



Library podcast

Dawnland Discussion

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[00:00:37] Welcome and thank you for joining us this afternoon for this beautiful body of work. This particular story has a deep impact on my life and my family. I was taken by force during the scoop era and so was my mother. And so six generations of my family have been affected and impacted by the things that you're going to see today. These are not things that were far away in a long ago time.

[00:01:08] This was me and my mother and my grandmother and my daughters and my grandsons.

[00:01:16] And so I just want to ask you just to pray in your own way. We're just going to take a moment to acknowledge the people of this land. We are on Indigenous land here in Seattle.

[00:01:31] And just take a moment to honor that and welcome our ancestors to be with us.

[00:01:40] This room is full.

[00:01:42] They are here.

[00:01:44] So just take a moment creator I just asked that you come in and be with us today in a good way that this room this energy and the people that are here to support this piece have an open heart and an open mind and that they they take away from this the harmful impacts that colonialism has had on our people.

[00:02:12] And particularly our families and our children.

[00:02:17] I prayed for those children that are still away from us. For those adoptees who are still searching for us because they will never stop searching to come home to us. They pray for those that are lost that have not made their way home.

[00:02:38] They pray.

[00:02:40] That we have an open heart and we take away from this what the Creator intended.
Runnable

[00:05:44] I just want to follow protocol that's this strong woman song and that song came out of the Kingston Prison for Women in Ontario Canada in the 70s and it's been used as an anthem now for women strong.

[00:06:00] And she should go ahead and turn the lights up just a little bit.

[00:06:04] Wow thank you so much Rebecca.

[00:06:09] And the Native Women's resistance group that was amazing.

[00:06:15] And what a beautiful audience. My name is Valerie wonder. I work here at the Seattle Public Library and we are so honored to be working with Tracy Rector and Longhouse Media and SIFF to make this program happen today.

[00:06:39] This program is so special and important to me. We've been working for several months with a group of native advisers and I'm going to introduce somebody. Joulani Casey who has been the lead of that group and she's just going to say a few words thank you Ashish Valerie.

[00:07:00] Thank you all for coming. My name is Lonnie Casey and I'm an enrolled tribal member of the Klinton nation Raven frog clan from Seattle and I'm the native Advisory Committee coordinator and I'm so honored to do this work with the Seattle Public Library. We've been actively working on this Valerie and I since September of 2017 and we've been actively planning meeting strategizing creating recommendations on what's important to the two indigenized the Pacific Northwest and specifically how the public library can be welcoming and honoring to native people. The film series is Courbet curated by Tracy Reptar and it's very valuable in sharing our history and our culture. So I'm honored today that we're doing this our art exhibits panels and community events are in the process of being planned throughout 2013 and this is the brochure highlighting some of our efforts. And it's over on that back table. It's the Indigenous sovereignty art land and knowledge. And it does list many of the programs that we've been planning.

[00:08:25] This is important work because we have children to raise elders to care for languages to revitalize sovereignty to exercise dances to celebrate bloodlines to honor rites to assert water to protect land to love seeds to cultivate medicine to propagate lifeways to love. This is why the native advisory committee exists and works with the Seattle Public Library a whole a whole

[00:09:14] There's one other item that I want to briefly share with you. There

[00:09:18] Is an indigenous films hand out for this from the Seattle International Film Festival. And with that I would like I'm honored to introduce Dustin with the Seattle International Film Festival. Please welcome Dustin.

[00:09:38] Thank you. Lenny My name is Dustin Casper. I'm educational programs manager and a programmer with SIFF and the Seattle International Film Festival. For those of you who don't know today is day 10 of the Seattle International Film Festival. We are still standing. It's a wonderful thing and we are honored to be a part of this event here at the Seattle Public Library. And I would like to thank several several people who are invaluable to making this happen. One is the Seattle Public Library as well as the Seattle Public Library Foundation the Tulalip Tribe charitable fund as well as Longhouse Media give them all a huge round of applause please. And SIFF is a huge thing for those of you who don't know. I did mention twenty five day festival.

[00:10:35] There's still half of it to go. We are playing 433 films from 90 countries around the world including eight features from indigenous film makers and a short film Prak package that plays tomorrow of all female Indigenous filmmakers. Yeah

[00:10:54] We do have a handout of the indigenous film specifically as well as a large packet 48 page packet of everything that's playing at the festival you're welcome to pick up on your way out if you haven't already done so please turn off your cell phones. I don't think it's going to make noise during the screening and please keep it in your pocket. No talking or texting during the film. And if you got one of them fancy dancy watches that light up do your best to make it not light up.

[00:11:20] And the last thing that I need to do here you've been given some balance. Hopefully most of you got them on the way in. These are the audience awards ballots at SIFF. And as you are an audience at a film you get to participate and vote one of them says Best Short and one of them says best film we have a short film that's presented here in front of Don land. It's called Holy Angels and it's a film from from Canada that I think will will pairs exceptionally well with with Dawn land. And then there's one that says Best Film and that's for the Donlon feature documentary and how this works. You do not need a pen or a pencil. All you need is your fingers and we're going to do do tarrying at the end don't tear it yet watch the movies and then make your decision. I'm going to do it now because I've seen them but how this works. You see the numbers one through five and the corresponding star rating five stars means you really really like the movie one star is the exact opposite of that and two three four obviously gradations in between. You can figure that out and all you have to do is tear no pen or pencil. About halfway through the sheet for the number of stars you'd give it. So I have my best film here for don land. I'm going to give it to five myself. This is how it works. Halfway through the page. And then turn it in. We're going to have a ballot box you can just put both of them in the same ballot box at the end. I will take care of meter now which are short and which are feature and we'll tally it all up and we announced the Audience Award winners on June 10th at the end of the festival.

[00:12:44] So that is all I have to say. Beyond being honored to pass the microphone on to my friend my colleague an extraordinary filmmaker and activist who really wants me to stop saying all that stuff. Tracy Rector please welcome to the

[00:13:09] Thank you. It's amazing to see all of you beautiful people here and these indigenous lands of the Coast Salish territory. It's an honor to gather in this way.

[00:13:18] My name's Tracey Rector and I am the founder of the Fourth World Media Lab and indigenous programming here at the Celo International Film Festival and this is just amazing. So thank you again.

