

Curriculum For

Stories of Decolonization: Land Dispossession and Settlement

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DISCUSSION GUIDE & QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to encourage the viewers' deep thinking on both the intentions of the film and the content. In an open viewing forum, these questions could be directed at audience members for post-viewing analysis and in classroom settings these questions are designed to facilitate both pre-viewing and post-viewing group discussions and could also be used for reflection journal prompts.

To ensure that learners are adequately equipped to engage these questions, the teacher/facilitator is invited to make relevant important terms and background information available.

Pre-viewing questions:

- View the first 60 seconds of the film. Considering the images and sounds, what do think the film will be about?
- What comes to mind when you think of “stories of decolonization”? Considering the title of the film, “Stories of Decolonization: Land Dispossession and Settlement”, what do you think the content of the film will be?
- What is your own family history with land dispossession and settlement?

Post-viewing questions:

Opening Scene

The opening scene of the film shows two people smudging.

- With the understanding that the purpose of the smudging ceremony is to cleanse both bodies and spaces, what do you think the filmmakers' intentions of starting the film with this imagery are?
- What is the significance of the smudging being shown over images of land?
- How are the smudging ceremony and images of land, linked in the context of the film title and content?
- What does beginning in this way tell us about the filmmakers' perspectives and intentions and why is it important to consider the film-makers' perspectives and intentions?

Leah Gazan

Quote analysis – What did Leah Gazan mean by:

A lot of people don't know the truth. A lot of people don't know the part; don't know the true story, the true Canadian story, the warts and all. A lot of people know the mystical Canadian dream of multiculturalism, and inclusion. But there's a history of racism in this country that we need to acknowledge

- What is the *mystical Canadian dream*, and how are multiculturalism and inclusion building blocks for it?
- Does this quote give you any conflicting thoughts or feelings about how you were taught about Canada's history?
- Where do we learn or don't we learn, the "true story"?
- Who determines the "true story" and why is this important?
- What elements of the film support Leah's statement?

Dr. Niigaanwewidam Sinclair

Quote analysis – In the quote from Dr. Niigaanwewidam Sinclair:

People would talk about history but when they would talk about that history, people often talked about them in hushed tones and they talked about them quietly and they'd often say 'well I'm going to tell you this but don't go around talking about it'

- What history do you think it is he is referring to and why do you think this history was something that wasn't spoken about openly?
- What are some of the consequences of not openly discussing varying perspectives of history?

Murray Angus

Quote analysis

It's the ground we stand on, figuratively and literally. In talking about land and peoples' attitudes of how do Canadians feel about living on somebody else's land? Well we don't like to think about it.

– Murray Angus

- Have you ever consider what it means to live on somebody else's land?
- Do you feel like you are living on somebody else's land?
- What responsibilities come from living on somebody else's land?
- What does Murray Angus mean when he states 'we don't like to think about it'?
- What are the consequences of not considering what it means to occupy another people's homeland?

David Bleakney

Quote analysis –

I went to the same grade school as my mom went to, so it's an old one. It's been around for over 100 years, and she remembers when she was a girl living in the

village that there were Mi'kmaq living there and I was fascinated with this, really the people who lived in the forest like they were living there in our village? Like when you were a girl? Yea. So my next question of course was, what happened to them? Where are they? Why did they go? And I didn't really feel I got a complete answer to that question.

– David Bleakney

- How are David's questions related the Mi'kmaq people not being present tied to the title of the film?
- How is the memory he shared tied to the story of land dispossession and settlement?
- How is his memory tied to present day displacement of Indigenous peoples and urbanization?

Aimée Craft

Quote analysis –

Thinking about that question, you know 'what is colonialism?', and I think a lot in French, so the idea of les colons, it truly is tied to question of land, right? Colonialism is appropriation of land and rebuilding of land often based on doctrines of discovery or the idea that there is no prior occupation.

– Aimée Craft

- How does the belief that there is no prior occupation support colonialism and land dispossession?
- Are there any examples of the ways in which you were taught about Canada, that were based in land appropriation?
- Are there examples based in the belief that lands were not occupied by Indigenous peoples or that it wasn't significant that lands were already occupied?
- How did that impact your thoughts and feelings about Canada and Indigenous peoples?

- Can you think of present day examples that unsettle the belief that lands were unoccupied prior to colonization?

Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

Quote analysis –

Without our permission and without our consent we have been systematically removed and dispossessed of most of our territory. We have fought back as our homeland has been stolen, clear cut, subdivided and sold to settlers from Europe and later cottagers from Toronto. The last salmon navigated our waters about 100 years ago. We no longer have eels or salmon in our territory. We no longer have old growth white pine forests. Our rice beds were nearly destroyed. All but one tiny piece of prairie that exists on my reserve in Alderville has been destroyed. 90% of our sugar bushes are under private ownership. Our most sacred spaces have been made into provincial parks for tourists, with concrete building on our teaching rocks. Our burial grounds, our mounds have cottages build on top of them. The veins of our mother have lift-locks blocking them and the shores of nearly every to of our lakes and rivers have either cottages or a home making it nearly impossible to launch a canoe. Our rice has nearly been destroyed by raised water levels from the Trent Severn waterway, boat traffic and sewage from the cottages. Our children have been taken away and sent to residential schools, day schools and now an education system that refuses to acknowledge our culture, our knowledge, our history and Indigenous experience.

– Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

- Why is it important to recognize that colonization occurred and that Canada continues to occupy these lands without the permissions or consent of Indigenous peoples?
- Does this challenge or unsettle anything you've been taught about the cede and surrender of lands?
- How does this quote from Dr. Simpson outline the contemporary manifestations of colonization?
- Is it important to identify the ways in which colonization continues?
- How should this inform our relationship with the lands we occupy today?

- How are Indigenous understandings of kinship reflected in Dr. Simpson's words?
- Why is understanding Indigenous kinship ties to land, water, plants, and animals important in the discussion of colonization?
- Dr. Simpson specifically addresses the ways in which education has been and continues to be involved in the oppression of Indigenous peoples, what are ways in which education can be involved in restoration of Indigenous knowledge systems and land-bases?

Additional works by

Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson:

Articles:

Coulthard, G., & Simpson, L. B. (2016). Grounded Normativity / Place-Based Solidarity.

American Quarterly, 68(2), 249-255. doi:10.1353/aq.2016.0038

Deiter, C., Assinewe, V., Mulenkei, L., Schultess, B., Settee, P., & Simpson, L. (2002).

We are the land; let us heal ourselves. *Biodiversity*, 3(3), 33-34.

doi:10.1080/14888386.2002.9712601

Simpson, L. (2008). Looking after Gdoo-naaganinaa: Precolonial Nishnaabeg

Diplomatic and Treaty Relationships. *Wicazo Sa Review*, 23(2), 29-42.

doi:10.1353/wic.0.0001

Simpson, L. (2016). Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg Intelligence and Rebellious

Transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3.3 (2014): 1-25.

Decolonization.org. Web. 5 Jan. 2016.

Books:

As We Have Always Done (2017)

Dancing on our Turtle's Back (2011)

Islands of Decolonial Love (2013)

The Accident of Being Lost (2017)

The Gift is in the Making (2013)

Videos:

Leaks

<https://vimeo.com/79076989>

Jiibay or aandizoke

<https://vimeo.com/166309937>

Website:

<https://www.leannesimpson.ca>

FACILITATED CONTEMPLATION & LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

OVERVIEW

DISCUSSION Considering Voice in Storytelling

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60 minutes	Understanding that narratives are influenced by <i>who</i> is, or is not telling the story is a critical part to understanding and analyzing historic and contemporary relationships and experiences of Indigenous peoples in relation to settler colonialism. This activity invites learners to think critically about <i>voice</i> in storytelling, and supports them to challenge settler colonial narratives of colonialism.
<i>Participants</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High school students• Post-secondary students• Adult community members	
<i>Media</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to internet• Video Playback	

Resource List

Quotation: Leah Gazan

- *From film 01:02* (included on next page)

Video Playback: Chimamanda Adichie

- *From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk*
(available online: https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

Quotation: Chimamanda Adichie

- *From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk* (included on next page)

Quotation: Leah Gazan

From film 01:02

A lot of people don't know the truth. A lot of people don't know the part; don't know the true story, the true Canadian story, the warts and all. A lot of people know the mystical Canadian dream of multiculturalism, and inclusion. But there's a history of racism in this country that we need to acknowledge.?

Video Playback: Chimamanda Adichie

From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Quotation: Chimamanda Adichie

From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk

It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is "nkali." It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power.

Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person. The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story and to start with, "secondly." Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story.

