

A topographic map showing a river system and contour lines. The map is overlaid with a dark, semi-transparent filter. The river is depicted in a dark blue color, winding through the landscape. Contour lines are shown in brown and red, indicating elevation. The word "RANGE" is visible in large, blue, block letters on the map. The overall color palette is muted, with greens, browns, and blues.

FINDING OUR WAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

PREPARED BY LEONIE SANDERCOCK AND SCOTT GRAHAM

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CONTENTS

1. SYNOPSIS	p1
2. ABOUT THE DISCUSSION GUIDE	p2
3. LEARNING OBJECTIVES	p3
4. PRE-SCREENING INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS.....	p4
4.1. Comparing Indigenous and Western European worldviews	p4
4.2. Settler and Indigenous realtions in Canada and B.C.: law and concepts.....	p8
4.3 History and geographies related to <i>Finding Our Way</i>	p16
5. POST SCREENING INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS.....	p21
5.1. Dialogue circles as a pathway for exploring <i>Finding Our Way</i>	p21
5.2. Chapter summaries and questions.....	p24
6. RESOURCES	p32



1. SYNOPSIS

This is a story of a people dispossessed, deep historic wounds and still unresolved conflict between Indigenous people, governments in Canada and industry. It's a story of the struggles of two First Nations in the Carrier territory of north central British Columbia, on Canada's northwest coast—a struggle for land and sovereignty, for healing and revitalization.

The Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Band) has been in conflict with the Village of Burns Lake over appropriated lands for almost a hundred years. The conflict culminated in the municipality shutting off water and sewerage services to their Reserve in the year 2000 and the Band taking the Village to the Supreme Court of BC. The Cheslatta Carrier Nation were evicted from their homeland in 1952 by Alcan's hydroelectric project, and are still struggling to keep their heads above water.

This is 21st century Canada, and this is a story with a question mark. After almost a century of apartheid in this region, the film asks: Is there a way forward?

2. ABOUT THE DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide is a tool for use in classrooms and in community workshops to help viewers engage in constructive dialogue about some of the difficult issues raised in the film.

Users should be aware that the film is not easy to watch. In recounting the history of colonization through Native and non-Native voices and experiences, it may arouse a range of emotions, from anger to sadness, pain, shame and guilt.

Depending on the community or context in which you are watching this, we recommend that there is a counsellor available as well as trained facilitators to create a safe space for and help to work through these emotions, towards greater understanding of the ongoing legacies of colonization.

This Guide was shaped by four years of conversations with the Ts'il Kaz Koh and Cheslatta First Nations, with the people of the Village of Burns Lake, and with the Elder, Gerry Oleman, of the St'át'imc Nation. It also benefited from the contributions of both Native and non-Native participants in the dialogues following two community screenings in Burns Lake in June 2010.

We thank you all. Mussi.

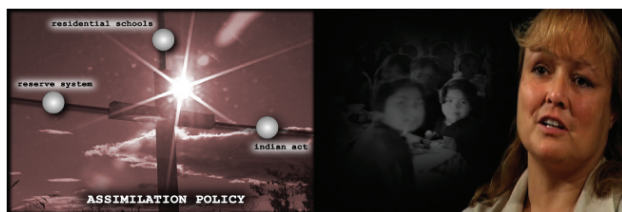


3. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This guide was developed for a range of audiences who are interested in cross-cultural work involving Native and non-Native peoples, including: High school students, college and university students, government employees, corporate sector leaders, and representatives of civil society organizations.

It is designed to help groups use *Finding Our Way* as a tool for learning and community-based action planning activities. Specifically, it will help you:

- Understand some basic differences between Indigenous and Western European worldviews, and empathize with the response of First Nations to Canada's colonialism;
- Develop knowledge of the history and ongoing impact of Canadian colonialism on Native people's rights and culture - with a particular focus on the struggles and successes of two sub-tribes of the Carrier Nation;
- Strengthen critical and creative thinking skills for identifying local pathways of truth and reconciliation between Native and non-Native peoples.



4. PRE-SCREENING INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

This section is divided into several parts. First, a general description of Western European and Indigenous worldviews is presented. Second, a brief overview of some key concepts and laws relating to settler and Indigenous relations in Canada is provided. Third, the history and location of the stories told in this film and the key groups involved are discussed. Discussion questions follow each section. For well-rounded discussions, it is a good idea to retrieve and review in more detail the material noted in each discussion.