[00:13:31] I want to acknowledge some of our other funders Vision Maker Media now Eliade fun Bowan science TV yes see then Sparke see Seekonk for culture. The Snoqualmie tribe the Tulalip Tribes and Seattle Indian Health Board. So give them a round of applause.

[00:13:59] Just a few things. Fourth World Media Lab is an indigenous film training program for emerging and mid career filmmakers from across these lands now called North America. I'd like for the group to raise their hands. Please all of these are incredible filmmakers who have made films are making films and are doing amazing work out there in the community in a creative way. And finally Donlon does a film it's a film about healing. There's been so much trauma within our native communities but I also see this project because it is a project it's more than a film. It's making an impact in the world and it's a story about resiliency and thriving today. And I've been lucky enough to be in a producing role on the film and so I'll be moderating a panel afterwards and we'll be able to talk about the issues and the important work and how film can leverage Hilling work within our communities. Thank you so much.

[00:15:12] Thank you. And one last thing I just want to remind everyone that we are on Indigenous land we're on Duwamish land coast Salish land

[00:15:50] If if possible. May I ask each of you. I'll hand the mike over and if you could state your name and the connection to where you're from.

[00:16:02] Quick quick and easy.

[00:16:04] Don Neptun Adams neon but I'm upscaling anyway Abbot I am da Neptun Adams. I am Penobscot and I am one of the former foster children in the movie

[00:16:25] Takie up the Sunday washdown not to be my name is Sandy White Hawk CT. I took cuts and as we see Changle I called him Mattawa I'm from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. I was adopted out and raised in Wisconsin and was fortunate enough to be nominated to be one of the commissioners of the main tier C

[00:17:02] My name is Kristen Salerno. I was the editor on Donlon. I started filming in 2012 and I was working with the footage broke over 500 hours of footage for about three years. And I'm very honored to be here watching with everyone I swear it's a different energy in the room. Every time we watch with people. Thank you all for being here and especially thank you to those that were in the film that came from all over to be here.

[00:17:39] Missy Leser I'm the director of education for the film. It's my job to get this film in the curriculum that we're writing into every middle high school and beyond the

[00:18:01] And it's my profound hope commitment after watching the film and learning the historic record that has been denied to non-native people who only know falsehoods. Everyone will be able to answer the question that over arches the entire teacher's guide and that is what is the relationship between the taking of land by colonial settlers and the taking of the children.

[00:18:45] Class if she gets a house if she had us soup my name is Rachel George my new child's name is yes. I come from a howzit and had a set just on the West Coast here so it's good to be home. It was truly an honor and a privilege to work as the research coordinator for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Maine.

[00:19:13] It leaves as the other panelists to come up let Don Marcy and Jennifer well have. We'll have a combined.

[00:19:23] We'll have some Kewanee and then we have a panelist of amazing indigenous women who are doing the work to make social change happen. So many of us are women who are out there and supported by our brothers and husbands and uncles. But today we really want to recognize the women who are doing this work.

[00:19:50] I am Jennifer Fuentes and I and Apache and also unknown indigenous to the southwest due to adoption.

[00:20:08] My name is Madonna Thunder Hawk and I'm from South Dakota. I'm Lakota cook the board member of the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe. Marcella Gilbert I'm her daughter and I'm exactly from where she's from

[00:20:36] And this is Becky Larson.

[00:20:38] She has an amazing story and has been such an integral part of helping us do this work well and right. And I just want to say thank you

[00:20:56] Great if you all would like to have a seat. If you sit over there that's fine. Rachel just heard her late today just today. So normally in our ideal situation we'd like to burn some sage and acknowledged some healing is happening. So Sandy is going to hand each of our panelists some sage hold on to it while we talk today. But we just also want to recognize that quite a bit of healing is happening through this process. And if you need extra support after this screening please let us know. If we can start with you Marci if you could just please share with us the work that you're doing today and a little bit about where your woman.

[00:21:51] Hello again. I don't know where to start.

[00:21:58] I've spent my younger years in survival school during the American Indian Movement days when I completed that I got I went on and got my bachelor's degree in master's degree in nutrition.

[00:22:17] My focus has always been nutrition and health so I'm currently working with young people or anybody who will listen.

[00:22:26] About our our indigenous diet and how important it is for us to be looking at that. Because on on our reservation our people are very sick and a lot of it is because we're not eating our own foods. Among other things. But I think it's really important that we need to focus on that and that leads to restoration of land and a whole bunch of other stuff. So that's one of the things that I'm working on but I'm also implementing a pilot project focused on their survival school model of the 70s so I've been myself and my husband are working very hard on that and will be able to kick off at least a week this summer.

[00:23:17] And so I'm also assisting my mother with her grandmothers group and wherever else I can help.

[00:23:33] Logan I don't know I guess I guess I just kind of have to you know start with I guess I have older status now. And that's a good thing because at home when you're you know it's automatic you have status when you become an elder.

[00:23:53] We still have that you know recolonize people. I mean all the you know ups and downs of the modern modern world I mean we experience it.

[00:24:05] But we still have some remnants of what our ancestors left us in one of those is respect for elders.

[00:24:17] But of course we have to earn it too. You know we can't just sit around and complain you know we have to be active. We have those. And then we have the group of grandmothers that I work with and we don't sit on the couch at home and we don't whine and complain we're issue oriented and we're doers and we don't because we are community based.

[00:24:44] We don't focus on one issue.

[00:24:47] You can't if you're a community based whatever's going on at home in your community that's what you work on because different ones come to you. Family friends and community and asked you to get involved or what should we do. Can you help us that type of thing. So on top of trying to save the land and and treaty rights and fighting pipelines and you know all of that environmental were under fire there constantly. But we're also fighting the trafficking of our young people with the state of South Dakota Department of Social Services. So we understand that. We've been in that battle for years and we found out over the years that the strong ones that are standing their ground the grandmothers and the great grandmothers when it comes to the trafficking of our

children the young people have all kinds of problems nowadays that that are compounded with what's going on in the American society so that's where we're at right now it's a never ending battle and I'm so proud of my daughter because she's picking that up. And it's an intergenerational struggle and all these women know that we have I had mentors I had women when I was young that you know where my role models and of course they're gone now but their teachings were amazing and they did.

[00:26:27] It wasn't so much teaching showing in myself. I guess I could.