Directions:

- Make Leah Gazan’s quote accessible to learners
- View Chimamanda Adichie TEDTalk “*The Danger of a Single Story*”, and ask learners to pay specific attention to Adichie’s comments on the importance of acknowledging *voice* in storytelling. Why is it important to consider *who* is telling the story?
- Review Leah Gazan’s quote and ask learners to discuss/reflect on how Adiche’s comments on voice in storytelling help us to more deeply understand Gazan’s comments on the “true history of Canada”, and the “mystical Canadian dream”.
- In a group discussion, discussion partners or reflection journal prompts, ask learners to specifically analyze the following quotes from Adiche’s TEDtalk in relation to Gazan’s quote.

Questions:

The single story has the power to define and malign Indigenous peoples, and has been used as a tool to do so in Canada. For this reason, it’s important to support the telling of Indigenous peoples’ narratives. While thinking about Leah Gazan’s quote and Chimamanda Adiche’s TEDtalk, consider the following questions:

- What is the mystical Canadian dream, and how are multiculturalism and inclusion building blocks for it?
- Does this quote give you any conflicting thoughts or feelings about how you were taught about Canada’s history?
- Where do we learn or don’t we learn, the “true story” of Canada?
- Who determines the “true story” and why is this important to specifically consider Indigenous peoples’ experiences and perspectives in the construction of the story?

***LEARNING ACTIVITY* Blanket Exercise**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60-90 minutes 	<p>This Blanket Activity is designed by KAIROS, and invites learners to interactively consider the historic and present-day relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers. More information on KAIROS and the Blanket Exercise are available in the supplementary resources section.</p>
<p><i>Participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school students (youth script) • Post-secondary students (adult script) 	

Things to Keep in Mind

It's highly suggested that those leading the Blanket Exercise activity be knowledgeable on the history and legacy of colonization, and are actively pursuing decolonization in their personal and professional journeys. Additionally, it's important to respect and incorporate local place-based cultural protocols and histories and involve local Knowledge Keepers in any ceremonial aspects., while engaging learning in this important activity.

LEARNING ACTIVITY Sharing Circle

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependant on participants 	<p>Sharing circles are meant to be safe and culturally responsive spaces in which people can share their thoughts and feelings. This model of learning exists in many cultures and support oral traditions, and building common understanding between individuals. A sharing circle activity can be used to invite learners to reflect upon and debrief the Blanket Activity, and/or as a post-viewing reflection activity.</p>
<p><i>Participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ages • All learning levels 	

Things to Keep in Mind

An important consideration for using a sharing circle as a teaching tool, is to respect the protocols of the territory you're on. In many territories, sharing circles are considered ceremonies and should thus be facilitated by an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper. Inviting an Elder or knowledge keeper to assist with learning place-based protocols and conducting ceremonial is important. The directions provided are adapted from the KAIROS, "To open hearts to understand and connect with one another" Sharing Circle lesson plan.

Directions:

- Invite learners to sit in a circle stating that all members to the circle are treated with dignity and understanding
- Follow the traditions of the territory □as directed by an Elder or knowledge keeper
- Use a sacred medicine/object/talking stick used for turn-taking □
- Invite learners speak from the heart □and reflect on their learning experience.
- Encourage all members to the circle to listen attentively while others are sharing.

LEARNING ACTIVITY Exploring our family stories

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-60 minutes 	<p>This activity is designed to help participants understand their place in the colonial narrative. The facilitator will ask participants to engage in understanding their own identity through the lens of decolonization, sharing family stories that ask participants to understand deeper their own family history of settlement and their relationship with the land on which they live.</p>
<p><i>Participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school students • Post secondary students • Adult community members 	
<p><i>Materials Needed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip chart paper • Markers 	<p>Understanding selves as beneficiaries (whether intentional or not) of the active displacement of Indigenous peoples and appropriation of resources and governance and jurisdiction over the land.</p>

Resource List

Map: Turtle Island that overlays current cities with traditional territories

- *Available online:*

Manitoba:

<http://www.trcm.ca/treaties/treaties-in-manitoba/view-pdf-interactive-map-of-numbered-treaties-trcm-july-20-entry/>

Turtle Island:

<http://room31turtleisland.weebly.com/>

Handout: Quotations and Questions to Consider

- *Included on next page*

Video Playback: Irene Jensen's film "Stolen Lane"

- *From Irene Jensen's Blog (<http://irenejansen.ca/>)*
(available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CxvKq5JurE&feature=youtu.be>)

Things to Keep in Mind

This activity is largely focused on the family narratives of settler identifying participants. Adaptation to include a mixed audience of Indigenous and mixed heritage Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples needs attention.