4.1. Comparing Indigenous and Western European Worldviews

A worldview is like a lens through which we see our world and make sense of how it is structured, how it functions and what our role in the world is. There are two general worldviews represented in the film: Indigenous and Western European worldviews. In exploring some of the general elements of both worldviews, the conflicts, co-existence and collaborations that have and continue to define both groups can be more deeply understood.



The following list of general differences between Western European and Indigenous worldviews was adapted from the work of Knudtson and Suzuki (1992) and Kawagley and Barnhardt (2005).

General Elements of Indigenous Worldview

- Spirituality is embedded in all elements of the cosmos;
- Humans have responsibility for maintaining a harmonious relationship with the natural world;
- Resources are viewed as gifts from the earth to be cared for with a view to future generations;
- Nature is honoured routinely through daily spiritual practices;
- Wisdom and ethics are derived from direct experience with the natural world;
- The universe is viewed as a holistic, integrative system with a unifying life force;
- Time is circular with natural cycles that sustain all life;
- Nature will always possess unfathomable mysteries;
- Human thought, feelings and words are inextricably bound to all other aspects of the universe;
- The role of humans is to participate in the orderly designs of nature;

- Respect for Elders is based on their compassion and reconciliation of outer and inner-directed knowledge;
- Sense of empathy and kinship with plant and animal life;
- View proper human relationship with nature as a continuous, two-way transactional dialogue;
- Communication of metaphor and story are connected to life, land, values and proper behaviour;
- Oral records hold together complex ancient knowledge systems;
- Trust characterizes how wisdom is passed on and received across generations.

General Elements of Western European Worldview

- Spirituality is centred in a single Supreme Being;
- Humans exercise dominion over nature to use it for personal and economic gain;
- Natural resources are available for unilateral human exploitation;
- Spiritual practices are intermittent and set apart from daily life;
- The Universe is made up of an array of physical objects that are often studied in isolated ways;

- The universe is compartmentalized in dualistic forms and reduced to progressively smaller conceptual parts;
- Time is a linear chronology of “human progress”;
- Nature is decipherable to the rational human mind;
- Human thought, feeling and words are formed apart from the surrounding world;
- The role of humans is to dissect, analyze and manipulate nature for own ends;
- Respect for others is based on material achievement and chronological old age;
- Sense of separateness from and superiority over other forms of life;
- View relationship of humans to nature as one way;
- Quantitative and qualitative written records hold together complex ancient knowledge systems;
- Skepticism is an underlying value of inquiry and wisdom is often achieved through personal efforts and not through intergenerational knowledge exchange.

Discussion questions

1. Do you agree with the description of these two different worldviews? Why or why not?

2. From your perspective, what are the top three major differences between Indigenous and Western European worldviews?
3. Do you see any overlap between the two worldviews?
4. Have you ever seen Indigenous and Western European worldviews used together to address a community-based problem? How did these different worldviews come together and for what purpose? What were the challenges and benefits of combining different worldviews for community development?

4.2. Settler and Indigenous Relations in Canada and B.C.: Law and Concepts

This section provides a discussion of key legal developments and related concepts that have shaped the relationships between government and First Nations in Canada over the past several hundred years.

Empty Land

One of the central organizing concepts in early colonial planning was **terra nullius**, which translates roughly into “empty land.” The term refers to a 17th century legal concept that European colonial powers routinely used to assume control of and establish settlements on Indigenous people’s lands.



The current day province of British Columbia was founded on the myth of empty land. James Douglas, first governor of the colony of British Columbia, once referred to the region as “wild and unoccupied” when proclaiming at Fort Langley the creation of the Government of British Columbia in 1858 (Miller, 2003). However, the most deplorable use of the concept in British Columbia’s history can be attributed to Joseph Trutch, who was Lieutenant-Governor at the time when British Columbia joined the federation of Canada in 1871. He said:

The Indians have really no rights to the lands they claim, nor are they of any actual value or utility to them; and I cannot see why they should retain these lands to the prejudice of the general interests of the Colony, or be allowed to make a market of them either to Government or to individuals.

According to Miller (2003), it was Trutch’s version of terra nullius that insured that B.C. policy at the time of the province’s entry into Confederation was not in conformity with the Royal Proclamation of 1763.