[00:26:35] I was in it for the long haul because I was when I was raised in a boarding school system. My mother was also we know that that was our background. So those that say they had a traditional upbringing and what have you. They are the fortunate ones because it wasn't for me or a lot of my contemporaries so we learned we learned how to survive in battle for that survival from the time we were in boarding school to today. So we understand the struggle. And we also understand that intergenerational an ongoing as long as we have a land base and we have remnants of our culture we're going to still be here and we're entitled to be here and we are entitled to fight to be here.

[00:27:30] Jennifer if you can talk about the indigenous sisters movement rights you've been really leading quite a bit here in this region.

[00:27:37] Yeah so Tracy said I'm from this area and I've been doing grassroots organizing and activist stuff for a while which is what the climate change last year. You know just change in the government and just all the things that are going on in our country. We came together as women for the woman's march you know. So a number of us and just women wanted to take participate that in that and we came together and that was just the beginning. So when we got together and we saw how powerful we could be together we felt that power and we didn't want to stop because there's all sorts of friends. There's so many things happening. And so since then we've been organizing. We do various things. So we are definitely activists were out there marching or are participating in various things some of us are water protectors some versus Earth defenders. So showing up for those actions. But also we understand that you know it's not just taking to the streets it's not just Occupy and it's not just yeah doing that work that work is so important but the other work is that stuff that's been trying to be taken from us that cultural work. And so a lot of the stuff that we do with indigenous sisters resistance is to gather women in circles. And we believe that circles heal and we have our drum some we have TVs we ever fires. We have these things that are in circles and so circles heal and so we gather women in circles doing all sorts of things so one of the things is preparing women for ceremonies.

[00:29:10] And so this skirt i'm wearing right now is made in one of our circles. So we gather women we make pairs skirts we make dresses for swi we make dresses for Sundance we help women with whatever necessary to get them to the ceremonies. At times when there's women too many women that are calling for ceremony and there's no connection. So that's one of the things we do is we connect them to ceremonies if they can't find one we we can call a ceremony. So we've had sweats lead for our women. Yeah. So we seeing as well so teaching women to sing a lot of women come and they want to know songs you know we don't have songs we want songs and so just gathering women

letting them explore what it's like to sing a song what it's like to be on that drum and encouraging women to take those songs and you know to go to their communities and to seeing and yeah. And so it's on both fronts. You know it's about that that activists work that that work that we're doing out there but it's also about that internal work that healing work. And so we want to make sure that we're not we're not just out there burning ourselves both ends but that we come back and that we were able to feed our spirit for that movement.

[00:30:23] Thank you Don I know that with your amazing voice and your storytelling that sharing seems to be part of the work of healing community.

[00:30:40] How did you come to be part of Don land. How did you come to find your voice in that way.

[00:30:49] Well to see I was asked to give a statement. And I was reluctant. But it was something I hadn't really talked about something that had been you know those words had been festering for a long time and they needed to come out. And so I gave that statement and the next day when I woke up it felt like this huge weight had lifted off my shoulders. I felt like I was bouncing around my college. So I met Adam and Ben when I gave my statement. And they told me about the project.

[00:31:40] I've always been a shadow warrior. That's what some of my friends back at home call me. I don't really like to be in the public view. So when Adam and Ben wanted to take a whole bunch of footage of me I declined said that they could use my public statement. But I've kind of grown into a life in the public eye.

[00:32:06] Now oh here I am before we circle to this part of the talking crescent moon here.

[00:32:25] Kristen I don't know if you all are familiar with the work of an editor in a film.

[00:32:31] That's where the magic happens that's where that hard focus happens that's where the heavy lifting happens. And Kristen has done an amazing job how were you able to hone down 500 hours of footage to 1 hour.

[00:32:49] Thank you. Yeah the editor is always the person that you know if you do your job well no one knows that you had any part in it

[00:32:58] Which is where I like to stay. Yeah I think when we started there were about 500 hours of footage which just grew over time as Sandi knows we've filmed a lot of meetings. That I watched and read transcripts for.

[00:33:17] And then we once the statements became available. The directors I and Mashi read almost 3000 pages of those and there are just these themes that kept coming up that could not be ignored. So we decided to instead focus on a few individual people to try to hear you know the stories of a collection of people which is why the film doesn't focus on one character but instead it focuses on you

know a all different voices and we started from. You know we wanted to show each community what that visit was like.

[00:34:03] The tears then went back many times to these communities but we started from there and you know you work around it you start from your main points and then build a story around that. Thank you.

[00:34:20] And Sandy is part of the team. See this is the first government sanctioned C in the country.

[00:34:29] How did you decide to take on this responsibility in this role as part of this commission.

[00:34:37] From my understanding the community decided that you had to be nominated so that you could apply. Yeah you would apply after you were nominated so a friend of mine from Maine who had done work with said you should submit your application. And I had been doing grassroots reconciliation community forums for some time so I was very interested in the whole state process that they were going to venture into. And so I filled out the application put it in and then got a phone call. Then we had to do a interview and I believe 55 people sent in their applications. Then they made a decision of who would be interviewed and then they chose five individuals. And so that's how they wanted as expressed from the different Indian communities in Maine. One of the commissioners they wanted to be from out of state of Maine that they felt that it would be easier for those offering their statements to have someone from outside their community be there to listen and support. So it was really quite surprised that I was chosen because so I knew some of the other applicants and I thought yeah they're going to get it for sure.

[00:36:08] And so I remember when I got in. And it's interesting because each of the commissioners have the same story we all thought that. And then when we were all seated we were laughing. We all said our first reaction when they said you've been chosen.

[00:36:21] We all started laughing. Oh my God. How'd that happen. But I want to say something before I forget about the film.

[00:36:30] In speaking to the other turkey remember her name already Kristen that you wouldn't know some of the things that you're seeing in the film unless someone told you and it hadn't even occurred to me because in our community this is how this is common knowledge.

[00:36:48] So the whole process of this commission has a spiritual foundation.