Handout: Quotations

*If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time.
But if you have come because your liberation is bound up
with mine, then let us work together*
-Aboriginal Elder Lilla Watson

*In order to know where we are going we need to know
where we are.
To know where we are we need to know who we are,
and to know who we are we need to know where we come
from.*
-Anishinaabe Elder Art Solomon

Handout: Questions to consider

1. Where were your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents born?
2. Where did your family come from before settling in Canada?
3. When did your maternal and paternal families settle in Canada?
4. What regions did they move to?
5. Did they move more after the initial settlement? Where did your ancestors come from before arriving in this land called Canada?
 - a. *What were/are the forces at play that caused them to migrate?*
 - b. *Who are the Indigenous peoples of the land that you are living on today?*
 - c. *What were/are the forces that caused these people to be displaced?*
 - d. *How do these two histories connect?*
6. How did you end up living where you do?
7. Map the journey of settlement as far back as you know
8. Why did your family choose to leave their country of origin?
9. Why did your family choose to come to Canada?
10. Did they move to areas for work, opportunities, education?
11. What kinds of stories do your parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents tell about the time of migration and settlement? What was it like for them living in those territories?

Directions

Introduction

Introduce the activity and present the quotes from Elders Lilla Watson and Art Solomon (**available on handout**). Query about the relevance of history to who we are today. How has our family history influenced our understanding of the world around us?

- **Guiding question:** How do we start to rethink and express our relationship with place and Indigenous peoples of the land?

Video

- Watch the video: [Stolen Land](#) created by Irene Jansen

Discussion

Facilitate a conversation about genealogy and family research:

- A. Do you remember building a family tree?
There is so much information that can be found out through the telling and re-telling of the stories and the histories of our families and family members. We all have heard the re-telling of a funny instance of a relative at one point in time that has likely become a family legend.
- B. Provide the participants the **Questions to Consider Handout** and the **Map** and ask them to focus on 3 of the questions, jotting down bullet points for each and noting on the map the geographical spaces that are in their responses.
- C. Ask the participants to pair up with another person and share what they have identified. Reflect: *Looking at the map provided, what were the original Nations of each of those areas of land.*

Check in & closing dialogue

- What can we do with this information moving forward?

LEARNING ACTIVITY Personal Reflection

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on participants 	<p>This activity invites learners to spend time doing personal reflection on their learning experience. Quotes can be provided to the learners as reflection prompts, or learners can self-guide their written reflections.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ages • All learning levels 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Materials Needed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose paper • Writing tools • Optional film contributor quotes 	

Film Contributor Quotes (Optional)

(1) Quotation: Leah Gazan

- *From film 01:02* (included)

(2) Video Playback: Chimamanda Adichie

- *From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk*
(available online: https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

(3) Quotation: Chimamanda Adichie

- *From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk* (included)

Directions:

- Invite learners to reflect on their learning experience
- Learners can self-guide their written reflections or use film contributor quotes listed in discussion activity “Considering Voice in Storytelling”

PERSONAL REFLECTION My commitment is...

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on participants 	<p>This activity invites learners to spend time doing personal reflection on their learning experience and specifically to consider what they will do with their new understandings. Learning facilitator can provide reflection prompts, or invite learners to self-guide their reflection.</p>
<p><i>Participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ages • All learning levels 	
<p><i>Materials Needed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose paper • Writing tools • Optional film contributor quotes 	

Film Contributor Quotes (Optional)

(1) Quotation: Leah Gazan

- *From film 01:02* (included)

(2) Video Playback: Chimamanda Adichie

- *From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk*
(available online: https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

(3) Quotation: Chimamanda Adichie

- *From The Danger of a Single Story Ted Talk* (included)

Directions:

Invite learners to self-guide their reflections, or provide reflection prompts. Some suggestions listed below:

- Reflect upon your learning from watching the film and participating in the learning activities, with the knowledge that you have now, what is your commitment to challenging settler colonialism?
- Reflect upon your learning from watching the film and participating in the learning activities, with the knowledge that you have now, what is your commitment to challenging the erasure of Indigenous peoples from story and land?
- Reflect upon your learning from watching the film and participating in the learning activities, with the knowledge that you have now, what is your commitment to challenging settler colonialism?
- Reflect upon your learning from watch the film and participating in activities, with the knowledge that you have now, what is your commitment educating your friends, family and colleague?
- Reflect upon your learning from watch the film and participating in activities, with the knowledge that you have now, what is your commitment to changing your own relationship with Indigenous peoples and the territories you engage with?