Discussion questions

1. Why do you think James Douglas and Joseph Trutch bought into the idea of the land that is now B.C. as an empty land?
2. If you were a senior civil servant working for the British Crown at the same time as James Trutch, how you would have responded to his comments about Native peoples?

3. Do you think this concept is still active in government and industry planning for resource extraction in Canada and in other parts of the world? Are you aware of any other instances when the concept of terra nullius was or is used to appropriate lands of Indigenous peoples?

Royal Proclamation of 1763

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 was intended to organize the governance of Britain's newly stolen territories on the mainland of North America. The Proclamation defines the Crown's special relationship with Aboriginal peoples by setting out the basis in law for Aboriginal land ownership.

It has legal importance to First Nations because it was among the first laws that recognized:

- Aboriginal peoples lived on traditional lands;
- Interest in those lands belonged to groups and nations, not individuals;
- Only the Crown could buy or accept Aboriginal lands;
- The Crown generally required an agreement (loosely defined) to obtain lands from Aboriginal peoples;
- Aboriginal peoples were under the Crown's protection.

Discussion questions

1. Why is legal recognition of Aboriginal rights to land important to First Nations people?

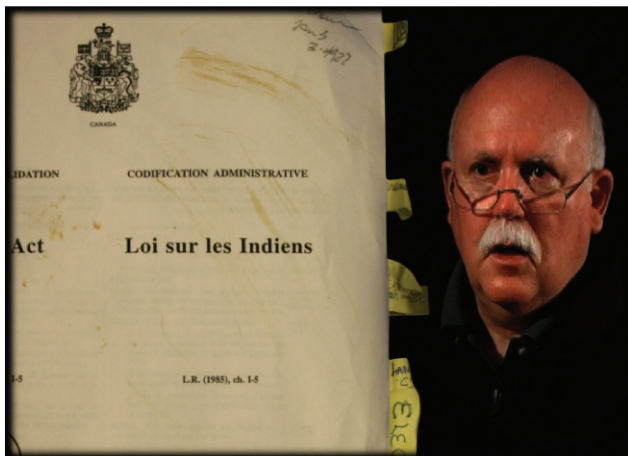
2. In what way is the Proclamation restrictive to the rights of First Nations?

Indian Act

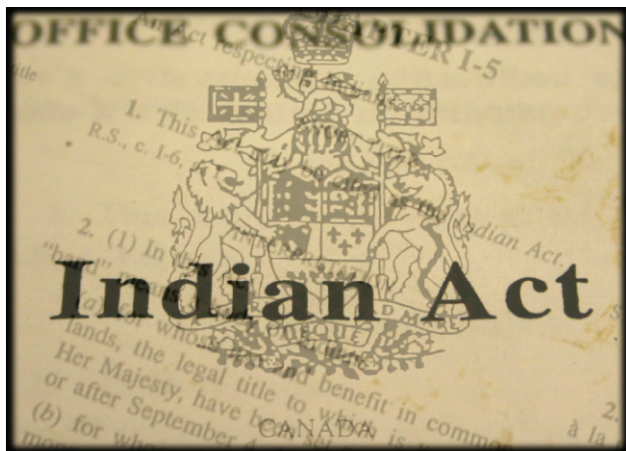
For thousands of years there was no such thing as an Indian Act. As First Nations we lived free from its constraints. We observed laws that encouraged us to be wise, humble, respectful, truthful, brave, loving, and honest in our dealings with others. Other people did not define our citizenship. We held our land in accordance with our own traditions. Children and grandchildren lived with parents and grandparents throughout the generations without being removed through other's rules. If people from other nations wanted to share with us we worked something out through mutual customs or agreement...

When it came time to choose political leaders we did so on our terms. We controlled our own laws. Most other areas of our lives were more firmly within our control. Consistent with our own aspirations and ideas we exercised power over commerce, punishment, enforcement, dispute resolution, education and numerous other matters. The past six generations of my family have not been so fortunate. They have lived under the Indian Act. (Burrows, 2008).

Prior to European settlement, Aboriginal Peoples were living in communities as distinct and self-sufficient nations. The subsequent imposition of the Indian Act, the creation of reserves and the adoption of assimilation policies undermined these traditional governments and led to growing social dislocation, poverty and dependence.