[00:36:55] The fact that this even took place is an answer to prayers of those generations beforehand of those individuals who live in boarding schools and in foster homes. That elder that you saw giving her her testimony in her you know grief as a child you know cried out. So that's how this came to be. But that fire that you see isn't just a camp fire that's a sacred fire and there's a certain protocol in setting up a sacred fire. It's not left alone for the entire time of the event. Someone has to sit there. It's generally taken care of by men. There's a whole teaching around why. Because the fire represents

the woman the energy that comes from that fire that life energy. And there can be no negative talk there can be no negativity whatsoever and that fire needs to be nurtured the way you would nurture the heart and the spirit of a woman. Certain prayers and only certain songs are sung as they build that fire. So that fire was set before we got there in the morning before we were going to a community. Those prayers were said and all the while we were in. So if we were there for more than one day that's how long that fire burned. And so at the end of every event you saw the tissues go into that fire and that's completing that circle of going in and opening that wound and then closing that wound through that that process so it wasn't a campfire. And I don't think that this the event. I don't think I mean I know that it wouldn't have been as powerful and impactful if we had not had that spiritual foundation. And there is many other things that went in place of that. But I wanted to tell you that much. And I have to ask one quick question. Did you make it. Are you in here. There she is. Yes.

[00:39:06] So I do explain that why that sleep and why it's important that she's here because she is lost couldn't get here and here she is initiates it's your work to do the education and create the vehicle of how we can start switching the narrative and educating teachers about true history.

[00:39:35] How do you even begin you just want to ask them who are the teachers in this room. Do you mind maybe just stand for a second. I want to. I think the work begins by supporting teachers to find courage. Because to undo hundreds of years of false narrative most of which is quite perverse and in defiance of the historical record takes community and it takes courage. And that's the reason that we created something called the upstander Academy. So the creators of this film were called the upstander project and we created a six day learning experience for educators classroom and museum called upstander Academy because we think that you can't just feel some kind of stirring to do this work you really need to we need to support one another. So when I started to think about how to bring this story into the classroom there were five big themes I interface a lot with history and social studies teachers and language arts teachers and a buzz word that they use inquiry how to support students to learn to interrogate history look at the sources ask the tough questions and come up with their own perspective and that's what's not done with a top down uncritical view of history. So the Donlin teacher's guide is organized around five inquiries.

[00:41:25] The first is a deep dive into history itself and I get really upset when someone someone once said yet starts like around 14 21 and it's not true. It starts thousands of years ago. Acknowledging the the knowledge keepers and the technological breakthroughs of indigenous peoples. And it goes all the way up to our folks here familiar with the Scout proclamations that happened in the East Coast. So in the 1750 before this was you know what's now United States Massachusetts Bay Colony Pennsylvania New York and elsewhere. And there were a lot of them in Canada as well. There were scalped proclamations. They were they are evidence of genocide against particular indigenous nations. So that's where the first inquiry ends. It spans thousands of years and its 12 lessons. The second inquiry looks at Native families and of course you can't talk about the indigenous family because there are so many thousands of tribal nations. But it looks at some of the commonalities. The love for and the cherishing and protection of children and how they were taught and how that collided with the European approach and the mothers and the

grandmothers and the aunts and the social workers who made the Indian Child Welfare Act a reality.

[00:42:56] You met some of them in the historical footage and then the non-compliance of states like Maine and then the new generation of aunts and mothers and grandmothers embodied in the godmother of the TIAR Sister M. who made that change and then the next inquiry is about community inherited resilience and historical intergenerational trauma and then the fourth inquiry look it looks that truth commissions and this complexity of reconciliation what does it really mean and who does it serve. And if a community is thinking of supporting reconciliation and truth process what should the non-native people know and thanks to Sandy White Hawk for me sharpen my thinking on that and then the fifth inquiry is on genocide and cultural genocide and the history of the world and how cultural genocide didn't end up in the UN Convention and why and who opposed it. Guess. Which countries. So how do you teach that story and why the DRC in its final report talks about cultural genocide and why that is truth. So that's going to be available freely for teachers. The first inquiry will be done in a month and then what we've got to do with your help is find schools and teachers champions who are willing to stand up the standards teach this history because this is American history native history is American history thank you so much.

[00:44:54] I know that there's a Roebing Mike out there right here. And they know that people have questions who has a question.

[00:45:14] And that teachers guide can be found at dawn land dot org and about in July and there's flyers for the Academy. Over here as well and donation envelopes her reach. All right. You have a question.

[00:45:31] Thank you so much for your film for the work you are doing as the Truth and Reconciliation Council has presented its findings. How do reparations come into the conversation.

[00:45:47] Did you say how did reparations. So I guess reparations. Could be said that in devoting the work to the findings would be a reparation typically reparations. What Maine was afraid of is that they were going to get sued and that there was going to be money involved. And so there was not a part of this see but I always say that real reparation would be actively involved in committing resources to right what's happening so I think that's if you were to ask Esther and those that are working still with reach. That's what they would probably say.

[00:46:43] We're waiting for someone to get to the mike. I wanted to thank Tracy for. But I wanted to thank the these powerful voices who cleared the way for us before the event that the fact that you are an indigenous sisters came and lifted their voice and maybe scared some people because they're not used to us being so. But I was diggin it as like

[00:47:08] Get it so I was I wanted to acknowledge them and say thank you for doing that.

[00:47:19] And then I also wanted to think thank Tracy for acknowledging that women that are in this leadership of these leadership roles but also acknowledging are men that many of our men are with us and do support us. And it's always a balance. We always we can't uplift one and put down another. So I wanted to. And the more that we use that as an example the more we'll bring healing between us because there has been a lot of pain. And I want to thank my husband who's here. George McCallie who has supported me. The work that I do isn't glamorous. It isn't. It's energy draining and it's wonderful and it's what I was made to do. It's my purpose that I have and if I didn't have the balance of his energy taking care of me. I don't know that the work would be as strong as it is it wouldn't be as focused as it is and I would forget to eat and sleep. So I just want to acknowledge him and he's here with me supporting me as always so you already touched his.

[00:48:42] My name is Troy Olsen I'm from the Lummi Nation up right up near the Canadian border on the West Coast here but I wanted to touch base with here in the state of Washington. One of the tribal members in Tulalip he says Center for legislation he passed the bill are the state of Washington passed a bill. Native American history needs to be taught in public schools here. That's the Avenue here in Washington state that will teach native american history in Washington state. But I also want to welcome you guys to the coast Salish territory here ones of you that are from the east coast over here on the West Coast. Our story is the same as yours on the East Coast it's no different our grandparents and our great grandparents. They went to boarding schools over here too. We're all Native Americans and east and west are no different in American genocide experiences takes a lot of strength and courage to get up and be present in the moment to talk about a story that has been hidden from history.