ARTICLE & INTERVIEW REVIEW
Colonialism Today: Rooster Town

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 minutes 	<p>In 2017 Indigenous land defenders and allies reclaimed the urban space which was historically the Métis community of Rooster Town. After the startling deforestation of the land, a blockade was created to protect the space from further assault. In this lesson, learners are invited to consider how the legacy of colonization and displacement of Indigenous peoples is an ongoing process that continues today.</p>
<p>Participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school students • Post-secondary students 	
<p>Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to internet • Access to audio playback 	

Resource List
Article: “The Outsiders”

- *By Randy Turner*, published in *Winnipeg Free Press*
(available online: <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/The-outsiders-366764871.html>)

Audio Playback: “Direct Action Against Development in Winnipeg”

- *Interview from Talking Radical Radio*
(available online: http://talkingradical.ca/2017/11/28/trr-rooster_town_blockade/)

Sharing Circle

- Available in this curriculum

Part 1 Directions:

- In a sharing circle, ask learners to briefly describe a meaningful place in their lives. Prompt: Think of a place that you feel a strong connection to. This can be a place that you spent a lot of time in, or just visited with briefly. It can be a place that you haven't been to in a long time, or somewhere you go often. How would you describe this place to someone who will never get to visit it? What makes this place special to you?
- As you close the sharing circle, invite learners to write down how they would feel if they and the people they love could never have access to that place again.
- Read the article "The Outsiders" written by Randy Turner.
- As a group, discuss the displacement of the Métis people.

Part 1 Questions:

- Were you familiar with the history of Rooster Town? If not, how do you feel about never having learned about this community and the displacement of Métis people?
- How do you think this displacement impacted the people of Rooster Town? How does it continue to impact their descendants?
- What do you think the responsibility of the city and citizens of Winnipeg are to the descendants of the people of Rooster Town? How do we correct these injustices?
- Reflect on your contributions to the sharing circle about a space that is meaningful to you, do your thoughts and feelings help to give you some understanding of the impacts of disconnection to place?

Part 2 Directions:

- After the learners have a chance to express themselves and have made connections between their own relationships to space and the displacement of the Métis community of Rooster town, inform them that you will now consider how displacement continues in present day
- As a group listen to the Talking Radical interview, “Direct Action Against Development in Winnipeg”
- Discuss how colonization and displacement continue today

Part 2 Questions:

- From learning about the historic and present day displacement and land assault of Rooster Town, what do we understand about the continuation of colonization?
- Why is important to support Indigenous peoples reclamation and protection of land?
- In learning about Rooster Town, what do we understand about how the continuation of colonization is protected?
- What is the role of allies in Indigenous reclamation of space and land defense?
- Does learning about Rooster Town change how you feel about the space you occupy? How?
- Reflect on the thoughts you wrote down after our sharing circle? From you own feelings about how you would contend with not being able to access the space that you have a close relationship with, does this support you to better understand Indigenous peoples relationship to land? Does this support you to better understand Indigenous land defense movements?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

An Indigenous Blockade in Winnipeg Is Halting Deforestation Efforts

https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/evdj3z/an-indigenous-blockade-in-winnipeg-is-halting-deforestation-efforts

Coverage of Winnipeg's Rooster Town Blockade Reveals Media's Anti-Indigenous Biases

<https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/coverage-of-winnipegs-rooster-town-blockade-and-medias-anti-indigenous-bias>

Métis-Anishinaabe land defender establishes Rooster Town blockade in Winnipeg to protect wetlands

<https://canadians.org/blog/métis-anishinaabe-land-defender-establishes-rooster-town-blockade-winnipeg-protect-wetlands>

Rooster Town: The Winnipeg Community that Nobody Remembers

<http://uniter.ca/view/rooster-town-the-winnipeg-community-that-nobody-remembers>

LEARNING ACTIVITY Considering Indigenous Kinship

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes 	<p>Indigenous kinship systems are historically and contemporary models of family and community structures that are based in intersecting relationships between humans and the natural world. These non-hierarchical relationships are built on mutual respect and reciprocity. This activity is meant to provide deeper understandings of Indigenous kinship through the analysis of Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's contribution to the film, and her artistic work, "How to Steal a Canoe".</p>
<p>Participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school students • Post-secondary students 	
<p>Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to internet • Video playback 	