The Indian Act is a Canadian statute that was enacted in 1876. It provides Canada's federal government authority to legislate in relation to "Indian and Lands Reserved for Indians." There have been over 20 major changes made to the original Act. The original Act sets out two central dictates affecting all Aboriginal peoples in Canada:



1. The Act defines who is and who is not recognized as an “Indian.” The Act defined a number of types of Indian people who were denied recognition as “registered” or “status” Indians, and who were therefore denied membership in Bands.
2. The Act sets out rules for governing Indian reserves, defines how Bands can be created and spells out the powers of “Band Councils,” which are the federally recognized governance bodies for Indian Bands. (Department of Justice of Canada)

The Indian Act generally angers First Nations because it imposes colonial style governance upon First Nations, prohibiting the emergence of Indigenous governance in First Nations communities.

Discussion questions

1. Many Native and non-Native people want to see the Indian Act abolished. What are some of the reasons for abolishing the Indian Act that you have heard? Do you agree with the abolition of the Indian Act? Why or why not?
2. The Indian Act is often referred to as a tool of state oppression. What are examples of how Indigenous peoples in Canada and elsewhere have and continue to creatively resist the imposition of colonial systems of control such as the Indian Act?

Racism and white privilege

Underpinning the law and policy making of the British Crown, and later Canada, was the belief in the racial superiority of European ways of organizing human life and understanding the world. This racism continues to characterize Native and non-Native relations in Canada and connects to practices that privilege people who are of white European descent.

In Wellman's *Portraits of White Racism* (1993), he defines racism as culturally sanctioned beliefs that defend the advantages white folks have because of the subordinated social and economic position of racial minorities. As a belief, racism often informs the design of institutional practices and therefore presupposes the everyday routines of human life, especially the verbal and physical actions (interpersonal and systemic) that discriminate against particular other racialized groups.

McIntosh (1988), a U.S. feminist scholar, helps us understand how white privilege and racism are connected. She describes how she tackles the problem in her own life by:

Work[ing] on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life... I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege... I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious.

In an effort to make clear what she means by the effects of white privilege, McIntosh develops a list of over 50 benefits that she is able to claim on a daily basis primarily because of her white skin. A reference to her article can be found in the resource section.

Before discussing the following questions, it is a good idea to print and read McIntosh's list as a group.

Discussion questions

1. Do you think white privilege exists? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever experienced or witnessed a moment of white privilege? If so, how did it make you feel?
3. In your opinion, do you think that it is important to talk about white privilege as part of local discussions about racism? Why or why not?
4. Have you ever witnessed someone express a racist comment? How did it make you feel? What did you do?
5. Have you ever held a racist belief? If so, how did you learn such a belief?



Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal rights

In the Constitution Act, 1982, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is used to collectively describe three distinct groups known as the ‘Inuit’, the ‘Métis’ and ‘First Nations’. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, recognizes and affirms Aboriginal rights, which is a generic term referring to several specific rights, including the right to customary law, the right to an ancestral territory, the right of cultural integrity, and the right of selfgovernment. Aboriginal rights are important in the B.C. context because nearly all First Nations in B.C. did not cede their land through treaties, and therefore, there is uncertainty about how Aboriginal rights apply in B.C. The ongoing B.C. Treaty process aims to address this uncertainty. For more information on this topic, see the websites of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs and the B.C. Treaty Commission.

4.3. History and Geography Related to ‘Finding Our Way’

Historical overview

Before the arrival of European fur traders in the early 19th century there were between 250,000 and 400,000 Native peoples living in what is now known as British Columbia.

By the end of the 19th century, that population had been reduced by 90%, primarily as a result of the impact of contagious diseases but also as a consequence of other more intentional aspects of colonization, such as the Reserve System of Indian Lands and the Residential Schools.

The Carrier Nation is part of the Dene or Athapaskan cultural and language group whose territories ranged from the Rocky Mountains to the Coastal Range. The Carrier (Dakelh) people, who lived as hunters, trappers and fishers, with settlements located along the lakes and tributaries of the upper Skeena and Fraser rivers, were geographically divided into northern, central and southern Carrier.



Among their many sub-tribes, the Ts'il Kaz Koh people were central Carrier, the Cheslatta southern Carrier. Archaeological work has confirmed occupation of the area between Burns Lake and Tweedsmuir Park going back at least 7000 years. The Carrier had extensive trade routes and trading connections with coastal First Nations such as the Bella Coola, the Haisla, and the Gitksan. Families and communities wintered in their villages and then dispersed widely to take advantage of seasonal foods.