[00:50:16] The one to hold is each and every family member from 500 nations.

[00:50:24] We all suffer some sort of inherited past or it's in our grandparents.

[00:50:38] This truth and reconciliation getting out to the truth is the hardest part. Facing the fact that 500 nations has this story to tell. You're on this continent. Now to those 500 nations each and every one of the nation members here. It's something that is traumatic. Just wanted to shake your hand and say hello to each and every one of you. Because takes a lot of strength to be up here at Swanner say hello to each and every one of you thank you I'm interested in hearing.

[00:51:37] Thank you very much for the film and the panel it's really an honor to be here and participate. And I interested in hearing about the reach and the TR see now in Maine if you would talk about that a little made Wabanaki reach has trained over a thousand people non-native people to be allies and accomplices. Now I was I was talking

[00:52:17] At the Boston premiere. I was mentioning that instead of allies I would like accomplices. I mean it's great for for people to stand with us. But I want people to help us tear shit up

[00:52:38] So main Wabanaki continues to do amazing work in our community.

[00:52:43] All of my non-native friends that show up at the same protests and you know events that I show up that they have all gone through the training. They know how to have our backs and they continue to do good work. They have been reaching out for donations too so if you go find the main Wabanaki reach page. Oh Ms. She brought envelopes they don't need financial help to continue on with the amazing work they're doing. Another thing that made Wabanaki reach is doing is going to visit people Native people in the jails and prisons and that's really important work. You know it's a simple thing like a some sage in jail is it's really important.

[00:53:40] Also when we finished the film the first thing we did was we took it to the Wabanaki homeland. We screened it in six different communities and we learned that at this moment there are people who weren't ready to come before the commission during its 27 month duration but they're ready now. And so there is someone who is available. I can't remember her name Rachel Erica. And so people know that they can find Erica they can give their statement and it will be archived at Bowdoin College with all the other

[00:54:18] Statements so that there's a rippling that's going Madonna I'm wondering if you can speak towards this next generation of women that were all up here as women doing this work that through your film I think that you're doing some kind of outreach and telling a different kind of story.

[00:54:41] Basically I am really hopeful because younger ones.

[00:54:48] This is their time this is your time. We had our time and what we did in our day we had to do in the same way that you're going to have and you'll you'll you'll do it because it's your time. In your frame of mind your way of thinking and that's good.

[00:55:08] But you know there are still elders around like myself you know and we've got your back. So are there

[00:55:24] Are there filmmakers in the room in the House and the audience. OK.

[00:55:30] So I want to speak to you for just a moment about filming something that you just witnessed. So one of the things that I really loved about Ben and Adam is even though there were bumps in and along the way they basically came in and followed the instructions that they were given in terms of the respect the terms of you know and I know one film and I'm having another film made that I'm participating in. And we get into these scuffles because filmmakers say well we own this because we're making this and we're like no you don't own this this is me. This is our home. So we go back and forth. And so when you come into an Indigenous community you have to bend to us men.

[00:56:22] When you come into an Indigenous community unless you are indigenous you must remember that you're coming in with an institutional lens especially if you have gone to film school. And I'm not downing education but you can't help but get institutionalized when you go to an institution.

[00:56:43] And I believe in education.

[00:56:48] I was a student adviser at one time. I can prove that I believe in education in an actual college. However there were a couple of times when they were filming where we ran into that were someone didn't. They said I want to make sure that you don't put my story in the film and I want it make sure that it's not I don't remember the exact words that were shared but I remember Bend's saying no that's not the way it happens and someone came to me and they said I can't believe what Ben just said. You know. Like what are you kidding. So I stand up and I go after him and literally and I said he was trying to walk away. I'm like you we're

[00:57:41] Not. And I said you know you cannot do this. You came in here and said that you would respect our process and you would respect what we're saying to you for you to come in and witness what you're witnessing and you have the gall to tell us that this is how your going to do it.

[00:57:58] No that's not going to happen. Some of this I really like Ben Onoe Adam really like Adam like Ben. I like both of them

[00:58:15] Adam is the one I went after. But he was really

[00:58:20] And it's not his fault that he came from a city in Minnesota called Dynan which actually stands for every day in need of attention. So

[00:58:32] That's true. That's true. Anyway he

[00:58:36] It was a struggle in the relationship for him to trust us and for him to try and so filmmakers that are going in and want you to always ask don't ever assume you're asking ask again and get permission and remember that you are an invited guest and that your trust has to be earned and do regardless of where your heart might be. You still come from a place of entitlement as well. And so you are going to habitually remember the white people that were upset that they weren't able to be up. They didn't get it. You know that could happen to you even if you're very sincere. It's just a process of shedding that we'll have to take place and you'll grow from it. Don't worry about it. One of the things and white community I learned because I was raised by you guys is that. There is this need to be right and this need to be the expert. And in our community we are always realizing every year. And you know Madonna here will tell you. Every year we learn how much we don't know. I. Wanted to

[00:59:47] Kind of speak a little more to what Sandy was saying in my own healing. I spent time you know getting counseling and understanding oppression and one of the things that I've learned is that we're all oppressed and so our repression looks different from yours. But you're oppressed too. And part of that oppression is that you're in this position you're forced from a little kid just like we were forced to be in a certain position or role. Everybody has that. And for four white people your oppression is you have to know everything. And that's oppressive. How can you know everything you know. And so we're all we're all oppressed and certain you know in this environment that we're living in in this country in this history. And so when we get we get to that point we're like oh my oppression

was heavier than yours or you know like that let's just heal from the oppression that we've got. And and you know it can be different. Let's let it be different because it is. But let's get back to being the relatives that were meant to be in this human this human place on this human planet.

[01:01:15] It's as simple as that.

[01:01:23] I have another message.

[01:01:25] I have a one other very important message to filmmakers as well. So because I really think you know that one of them the most influential elders in my life time really believed in this and in capturing things on film you came from a generation where that was not happening. And he's the one that convinced me yes we should film things so we have lots of footage of the work that I do as a result of him so I think when I was watching this and when he was right we do need to do this. However the other piece that as filmmakers you need to understand when you come into our community we know this story. When they when they when Ben and Adam got done with the first film first cut and Tracy witnessed this that's how we met and she still likes me.

