

A SCREENING AND CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR RE-LEARNING THE LAND

In this guide you will find:

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What can learning become?

What space is there in education - for wisdom, for **Enlivened Learning** - a holistic learning that can emerge with our heart, our heads, our hands and our connection to the environment? The Enlivened Learning Project and its series of films have been created to stimulate conversations and actions around these very questions and many others.

ABOUT THE FILM AND DIRECTORS

RE-LEARNING THE LAND: A Story of Red Crow College (2015), 68min.

Directed by Udi Mandel and Kelly Teamey

RE-LEARNING THE LAND is the story of a Blackfoot community in southern Alberta, Canada, and how they have re-taken control of their education system within Red Crow Community College. The film traces the decolonization of their learning and the development of an innovative program, Kainai Studies, within Red Crow College, the same site as a former Residential School. The Kainai Studies program is reclaiming and teaching to a new generation the Blackfoot knowledge system that sustained their community on their land for thousands of years.

The film raises a host of important questions related to the purpose of education and what it takes to create a deep ecological consciousness and connection with our local environment. By witnessing how students and faculty within Red Crow College are re-building relationships with the land around them, we see a greater sense of purpose, confidence and identity from amongst those participating and learning within the Kainai Studies program.

Re-learning the land explores how education can be used both to wipe out particular ways of knowing and lead to suffering, as in the case of residential schools, or else to promote healing and a transformation of individual and community through a reconnection to history and place. Based on a very different cosmology, set of values and ways of teaching, 'Re-Learning the Land' is a subtle exploration of how another way of learning can create transformational relationships with the land, its beings, the community and one's own self.

Directors Udi Mandel and Kelly Teamey

After working in a number of universities in the UK for the last ten years teaching social anthropology, international development, education as well as making documentary films Udi and Kelly co-created the **Enlivened Learning** project. **Enlivened Learning** is an interactive multi-media exploration of innovative places of higher education emerging around the world from indigenous communities and social and ecological movements. The project involves writing, photography and a series of films sharing stories and learning experiences from these places - <http://enlivenedlearning.com>. The project is also highly collaborative, co-creating with a group of people from around the world and with those involved in these inspiring places of education to create these stories.

RE-LEARNING THE LAND is the first in the series of films to be released.

SCREENING IDEAS

Some ideas to support your community screening of **RE-LEARNING THE LAND**.

1. Publicizing Your Event - What are the best ways for you to publicize the film screening to people in your community? Sending emails, creating event notifications on social media, and placing screening announcements in local newspapers and newsletters can be a good start. You can also use the **RE-LEARNING THE LAND** screening poster from <http://www.films.enlivenedlearning.com/host-a-screening> to help publicize your event. Let the Enlivened Learning team know about your plans - we will be happy to support you in publicizing your event.

2. Forming Your Intention - What do you hope to achieve with your screening of the film? For example, your intention could be to generate a lively post-film discussion with your audience about the future of higher education, indigenous ways of knowing and being and/or processes of de-colonization, or to mobilize your community to create its own localized place of learning. Or, you can simply provide an opportunity for individuals and families to watch and learn together.

3. Where To Host? - Consider which locations in your area would be ideal for accommodating a community film screening of the size you anticipate -- town halls, community centers, public libraries, school auditoriums, outdoor screenings at parks and playgrounds — all have been used as venues for many successful community screenings.

4. Finding A Partner - Give some thought to who is already working within your community on issues relevant to those in the film. Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Speak on a panel discussion after the screening?

5. Inviting A Guest Speaker - Guest speakers and panels are a great way to encourage discussion and debate after a community screening. When people are thinking about the issues, they will stay engaged long after the screening has passed. Contact local individuals or organizations who have insight or experience with the issues raised by the film, and invite them to attend and participate in a discussion or Q&A session. The **Enlivened Learning** film team and participants in the film may be available to appear in person or via Skype for a Q&A.

6. Engaging Your Audience - Included in this handout is a section called **GOING DEEPER** which can be handed-out after your screening. It will help your audience investigate further many of the issues raised in the film.

7. Let Us Know How It Went - Please visit films.enlivenedlearning.com to tell us about your event. Where it was held? Who attended? What went well, and what was challenging? Your feedback will help others in organizing their own successful events and will energize the Enlivened Learning community as a whole.