Missionaries first contacted the Carrier in 1842 but contact was infrequent until 1869 when Fathers Morice and Lejac came to Carrier territory and began recording the language, history and culture, as well as trying to “save souls.”

In 1858 the land now known as British Columbia became a Crown colony and shortly thereafter a land policy was formulated that became known as the Reserve System. This forced First Nations onto tiny patches of marginalized land. In 1871 B.C. became part of the Dominion of Canada, and First Nations became a Dominion responsibility while land and resources remained under provincial control. With the passing of the Indian Act in 1876, First Nations were deprived of their sovereignty and became wards of the state, and most aspects of their daily lives increasingly came under the control of the Indian agents appointed in Ottawa and sent to the regions.

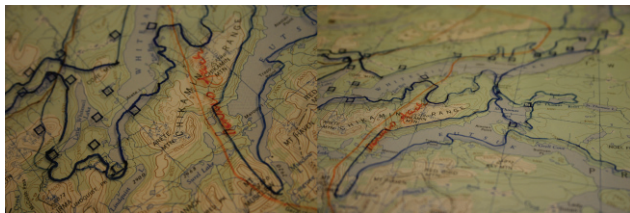


By 1890, white folks outnumbered First Nations in B.C. but beyond the Lower Mainland the province was still very sparsely settled. In the Carrier region there were no more than 50 settlers at the turn of the 20th century. That changed immediately after the completion of the transcontinental railway in 1913.

The Ts'il Kaz Koh people were forced onto Reserves in 1915 to make way for the arrival of settlers and the establishment of the town site of Burns Lake. In 1916 the Indian Land Commission established 16 reserves on and around Cheslatta Lake for the Cheslatta people, so that the now-growing white population could stake their claims to plots of land on the south side of Francois Lake. By the 1920s, priests and Indian agents were taking school-age children from their Ts'il Kaz Koh and Cheslatta families and installing them in the newly established Lejac Residential School. This caused huge emotional as well as physical disruption to the Carrier communities as described in Chapter One of the film. Four generations of Carrier families endured the hardships and traumas of Lejac until it closed in 1976.

Geographical orientation

The following activity will help you orient yourself to where *Finding Our Way* was made, as well as provide you with other insights into the territories of First Nations in B.C. and the cities that are located on these territories.



The following suggestions will bring groups of viewers into a common understanding of where the stories in *Finding Our Way* are based.

1. Print off copies of the maps on the following sites:
 - a. Map of First Nations territories and language groups:
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/map.htm>
 - b. Map of Bulkely-Nechako Regional District:
<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/RDMaps2006/RD51.pdf>
2. In small groups, study the maps and engage the following questions:
 - a. On whose territory is the City of Vancouver located? Whose territory is the City of Prince George located?
 - b. Can you locate the territorial boundaries of the Dakelh (Carrier) First Nation? What are the names of the other First Nations surrounding Dakelh territory?
 - c. Where are the Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Band) and the Cheslatta Carrier First Nation located?
 - d. What strikes you about these two maps? What can these maps tell us about the lands of Native peoples in B.C.?

5. POST SCREENING INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS



This section provides an overview of the dialogue circle method, which is an inclusive way to engage film viewers in meaningful and respectful conversation about the content of *Finding Our Way*. There are three other parts in this section, each of which provides a short summary of each chapter and proposes guiding questions.

5.1. Dialogue Circles as a Pathway for Exploring 'Finding Our Way'

The dialogue circle method is an inclusive approach to exploring important topics. The following description of dialogue circles was adapted from the resource guide developed by Everyday Democracy, entitled *A guide for training public dialogue facilitators* (2008).

In a dialogue circle, all participants have an equal opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Although dialogue circles are usually supported by material of some type such as a film, article or report, the dialogue is mostly enriched by the knowledge and experience of participants. In general, dialogue circles involve several meetings of approximately two hours each.

Dialogue circle participants set their own ground rules with a view to fostering a climate of mutual respect and shared responsibility for the quality of the discussion.

An impartial facilitator leads dialogue circles and works with the group to ensure everyone is able to contribute their thoughts and feelings to the process, and encourages the group to stay true to the guidelines it has set for itself.