[01:02:16] They showed the film and I had like this visceral reaction of what you spent two years with us and this is what you came up with.

[01:02:27] It was horrible. I will not I mean I didn't cut and I mean if I had not built the relationship with them I couldn't have been as honest but I just told them and now and now wasn't the only one. Most of the people in Maine in the communities felt the same way and I kept hammering and asking them how could you have spent all this time in this community and not known who is the expert in telling this story. You heard statement after statement after statement and you got one statement. Give me this film. There is huge that the DRC the mandate of the book. They didn't even have a picture of the book in the film and that's what we were going for. And so they listened and it had been hard for them.

[01:03:16] I give them so much credit for listening to because it was coming from this place of of you know fear of this exposure that we're going to put on here that we're going to feel or not portrayed in and the way we're showing our strength in the midst of this expression of our trauma and expression of this history.

[01:03:40] We would look like superstitious victims as opposed to the incredible strength that this the web Iñaki people have. And so as a filmmaker remember you don't know the story.

[01:03:56] You're intrigued by what you're seeing but you don't know it we know it from the beginning to the end that narrative arc you're taught no taught about we live it you don't know what in here that's that's true is a very humbling process is part of my job as part of this film was to remind the directors that first and foremost they needed to bring it back to the community first before they even thought it was done.

[01:04:32] And after that screening they were in shock and they said you know there they're white males. I was like Have you ever failed before. And they couldn't answer that which I thought was interesting. But again to their credit they humbled themselves. They went back. They spoke to Esther they got instructions.

[01:04:57] They processed a lot and they knew that they needed to go forward with the information that the community put forth with that. Kirsten how did you rework that story.

[01:05:11] I'm sitting here laughing about every comment about them because I'm not privy to those moments with their review. You know the role of the editors.

[01:05:20] I only know the world that they shot. You know it's it's through their lens. And I don't know if it's accurate. I have to trust what they shot.

[01:05:30] And I have to trust that they got the story and that I take it and I look for stories in what becomes characters instead of people. And because I don't know them and I remember I remember that moment when they told me and they did not tell me about that.

[01:05:51] Have you failed. That's actually really funny. They left that out. And I loved that.

[01:05:57] But it was hard because this happened maybe three months before we ended. And you know we've been working on it for years and years and it was just devastating to know that we didn't do it right and we need to keep working on it.

[01:06:11] And it was devastating for you know a day. And then we said what are we doing. We are those people in the film that were saying why can't we be there why

[01:06:24] We were the people saying you know we're right.

[01:06:27] And this is what we're doing. And you know that was a day and then we woke up and said like we gonna change everything and we did. And so it's so much more powerful now. Yeah I think there also was a part of it that as white filmmakers we wanted to acknowledge our role that when we first started showing the film to people mostly non-native audiences they would say well we want to see you know in their homes we want to see what they do and we say why. You know what is this voyeur opinion that you have. And that's not really our job to go inside people's homes so you can see it. So there was an important part of making this film that we wanted we wanted to be used as a tool for non-native people to question their roles and their actions just as we did in making the film. We had to constantly you know you come from a we were all in Boston a very progressive place and we think where we know what we're saying and then you start to learn and realize oh I have no idea what I have so much more learning to do and I really hope that this film can be used to for people to take a moment and question. Do I know or I have a lot more learning to do. Thank you

[01:07:56] I remember telling them.

[01:07:57] So a silver lining is this happened now and that in the theater at the premiere. Jennifer you had something to say.

[01:08:05] Yes. So by trade I'm a therapist a mental health therapist and so I have is standing on the stand Iraq mental health team I was out there and out there a few times and I just made me think about genocide and it made me think about identity. So you know. The second time I went back out it was the day after the bridge incident and I thought OK what I'd be doing crisis counseling have everybody coming in. They're going to be talking about these violent acts and I'll tell you what people were coming in to share with all around identity. It's about identity. Who am I. Do I have a right to be here am I native enough and I'm ok enough. And so when I think about you know they're talking about culture genocide. But it's not just you know it started with genocide. It started with you know first they came and killed us. You know they tried to wipe us out and they couldn't you know biological warfare arms and everything they could. What what was left of us then cultural genocide. So boarding schools we know we know the sterilization of women taking children through the foster care system. They did a really really good job at taking who we are that identity that piece of us. It doesn't matter if you're if you are like full blood or you're 164 through you're enrolled you're not enrolled. You know your language you don't know what your language you know thousand songs you only know none you know or one or it doesn't matter. We all struggle with identity. It's just who we are. They did a really really good job of taking that from us and making us question. Am I and my Indian enough and my indigenous enough do I belong. Am I here because that was the aim. And so my words are you're enough.

[01:09:41] It doesn't matter you're enough thank you for that for those words Jennifer.

[01:09:52] We are enough. My question was that one I'm a I'm a tribal foster parent state licensed and I only went through state licensing because I'm sick to death and listening to the state say well there are no tribal foster homes so we you know we don't have to comply with it. Because you people won't get licensed in order to protect your children. And so I've been a state licensed foster care provider for three years and I just want to say out loud that the state of Washington has not called me once I'm in the heart of Coast Salish territory. I am in the middle of Swinomish Upper Skagit Stillaguamish Tulalip Lummi all SoCs who Watty I am right there and not once has the state complied with it guapa in order to place our tribal children with me. The children that I have taken into my care and into my home. I have had to fight for and I will fight for them because those children that I have two boys in my care right now who were placed six times in non tribal abusive racist households. This march against our children in our communities continues today. This is not something that just stopped when they implement implementation of Akwei in 1978. It has not stopped it has not slowed down and the disproportionality of our children in care. Those statistics that 5 to 5 to 1 are true today of our children and this work is so important for us to be talking about this and bringing that platform out. And I'll tell you what it is. It is these women as women like me that are fighting for our kids and our communities and our culture because it is not just cultural genocide it is just genocide.

[01:11:59] And I applaud you ladies thank you was there another question up there at first fall I would like to say thank you to all of you ladies for being here.