CONVERSATION IDEAS

You have watched the film and now have a group of people keen on sharing their reflections, experiences and stories. In our experience the film touches people on many issues – their relationship to the land and its beings, their experiences of traditional education, the nuances of indigenous ways of knowing, becoming more deeply aware of the profound injustices experienced by First Nations' peoples and the crisis in and hope for the higher education sector. It is a good opportunity to open a safe space to hear people's voice. Here are a few suggestions of possible discussion questions for the group:

1. What does it mean to 're-learn the land'? What would this mean where you are living?
2. Narcisse spoke in the film of how contemporary universities are like 'forts' protecting themselves from other ways of knowing and from the environment. What is your experience of this? How could universities open up their 'forts'? What would this look like?
3. Re-learning the land engages with the trauma of residential schools and how education can also be used both to wipe out certain ways of knowing but also to heal and reconnect to history and place. How might we transform higher education so as to be about healing or reconnecting us to the places we live in?
4. Ryan in the film spoke of his experience of learning from place and its beings through the Beaver Bundle. This involved cultivating certain kinds of attention and relationships in a process he called 're-indigenizing ourselves' in relation to the local ecology. How could we re-indigenize ourselves in the places we live in? What would this look like?
5. Duane described an encounter in the film with university faculty where the Blackfoot ways of knowing were dismissed as being about 'myth and legend'. The reason for Duane is that we often 'don't have the eyes to see' the complexity of other knowledge systems. What prevents us from 'having the eyes to see' other knowledge systems aside from our own? How can we better appreciate the complexity and richness of indigenous ways of knowing and relating to place?
6. Cynthia in the film described a Blackfoot pedagogical turn amongst students whereby they took control of their own learning instead of waiting for experts to explain to them what they can and should learn. What would you like to learn and how might you as a community organize in order to do this?
7. Narcisse spoke in the epilogue of the film of his ongoing process of de-colonizing. What does this mean to you? Are there ways in which we are all colonized and how might we de-colonize ourselves – individually and collectively?
8. Near the end of the film, Narcisse makes the point that 'it is not about being Blackfoot, it is about becoming Blackfoot throughout your life. In other words, becoming human to its fullest!' What does this mean to you? And how can and should education nurture this?

GOING DEEPER

You've seen **RE-LEARNING THE LAND**. Here are a few ways you might go deeper into the issues raised and to explore these in your own life and community.

Join our **Enlivened Learning** community. Like the **Enlivened Learning** page on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and subscribe to our blog to learn more about what we do and how you can get involved. Tell your friends about the film and send them the link.

Get involved with a group in your own community. Find out what is going on in your community or start your own learning and action group and tell us about it! Here is just a small sampling of some resources and websites where you can go deeper into these questions or connect with groups working on environmental and educational issues all over the world.

Enlivened Learning – <http://www.enlivenedlearning.com> – Our Project website where you can see what we are up to and link with learning places we are connected with all over the world.

Idle no More - <http://www.idlenomore.ca> “Idle No More calls on all people to join in a peaceful revolution, to honour Indigenous sovereignty, and to protect the land and water”.

Indigenous Environmental Network - <http://www.ienearth.org> - IEN's activities include building the capacity of Indigenous communities and tribal governments to develop mechanisms to protect sacred sites, land, water, air, natural resources, health of both our people and all living things, and to build economically sustainable communities.

Blackfoot Digital Library - <https://www.blackfootdigitallibrary.com> - This Library is intended for use by anyone who wants to learn about the Blackfoot people and their culture.

Walking Together: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum

<http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/>

An interactive website with videos and curriculum resources for teachers and students to understand First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and ways of knowing. See especially the section on Connection to Land with Narcisse, Cynthia and others.

Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Center – Learning from Place.

<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/ccl/aboutccl/knowledgecentres/AboriginalLearning/Themes/AnimationThemeBundle1.html>

Explores learning of traditional knowledge, processes and practices from living in a particular place.

Here are some great articles engaging with these themes that can be found online:

Cynthia Chambers and Narcisse Blood (2010)– Love Thy Neighbour: Repatriating Precarious Blackfoot Sites. <http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/ssmc/html/lovethyneighbor.pdf>

Cynthia Chambers (2008) – Where are we? Finding common ground in a curriculum of place. <http://jcacs.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/jcacs/article/view/18099/0>

Little Bear, L. (2009). Naturalizing Indigenous knowledge: Synthesis paper. Aboriginal Knowledge Learning Centre, Canadian Council on Learning. http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/ablkc/naturalizeIndigenous_en.pdf