the Lake before settlers arrived. He actually praised them for their "stewardship" of the land, as though they had any notion of such an idea. Today I learn that the mayor of Victoria British Columbia has ordered that the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald be removed from in front of city hall and that some sort of "cleansing and healing" ceremony be held at the site to satisfy the aboriginal people. For the information of that ignorant mayor, British Columbia would be part of the USA if Macdonald had not lived, and her city would certainly not be called Victoria. Frankly I am getting sick and tired of the kowtowing to so-called "First Nations" or "Indigenous" or whatever they call themselves. This is OUR country, not theirs, and we don't need to apologize for being here. I don't give a rat's ass who lived in it before Europeans arrived or what happened to them. I will never speak to a member of that ethnic group again and I hope I will never see any of them either.

Brock University says a professor who allegedly made a racist tweet this week no longer works at the University.

University officials confirming that Garth Stevenson retired in 2012 from Brock.

The tweet which was sent from Stevenson's account and which has now been taken down talks about an experience at the Shaw Festival this week.

It reads that an actor made a tribute to aboriginal people who lived in Niagara-on-the-Lake before settlers arrived praising them for their stewardship of the land.

The tweet states that he's sick of so called "First Nations" or "Indigenous" or whatever they call themselves.

The tweet says this is "OUR country and not theirs and we don't need to apologize for being here".

It reads that he will never speak to a member of the public of that "ethnic group" again.

When trying to reach out to Stevenson, his Twitter account has been temporarily restricted.

On LinkedIn Stevenson reports that he was a political science professor at Brock for 31 years.

Brock University responded on Twitter saying "Garth Stevenson retired from Brock University more than half a decade ago, in 2012. Any comments he makes on social media or elsewhere are his own. Brock University has no connection whatsoever with his views, and abhors comments that have been posted on his social media sites."



Brock University 

@BrockUniversity



Replying to [@HacheFilardi](#) [@Y_Conflict_Mngr](#) and 9 others

Garth Stevenson retired from Brock University more than half a decade ago, in 2012. Any comments he makes on social media or elsewhere are his own. Brock University has no connection whatsoever with his views, and abhors comments that have been posted on his social media sites.

2018-08-09, 9:14 PM

President of the Niagara Regional Native Centre Sean Vanderklis sent the following letter to Brock this morning:

Gervan Fearon
President and Vice-Chancellor
1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way
St. Catharines, ON
L2S 3A1 Canada

August 9, 2018

Dear President Fearon:

It is with great regret that I find myself writing to you. Yesterday, on International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a retired Professor, Garth Stevenson; who currently holds the status of Professor Emeritus within your institution, made some abhorrent comments regarding indigenous people, their beliefs and ceremonial customs. I have attached the screenshots for your perusal.

In the wake of the Tina Fontaine and Colten Boushie rulings, you wrote the following:

“The path towards trust and mutual respect requires meaningful action to address systemic barriers and establish institutional accountability, including a commitment to work with Indigenous scholars, students, faculty, staff and communities to assist in the Indigenization of curriculum, policies and practices to earn the trust and respect of Indigenous communities.”

I am afraid that the actions and words of Mr. Stevenson represent the “systemic barriers” you were referring to; given his status within your institution.

In order to have reconciliation with Indigenous people, we must first acknowledge the truth. While Residential schools officially closed in 1996, Mr. Stevenson’s public views are aligned with their intent. The truth aspect requires all of us to acknowledge that racism is alive and well. The truth aspect also requires us to acknowledge that despite all of the best intentions, racism can make its way into classrooms. Mr. Stevenson was responsible for shaping the minds of our future leaders at your institution. I wonder what truth he taught his students.

As an Indigenous man, I find his comments highly offensive and bigoted. It is my sincerest hope that your institution does not hold the same views on Indigenous people. If so, I would highly encourage you to write an official statement denouncing all of the remarks he has made. In the time of the Truth and Reconciliation report, any official designation awarded to Mr. Stevenson is completely unacceptable. As such I would also encourage you to sever any official ties and ongoing relationship your institution may have with him.

Should you wish to discuss my concerns more in-depth, please feel free to contact me at your convenience. I can be reached via email at svanderklis@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Sean Vanderklis