[01:12:23] My name was Shelley makossa Toha helped. I'm second Fox from Oklahoma. I lived up here for years with my husband who's macaw and I just want to address the education portion of this is that I have been going into schools even when my children were young. In elementary school and middle school and even through high school I would take all of the things down off my walls in my whole house and I'd put them in my laundry baskets and I'd go into the schools a couple of the high school or a couple of the history teachers would ask me because my children would say hey my mom can talk about that. So they asked me to come into the schools and I took all of the things down and then I had I have collected things from Florida to New York to California all the way up to MacColl. And I have the whole house full of things. And I would take those into the school. Any school that my kids were at I would go there and talk to the kids and show them I would pass around all my things to all the children and tell them that these are my my things in my home. And so if you know if you would be gentle with them all the kids I would talk about all these issues that we're talking about right here today to the elementary kids and middle school and the high school kids.

[01:13:41] And then next thing you know other classes would say can we come in and listen to can we come in. Can we come in and one of the teachers said gosh I've been teaching for 12 years and this is the most I've ever learned about Native Americans in one hour. So you know I just if we have the opportunity to go in and this would be awesome you know for the schools to see and I'm going to do my best wherever I am and wherever school I can to get this shown in there. But I also am now now that my kids are out of school and grown. I have set my T.P. up in my yard out in Squam Washington and it's about two hours from here and now invite people from the community to come in and sit in my teepee and I tell them the very same things that we talk about today and they are starting to come in by the droves now which you know I didn't realize it would happen. But they are coming in so I just wanted to say thank you guys for encouraging me and I love all of you and I just thank you so much for this time.

[01:14:43] Thank you enqueue.

[01:14:51] I'll be brief. I know it's closing time. So thank you for this film and everyone involved learned so much. My main question is for Michelle. I wanted to learn a little bit more about the academy and I'm just. Can you hear me OK.

[01:15:06] Yeah. In about I'm trying to get as brief as possible.

[01:15:11] Like what is the kind of when you're recruiting for a teacher who maybe has good intention but like even for her teacher we had met with her teacher that day and you came to the class and were very involved. And then she came home with homework that was like crazy racist. And I was just like I don't know how to like. What more relationship building can we do. So I I'm just curious like when I'm thinking of who I can recruit and have intentional conversations about is it someone that like maybe is unaware but willing or is it someone who's kind of had some like they're willing to put in the

work and build relationships and then help work in their community like Who are you recruiting who's the ideal candidate.

[01:15:55] What a great question. It's a complicated question.

[01:16:01] I mean there's a part of me that wants to say figure out how to surrender and will work with her. You know we'll try to. I mean because. So you met Lisa Tonimbuk in the film. He's a ton of Moak has been guest faculty at the upstander Academy. This will be our third year and there's a young man from who's just graduated from Evergreen named Lapland too. He's graduating right now and he's not going to get here for another two hours. They will be the native faculty together with Mique Mohan Housatonic mooks spouse and the grandmother of the little child that he's singing and of. So there's you know transformational learning like how do we upset the paradigm that you know especially for white people who have been bred on the sense of supremacy.

[01:17:03] It's a very complex process and of course there's no guarantee that a six day Academy is going to crack open their hearts and open their minds. But we we work on a global genocide which was the first documentary that we made. And it's about post genocide Rwanda. And it really shakes people up because of the because of that story and the role of forgiveness and reconciliation in Rwanda after the genocide. And there's going to be Erawan to genocide survivor human rights educator with us the entire week quad will have a profound impact I think on anyone and it's this combination of content skills methods and probably more than anything and it's what Zandi says in Dawn land it's community.

[01:17:55] It's doing it together. We have to disturb white people to get through this. It's not going to be like this easy week it's going to be profoundly upsetting but it's not going to be destructive. And they think that's the key. Much of our work is done in circle I would say every single day. There is there is a circle and we teach people about the origins of circle in Native community.

[01:18:29] It's I think it's at the end of six days it's really hard to hide. So then the question is if this teacher who is avowedly racist comes forward with those beliefs there's going to be many opportunities to try to get that. Where does that come from. You know we just kind of keep digging and that's where the historical part and how it impacts our beliefs our attitudes and their behaviors becomes the raw material freedom for transformation.

[01:19:06] I'll give it my best if you send somebody to us. I'll throw my heart into it and see what we can do. There's some fliers on the table I hope still so maybe we can talk after done as a mom a young one.

[01:19:23] What are you doing and seeing that's different from perhaps when you were Jennifer.

[01:19:36] So I have a 9 year old daughter. Her name is Lieblein and in Penobscot that means a beautiful dawn.

[01:19:44] Her nickname is Wally and I arrived back to my ancestral homeland two weeks before she was born.

[01:19:53] I had been living in California. I went home with her so that she could learn what I had not been taught as a child. I knew I couldn't teach her alone.

[01:20:08] So what I have done wedding her and I have done together is to give her a strong foundation of culture and ceremony. You know we have some some amazing women where I live. And they've really taken her under their wing and shown her what it means to be a Penobscot woman what it means to be Penobscot.

[01:20:41] We have a grandmother moon ceremonies. We have a drum group called Mama gesso singers Mama gesso is the Penobscot word for butterfly. So I think there are a lot more opportunities for the children to learn the culture. We have language class every week Wednesday at 5 we have a lot of ways in which the children can learn their culture.

[01:21:16] And I don't think that that was a thing.

[01:21:21] When I was her age Sandy quite a bit.

[01:21:29] Your work is about helping people to return to identity returned home.

[01:21:38] So I have founded an organization called First Nations repatriation Institute. It came from a grassroots beginning of welcoming adoptees those who grew up in foster care and honoring those who gave us life. By bringing them back through song and ceremony it's a longer story that I can't tell here but it's I always say I didn't wake up one morning and say I know I'm going to do this work. I was the last thing on my mind.

[01:22:12] I was never even on my mind let's put it that way but I was given I was given a vision for that and was fortunate enough to have an elder see that and really brought me into doing what we do. We use primarily the lived experience of those who have gone through the system to inform those who make decisions about families. So what we what we've all known about child welfare is that the money lies within foster care and adoption. The money isn't given to front end services for preserving the Indian family which is really the crux of the Indian Child Welfare Act so we are constantly fighting that.

[01:23:01] The we are into our 15th year of doing Apollo in Minneapolis and if you are so inclined to start saving your money now to come to on November 3rd we we have adoptees who have come as far away as Hawaii to be welcomed back in the circle of of through song and ceremony meet other adoptees. It's called The Gathering for gathering for our children and returning adoptees Paolo. We've gone to communities right now one of the other pieces I do is at the National Indian Child Welfare conference every year one of the evenings we have a talking circle where we have those that are humane and it's turned out really beautifully because not people often don't have the resources to

travel to go to something like this so the conferences in different areas and so we have a whole evening dedicated to sharing our lived experience hearing ceremony being given medicines that we need.