One way of organizing dialogue circles is a ‘round approach,’ which means that the turn to speak move around the circle and provides each person an opportunity to speak or to pass to the next person in the circle. This way of organizing a dialogue circle is useful because it ensures that everyone has a voice.



How does a dialogue circle happen?

Here are some sample ideas for ground rules:

- a. Seek first to understand, then to be understood;
- b. Share air time;
- c. If you are offended or uncomfortable, say so, and say why;
- d. It's OK to disagree, but don't personalize it - stick to the issue;
- e. No name-calling or stereotyping;
- f. Speak for yourself, not for others;
- g. One person speaks at a time;
- h. Personal stories stay in the group, unless we all agree that we can share them.

Engaging questions and generating discussion:

In general, dialogue circles contain two types of processes. First, dialogue circles should focus on conversations that explore topics and facilitate the sharing of ideas and feelings. Second, dialogue circles should include a process of deliberation, which might involve assessing pros and cons of options and an activity to select those options for action that are most aligned with the collective will of the group.

Summarizing and wrap-up:

The final step in a dialogue circle might involve the facilitator providing a review of the key ideas discussed by the group as well as a summary of any actions that the group decided on. Reflective questions could also be presented to the group by the facilitator.



5.2. Chapter Summaries and Questions

The film *Finding Our Way* is divided into three chapters. Below, brief summaries of each chapter are provided and discussion questions are presented.

CHAPTER ONE

In this chapter, ‘The Contagion of Colonisation’, we learn about Native life before the arrival of European settlers and then, after 1867, of the systematic attempt of the Canadian government (in alliance with the churches) to destroy Native culture: through the Indian Act, the Reserve System of Indian Lands and the Residential School system.



Discussion questions

1. Imagine the place where you feel most at home. Imagine that you and your family have lived there for generations. Now imagine a group of outsiders arriving in your homeland and claiming the land under and around your home because they claim no one is living there. Pretend that you are forcibly moved to a new land by these outsiders, removed from your family, dislocated from your friends, and forced to follow a foreign way of being. How does this make you feel?
2. The narrator explains that: “The settlers imposed three kinds of control over Native life: the Reserve system of Indian lands, the Indian Act and the Residential School system.” Did you know this about Canadian colonialism? If so, when did you first learn this and how did it make you feel? If not, does this information surprise you? What else would you like to learn about Canadian colonialism?
3. Larry Fast states that the Apartheid system in South Africa was informed by the Indian Act. How do the kinds of control imposed on Native people by government and churches in Canada compare to how Black Africans were treated by its government and churches?



Do you know of other current day or historic examples where colonial control was or is imposed on Indigenous peoples?

4. Peter John shares his experience with the Residential Schools in the following way: “When I got there, I had culture shock. I started screaming, that’s part of culture shock, when you scream, crying.” How would you feel if you were taken from your family as a child and put into an institution, forced to speak a different language, obey the rules of people you did not know and suffer physical abuses? Does this feeling help you understand why survivors of Residential Schools express pain when recounting their experience?
5. Mayor Bernice Magee expresses a widely-held belief among white Canadians, when she states: “There was an opportunity for several of these students, of the young children, to go into a Residential School to learn how to eat properly, to be clean, to look after themselves, how to just function. And this was a capacity that was not available to them at home.” What do you think about this statement? Where do you think Mayor Bernice Magee learned this belief? Do you know anyone that also holds this type of belief? How have you responded to people who express this view?
6. Gerry Oleman comments on the typical Canadian response to the Residential Schools by saying: “To still hear Canadians say today, ‘Get over it.’ I say, oh gee. You will never know how it feels to be messed up in the mind, in the body, in the spirit, all at once... It’s so easy for you to say, ‘Get over it.’ It’s so easy, if you haven’t been traumatized as a nation.” If you belonged to a group of people that had been subject to cultural genocide similar to what First Nations suffered, how would you feel if a member of the dominant society told you to get over your pain and move on?

7. At the end of the first chapter, an excerpt is played from Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology to Native peoples for the harm of the Residential Schools. How should non-Native Canadians respond to the legacy of the Residential Schools? What can be done in your community to address legacies of the Residential Schools?
8. Are there buried stories about colonialism in your community? What role do these stories play in fostering distrust in local relations between Native and non-Native peoples? How could these stories be told and how could their telling support a process of truth and reconciliation among Native and non-Native peoples? Who needs to be involved in the sharing and hearing of these stories?
9. In addition to dialogue and storytelling, what other local actions can improve Native and non-Native relations in your community? What is your role in making these actions happen?