Resource List

Quotation: Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

- *From film 03:08* (included on next page)

Video Playback: How to Steal A Canoe

- *By Dr Leanne Betasamosake Simpson Leanne Simpson*
(available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dp5oGZ1r60g>)

Definition: Wahkotowin

- Included on next page

Quotation: Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

- *From film 03:08*

Without our permission and without our consent we have been systematically removed and dispossessed of most of our territory. We have fought back as our homeland has been stolen, clear cut, subdivided and sold to settlers from Europe and later cottagers from Toronto. The last salmon navigated our waters about 100 years ago. We no longer have eels or salmon in our territory. We no longer have old growth white pine forests. Our rice beds were nearly destroyed. All but one tiny piece of prairie that exists on my reserve in Alderville, has been destroyed. 90% of our sugar bushes are under private ownership. Our most sacred spaces have been made into provincial parks for tourists, with concrete building on our teaching rocks. Our burial grounds, our mounds have cottages build on top of them. The veins of our mother have lift-locks blocking them and the shores of nearly every to of our lakes and rivers has either cottages or a home making it nearly impossible to launch a canoe. Our rice has nearly been destroyed by raised water levels from the Trent Severn waterway, boat traffic and sewage from the cottages. Our children have been taken away and sent to residential schools, day schools and now an education system that refuses to acknowledge our culture, our knowledge, our history and Indigenous experience.

Definition: Wahkotowin

Wahkotowin is a Nehiyawewin (Plains Cree) word that refers to kinship and the making of relatives. This value, keeps communities together by reinforcing the belief that all people are connected, and have the responsibility of taking care of one another

Directions:

- Make Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's quote available for learners
- Make definition of wahkotowin available for learners
- Ask learners to consider and note what is revealed about Indigenous understandings to land, water, plants and animals in Dr. Simpson's words and how her contribution with the film is connection to the definition of wahkotowin.
- As a group discuss the differences between settlers' and Indigenous peoples' understandings of relationships with and responsibilities to land and brainstorm the ways in which those differences are expressed, specifically within processes of colonization.
- As a group view the YouTube link "How to Steal a Canoe."
- In a group discussion, or through written reflection invite learners to reflect on a physical place they feel connected to and how it would feel if they were forced away from this place, or no longer had access to it. Additionally ask learners to consider the questions below:

Questions:

- How does understanding land as a relative, challenge colonization?
- How does understanding that Indigenous peoples exist in kinship relationships with land and water, challenge or change your views on the history of colonization in Canada, and the experiences of Indigenous peoples?

FILM MAKERS' & FILM CONTRIBUTORS'

BIOGRAPHIES

Film Curriculum developer

Tasha Spillett draws her strength and softness from both her Nehiyaw & Trinidadian bloodlines. She is an educator, poet and emerging scholar, but is most heart-tied to contributing to community lead work that centers land and water defence, and the protection of Indigenous women and girls.

Film Makers

Teddy Zegeye-Gebrehiwot is an Ethiopian-Greek-Canadian, a Winnipegger, a filmmaker, a father, a husband, an activist, a socialist, a settler. He recognizes that he receive privileges from colonialism (regardless of whether he wants them or not) and that these privileges are the product of an unjust, harmful system. Thus, he believes it is urgently necessary to dismantle colonialism and capitalism, and to struggle to bring the better world that we all deserve. He thinks that settlers are not doing their fair share of working to change this system, and he can see part of the reason for this as an education gap, but also thinks that inaction is structurally encouraged by colonialism and capitalism. He hopes these films can contribute to folks' broader education and help spark action on both individual and collective levels.

Elizabeth (Liz) Carlson's Swedish, Saami, German, Scots-Irish, and English ancestors settled on lands of the Anishinaabe and Omaha Nations that were unethically obtained by the US government. As a white settler (zhaagnaash, gchi-mookman-kwe) on Anishinaabe lands occupied by the city of Sudbury, Liz is learning to live in Indigenous sovereignty as a treaty relative of the Robinson-Huron Treaty while working as an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at Laurentian University. Liz's doctoral research, *Living in Indigenous sovereignty: Relational accountability and the stories of*

white settler anti-colonial and decolonial activists*, as well as the work of Indigenous scholars and activists, has led her to pursue research related to the ways settlers can support land return and Indigenous land reclamation.

