



# Desecrating the Sacred

*An Original Free Nations Production*

Executive Producer: Steven T. Newcomb (Shawnee/Lenape)

## Logline

Desecrating the Sacred is the result of a decades long meditation that raises a profound question with planetary implications: What happens when the Sacred Free Existence of the Original Native Nations and Peoples of Turtle Island ("North America") is invaded and thereby desecrated by an invading People who have traversed a vast ocean, a People who claim they are carrying a Sacred and God-given Right of Domination?

Desecrating the Sacred asks the viewer to reflect upon the contrast between the intense desire of homo sapiens to live free and the intense desire by a dominating people to deprive them of their ability to live a sacred free way of life on their own lands by subjecting them to an imposed and ongoing *claim of a right of domination*.

## Synopsis

Desecrating the Sacred exposes how the same Christian European doctrines that justified colonization continue to underwrite environmental destruction today. From polluted lakes and desecrated mountains to rivers once revered as living relatives, the film traces the deep historical roots of environmental devastation to the 'sacred right of domination' claimed by Western empires and carried forward in law, religion, and policy.

Through the words of Elders, land and water defenders, and scholars, the documentary reveals a profound contrast: the Sacred Free Way of Life—a spiritual relationship of reciprocity and respect for all beings—against the Doctrine of Domination, which turned living worlds into property and creation into commodity. The story becomes one of memory and resurgence, as communities reclaim ceremony, language, and ecological stewardship as acts of liberation.

## **Director's Statement**

Desecrating the Sacred is a film born from a commitment to truth-telling. The earth is not a backdrop to human history—it is the first text, the first covenant. This documentary seeks to reframe environmental devastation as a moral and spiritual crisis rooted in the Doctrine of Discovery and its enduring legal and cultural echoes. By centering Indigenous knowledge systems and the lived experiences of nations who remember their original free existence, the film calls viewers to witness both the depth of desecration and the resilience of renewal. The camera becomes a witness, not an observer, to the enduring relationship between people and the sacred land.

## **Themes**

- **The Doctrine of Christian Discovery and the Right of Domination**
- **The Sacred Free Way of Life and the Restoring the Memory of our free way of life**
- **Environmental devastation as a result of spiritual and mental colonization**
- **Indigenous resurgence and efforts to restore the sacred balance**

## **Intended Impact / Distribution**

Desecrating the Sacred is designed for film festivals, university screenings, and public humanities programming. The film aims to deepen public understanding of Indigenous life, the spiritual dimensions of environmental justice, and the ongoing consequences of colonial domination. Through partnerships with Indigenous organizations, educational institutions, and advocacy groups, the film will circulate widely as a catalyst for dialogue and change. Its ultimate goal is to inspire audiences to join efforts of restoration, protection, and re-sacralization of the natural world.

## **Style & Approach**

Visually grounded in elemental forces—wind, fire, earth, and water—the film juxtaposes archival imagery, on-the-ground footage, and Indigenous narration. It contrasts two perspectives: the view-from-the-shore of our free and independent Native ancestors, contrasted with the view from the deck of the ship, the colonizers' gaze claiming to consecrate newly identified land for the purpose of the form of domination they call “civilization”; and the view-from-the-shore, the original peoples’ perspective witnessing the desecration of their pristine lands and waters and free way of life. These dual vantage points embody the clash between a free existence and domination, desecration and renewal.