CHAPTER TWO

The second chapter, 'High Noon in Burns Lake,' tells of the century-long conflict between Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Band) and the Village of Burns Lake, a conflict primarily about expropriated land, but also about 'the two solitudes,' the apartheid that has separated Native and non-Native people.



The chapter is based on interviews with First Nations and non-Native residents of the town of Burns Lake, depicting their radically different life experiences and expectations, and the emerging struggle for justice on the part of the Ts'íl Kaz Koh First Nation. We look at some of the changes in the past decade, towards partnership and reconciliation, and what stills needs to be done.

Discussion questions

1. According to Chief Rob Charlie, what was life like for the Burns Lake Band (Ts'íl Kaz Koh First Nation) before 1914 and how did that change once they were forced to live on a Reserve?
2. In what ways did life experiences differ for Native and non-Native residents of Burns Lake, and why?
3. What does Pauline mean when she talks about “the privilege I lived in”? What do you think ‘white privilege’ means, and how does it affect you?
4. How long have the Burns Lake Band and the Village of Burns Lake been in conflict? Why?
5. Do you think the Village of Burns Lake was justified in shutting off water and sewer services to the Reserve? Why or why not?



6. How and why did the Supreme Court case begin to change the relationship between the Village and the Burns Lake Band?
7. Why do Pauline and Rob Charlie and the Mayor place so much emphasis on youth?
8. What do you think about the role of video and music in bringing about community change?
9. Why are efforts at partnership between First Nations and non-Native people so difficult? What do you think are the ingredients of a strong and healthy partnership?

CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Three, 'Keeping our heads above water,' relates the tragic story of the eviction in April 1952 of the Cheslatta Carrier Nation from their ancestral lands by the Aluminum Company of Canada (Alcan), in association with the government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia. The Cheslatta tell their own story of pain, struggle, forgiveness, healing and revitalization: and their chosen path to economic and social development through partnership and joint ventures with the surrounding non-Native community.



Discussion questions

1. Why were the Cheslatta people evicted from their villages around Cheslatta Lake? Do you know any other stories like this one? What makes this kind of dispossession possible?
2. In the eviction process associated with the building of the Kenney dam, were white people treated the same as or different from the Cheslatta? Why? What does this tell you about power in Canada?
3. If your family was given 10 days to leave their house and land and were not allowed to take anything with them, where would they go, how would they survive? Would it be different from the Cheslatta story? Why or why not?
4. How would you feel if your family's burial place was flooded or desecrated? What would you do?
5. Why is the Cheslatta story told primarily through the voice of Mike, a non-Native person? Does this bother you? How else might the story have been told?
6. What was the Kemano 2 (Kemano Completion) Project, and why did the B.C. Government eventually cancel it?
7. After the descent into social chaos following their eviction from their homeland, what was it that brought about the revitalization of the Cheslatta people as a Nation?
8. Who were the three partners in the saw mill that the Cheslatta built after they were granted a timber license?

9. Given what had happened to the Cheslatta in 1952, why did the Chief want to include the community in the saw mill, and what did he mean by ‘community’?
10. Why did Cheslatta enter into a partnership with their archenemies, Alcan? What does this tell you about the Cheslatta people and their leadership?
11. What is Cheslatta’s attitude towards partnerships and joint ventures? Is their way of doing business different from that of mainstream North American business? Why or why not?
12. What do you think have been the key ingredients of Cheslatta’s revitalization as a community?
13. What challenges do the Cheslatta still face today?
14. What have you learned about forgiveness from these two stories?
15. What have you learned about the present-day struggles of First Nations from these two stories?



6. RESOURCES

Online resources

Assembly of First Nations

www.afn.ca

Aboriginal Canada Portal

www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca

BC Assembly of First Nations

www.bcafn.ca

BC Treaty Commission

www.bctreaty.net

Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

www.cstc.bc.ca

Cheslatta Carrier First Nation

www.cheslatta.com/index.html

Department of Justice Canada (Indian Act)

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/I-5//20090923/en?page=1>

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/rrc-eng.asp

Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation

www.cstc.bc.ca/cstc/37/tsil+kaz+koh+first+nation

Union of BC Indian Chiefs

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