*https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/bitstream/handle/1993/32028/carlson_elizabeth.pdf

Gladys Rowe is a Muskego-iskwew (Swampy Cree woman) of mixed ancestry and a member of Fox Lake Cree Nation in Northern Manitoba. Gladys has been enamoured by the power of stories to connect and create spaces to build relationship with self and with the animate and inanimate world. When Gladys was young she began her creative development, writing poetry and short stories and has added paint and film as a way to share stories that are close to her heart. She is currently completing her PhD in interdisciplinary studies through the University of Manitoba. Gladys is passionate about human experiences and opportunities to foster meaningful connections.

Sarah Story is a freelance archivist and oral historian raised in rural Manitoba. Story resides in Treaty One (Winnipeg). She is an archival advocate committed to disrupting the settler-colonial archive and sharing skills, knowledge and resources with groups who request assistance to develop sustainable independent or community-controlled preservation systems. Her true passion is working with individuals, families and community groups to document and preserve oral histories for present purposes and future generations.

Film Participants

Joy Eidse is a social worker living in Treaty 1 territory, Winnipeg, occupied traditional lands of Anishinaabe, Nehiyawak, Dakota, Nakota, and Red River Metis peoples.

Steve Heinrichs is a settler Christian Canadian living in Treaty 1 territory, Winnipeg, occupied traditional lands of Anishinaabe, Nehiyawak, Dakota, Nakota, and Red River Metis peoples.

Monique Woroniak is a settler living in Treaty 1 territory, Winnipeg, occupied traditional lands of Anishinaabe, Nehiyawak, Dakota, Nakota, and Red River Metis peoples.

Murray Angus is a settler and founder of Nunavut Sivaniksavut living in Ottawa, Occupied unsundered territory of Algonquin people.

David Bleakney is a settler and 2nd National Vice President of Canadian Union of Postal Workers living in Ottawa, Occupied unsundered territory of Algonquin people.

Leah Gazan is a University of Winnipeg instructor and an Idle No More Activist from Wood Mountain Lakota Nation, Treaty 4 Territory.

Chickadee Richard is a mother, grandmother, and clan mother from Treaty 1 territory, Winnipeg, occupied traditional lands of Anishinaabe, Nehiyawak, Dakota, Nakota, and Red River Metis peoples.

Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair is a Associate Professor of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba and is Anishinaabe (St. Peter's/Little Peguis)

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson is a writer, scholar, lecturer, storyteller, musician, First Nations Activist, from Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg, Alderville First Nation.

Tasha Hubbard is a filmmaker, assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan, is Nehiyaw/Nakawe/Métis from Peepeekisis First Nation.

SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING RESOURCES

Useful websites:

Assembly of First Nations

<http://www.afn.ca>

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

<https://manitobachiefs.com>

Groundwork for Change

<https://www.groundworkforchange.org>

Treaty Commission of Manitoba

<http://www.trcm.ca>

Native Women's Association of Canada

<https://www.nwac.ca>

National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation

<http://nctr.ca/map.php>

History & legacy of residential schools

Websites:

The Blanket Exercise (directions & scripts)

<https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/about/>

Residential Schools- 100 years of Loss, Timeline

<http://www.legacyofhope.ca/downloads/100yol-timeline.pdf>

Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of Residential Schools

<http://wherearethechildren.ca/en>

Videos:

Nindibaajimomin, Intergenerational Storytelling on the Legacy of Residential Schools

<http://www.oralhistorycentre.ca/projects/nindibaajimomin-intergenerational-digital-storytelling-legacy-residential-schools>

Where the Spirit Lives

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Os5KqErc7XY>

We Were Children (available on the National Film Board website)

https://www.nfb.ca/film/we_were_children/

Text sources:

Indian Residential Schools Map

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015606/1100100015611>

Intergenerational Impact of Residential Schools

http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/pdfs/kiskino_Intergenerational%20Effect%20of%20IRS%20on%20Prof%20Women.pdf

Government of Canada, full apology to Residential School Survivors

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649>

They Came for the Children

[http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/2039_T&R_eng_web\[1\].pdf](http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/2039_T&R_eng_web[1].pdf)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Findings & Calls to Action

<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?>

Colonization in Canada

Websites:

21 Things You May Not Know About The Indian Act

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/21-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-indian-act-1.3533613>