[01:24:06] And you know when we say our medicines sage sweet grass and cedar and tobacco. We've always known that that's a medicine for the spirit. We've always known that it is like a sap to our spirit and helps put in a line our mind and our heart. Science is catching up in and saying you know it impacts brain chemistry. You know that's why it's working and they get done. We've known that. So now other people are selling it in health food stores and everything. And I guess that's OK. But I don't know just something about that that still bothers me. But nevertheless I think the real messages that we have within our community everything that we need to heal we could build that up so much stronger if we had the support of accomplices and in PA especially in policy. One of the things that our Indian women face. You saw this statistic for Minnesota and that's where my husband and I live right now. So I always say. So it's this is this is a Saturday but if I'm speaking in during the workday I'll say as we speak there is an Indian woman who has just gotten out of treatment and she's a felon and she is expected. Now she only has six months left on her timeline to get her children she needs to find safe and stable housing. She needs to find a job and a place to live in if she doesn't do that within this timeline.

[01:25:41] Her children are automatically barred meaning parental rights terminated. This is the legacy that we live with that you saw as a result from boarding school and then what you saw in in Don land. We just completed a study in our papers are being published I think we're into our fourth paper published on this topic but we did a study and out of the 95 who responded 95 adult adoptees who Fost it had there been in foster care for six months and also adopted out of the 95 47 said that they had been physically abused within their adoptive homes. 43 said that they were emotionally abused 23 said that they had been sexually abused. 20 of them contemplated suicide. This is all connected to as Jennifer said the eye not having a sense of identity. The other piece of that is in the adoption law that we have today once a child is adopted we have no legal recourse to go back to that home and continue to support and see if that child is indeed safe. So our work is far from being done and it takes educating and educating and educating. So the work that I've been given that I've been shown that I've chosen to to continue to fight for is to remind everyone that we really are mothers can heal our mothers regardless of how how far down they are in their addiction.

[01:27:23] They can and they do love their children and they need the opportunity to heal so that they can parent I've not met one mother who has said God I'm glad my kids are gone so I can just ride this horse as far as I can go. Horse I mean heroine from the old school called it back there.

[01:27:49] But anyway. So it's you know our work is not done at all and so what can you do when you go to the polls. There is such a thing in our government called the Indian Affairs Committee and you need to look up and say well what's going on in Indian country and what senators support the addressing pipelines what senators and representatives support child welfare. Most of them are child welfare. What do you mean Joe. So your vote if you get educated about our issues that would be one of the things that would be very helpful.

[01:28:30] Well if we could start with Kristen and go around and say or last statements it's about time to wrap up. And before we do wrap up and hear from everyone tonight at 630 is warrior women and it's at the Uptown cinema and it's going to be an amazing experience and a follow up to this time that we've shared together.

[01:28:55] Kristen thank you all again for being for being here. It's interesting to bring this film to the west coast and hear how similar the stories are from Maine across the state sorry across the country. And I want to thank again Sandy for being someone who was willing to stand up and say you're doing it wrong.

[01:29:20] Because that's how we learn I want to thank indigenous gentleman who welcomed here welcomed us to this territory. I also want to invite you to come and see warrior women. She's awesome.

[01:29:48] Thank you all for coming. This is really really good for me to sit here and listen to these women.

[01:29:55] It just you know yeah that's the support you know when you go home at a time you think you're slugging away by yourself you know but this picture will come up to me.

[01:30:07] And thank you all for being here.

[01:30:12] I just want to say thank you to everybody who came out. And I'm just so humbled to be among such powerful women here. I'm doing great work. So just thank you.

[01:30:21] Thank you everybody.

[01:30:26] I want to thank you all for welcoming me to your territory. You have a beautiful city. Meg was not expecting so many trees and so much street art.

[01:30:37] The street art is actually pretty amazing.

[01:30:42] Thank you also for for watching the story for listening to the story from my ancestral homeland.

[01:30:52] It is an honor to be here and to be heard. Deep heartfelt thanks for that. She will be Winnie

[01:31:07] So appreciate the Seattle International Film Festival for making it possible for such a robust team from Don land only in women to be here. And for your welcome to your land. I've learned a lot listening to the questions and the stories I've put faces to people who have very much supported us during this process of thinking about the movie and I hope that we have planted some seeds together. Who knows if they will germinate but it's possible I'm I'm hopeful. So much gratitude.

[01:31:57] I'd like to again say thank you to all the powers that be that brought me and my husband here to be part of this. It's my first film festival and I'm learning all kinds of film festival lingo and language.

[01:32:11] It's very interesting. She would send me a text and I go what does that mean. What does this mean.

[01:32:19] So I want to say thank you. It's been a it's been a cool experience to those filmmakers who are here. I want to thank you for our for working hard to develop your gift you've been given a gift to capture a story and to to carry it and bring it forward is a great responsibility. But you must be given that gift because you're wanting to do it. So trust your heart and trust your gut. When you see a story that you think needs to be told just go for it. To those of you who are here because you like Filmon you're like an art. Our guest film festival people like are kind of artistic. I think in any way there's a reason why you're here every single person made it to this spot at this time for a reason.

[01:33:17] And you will know what that reason is. At some point why you witnessed what you witnessed today. And trust that when you see that.

[01:33:28] Be bold and speak your truth. Everybody has a truth. And I really appreciate. I can't remember her name. No no Madonna's daughter said we were all Marsy. We were all oppressed white people who came here initially shed their culture and their understanding of who they were and bought into something that developed an ancestral void. That's why it's so hard to hear us speak about our ancestors. You've had a great loss yourself coupled with entitlement makes it a little bit of an interesting box to unlock. However it's not impossible and maybe that's part of why you were brought here as well. So we've been given a beautiful afternoon. Thank you for letting me and my husband be part of it. And we'll see you down the road.

[01:34:22] Oakeshott K. and we'd like to invite the black family up for a bit of protocol before we wrap thank you so much as part of Coast Salish culture it's important to recognize the witnesses and to honor the tradition of oral history and sharing and the black family are acknowledging that they have witnessed this important the work that we've done together today. Your

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