Christopher Columbus & The Doctrine of Discovery

<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/christopher-columbus-and-the-doctrine-of-discovery-5-things-to-know>

Government of Canada, The Indian Act

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/>

Videos:

Colonization Road

<http://www.cbc.ca/firsthand/episodes/colonization-road>

Indigenous resistance

Websites

Idle No More

<http://www.idlenomore.ca>

Indigenous Nationhood, Pam Palmater's Blog

<http://indigenousnationhood.blogspot.ca>

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

<https://www.leannesimpson.ca>

Native Youth Sexual Health Network

<http://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com>

Decolonization, Indigeneity, Education & Society

<http://www.decolonization.org/index.php/des>

Videos:

Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance

http://workforall.nfb.ca/film/kanehsatake_270_years_of_resistance/

Website:

What is an ally? What is a settler?

<https://www.groundworkforchange.org>

Contemporary Indigenous Perspectives

Podcasts and other Media

Indian & Cowboy Podcast with Ryan McMahon

<http://indianandcowboy.ca>

Redman Laughing Podcast

<https://www.redmanlaughing.com>

Media Indigena

<http://www.mediaindigena.com>

8th Fire: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada & The Way Forward

<http://www.cbc.ca/8thfire/>

Radio

UnReserved with Rosanna Deerchild

<http://www.cbc.ca/player/radio/Unreserved>

News

CBC Indigenous

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous>

Settler Self Reflection

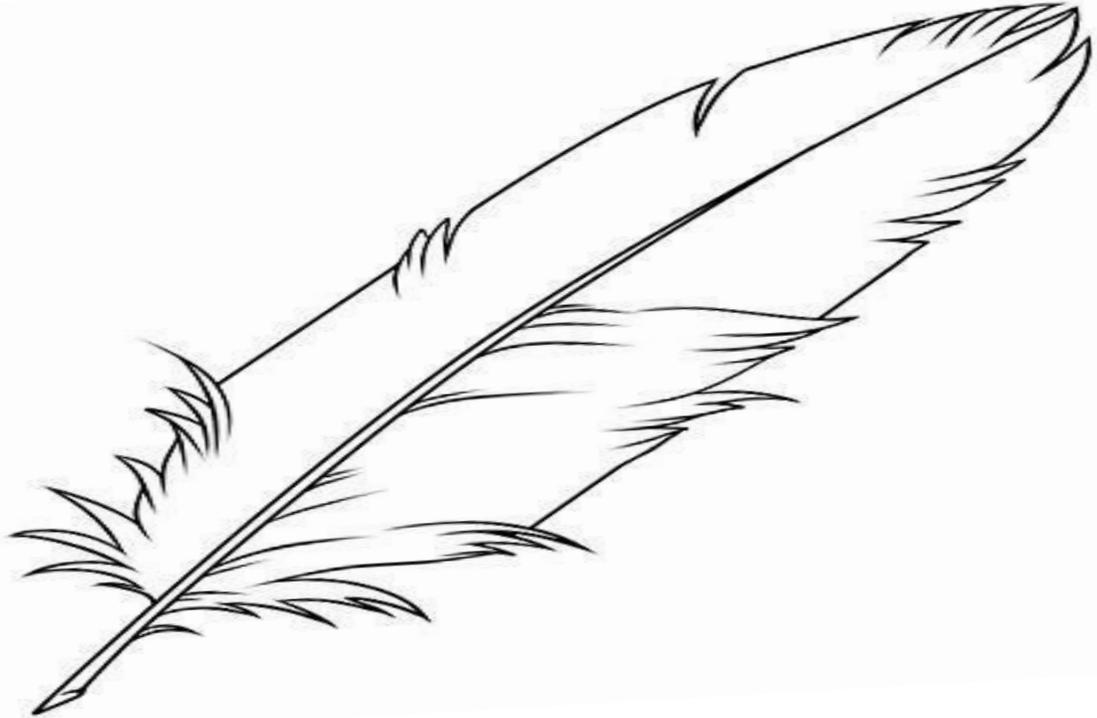
Irene Jensen's Blog

<http://irenejansen.ca/>

Blog by Kate Sjoberg

<http://imasettler.blogspot.com/>

My commitment is ...



Eagle feathers are a symbol of honour and of leadership. Eagle feathers are also used in doctoring ceremonies for healing. The work that we do to learn how to live as relatives, reflects both leadership and healing.

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