

# E001- Opening Conversation

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Indigenous peoples, Doctrine of Discovery, Lakota language, boarding schools, domination system, federal Indian law, language reclamation, genocide, assimilation, PBS documentary, cultural traditions, spiritual traditions, language philosophy, domination translator, human rights.

## SPEAKERS

Steven T. Newcomb

### Steven T. Newcomb 00:02

Okay, I'll hit okay. So good morning, Steve and I'm happy to have Steve Newcomb here with this podcast. I imagine they'll be cross posted to his substack too. But Steve and I have been knowing each other and working with each other for decades now, probably, I don't know, at least 30 years, something like that. So we're starting this recording just fresh out of the box here. We don't have a lot of plans for this, because Steve and I have been we talk, sometimes daily, sometimes a couple of times daily. Sometimes a week will go by, but it's been a long continuous discussion about legal issues related to indigenous peoples and everything that that means, which means it includes the whole world, basically, and philosophy and history and psychology and so on and so forth. And when we start talking, we range over quite a bit of material, we're going to aim to keep this conversation within a reasonable limit for a sub stack. And I guess Steve what I'm thinking of doing. I mean, I gave my little introduction. Maybe you want to say something about a work together, but the most recent thing that I want you to say something about is the film that's now being shown on PBS that you helped produce, and you are actually in about language. And so maybe first, if you want to just say some few things about how we work together, but it's like you to talk about the new film. Well, yeah, I have a book, pagans in the promised land that's complementary to your book, federal anti Indian law. And we have a documentary movie that Sheldon wolf child and I made some years ago, almost 10 years ago now, called the Doctrine of Discovery, unmasking the domination code and our collaboration and work together and conversations together. As you said, have spent quite a few decades, and our friendship has been just foundational to my life and to my work and and I thank you very much for that. I don't know what life would be with without that, you know, really strange. So these days, I always check in with my friends and say how much they mean to me. So that certainly goes for you, Peter. But our new movie is called oyata woyaka and the people speak, and it's about the Lakota language. It's co directed by Bryant high horse, who see Changu from the Rosebud Reservation and his nephew, George McAuliffe, and it's a beautiful outcome and very powerful, very heart wrenching in a lot of ways, but the people are determined to make sure that their language continues, and the story is about that, but it's also about the so called boarding schools, the policy of the United States government and the Canadian government, for that matter, to take native children away from their families and prevent the transmission of language and culture and spiritual traditions And the whole way of life of the people to cut that off and basically blot that out. So it's the outcome of that generations of those policies to kill the Indian save the man. Is as George Pratt. There was a colonel Pratt first, Henry, there you go, anyhow, that he, he popularized, and which is an admission of genocide, by the way, because the term genocide is the effort to destroy in whole or in part, an entire people. And certainly the US policies and so called federal Indian law system are premised upon that aim, or more back in the day, I know what they're based on. Now, just a bunch of weird, topsy turvy ideas. Anyhow, it's a beautiful film that's being shown on PBS. And if anyone has the PBS passport, I think that's the membership for PBS. They can tune

into oyata, o y, A, T, E, woyaka, w, o, y, a, k, a, and just type that in there and they'll come right up. So documentary, I'm going to put when we when we post, it's. Is, I'll put that info next to it, or as a canyon to it. And by the way, I my passport, whatever that's called membership, gave that up long ago, but I was able to watch it without a problem. And, oh, you don't know exactly why, maybe the link got sent to me, had that in it, but yeah, in any case, is available on a mass market platform for for viewers to see. Yeah, I think it's pretty it's wonderful. And George McAuliffe, what a what a great gift he's given to his uncle to persevere. He's a younger person about my daughter's age, mid 40s, I think, and he just made sure that he hit every deadline, and just dogged determination got it accomplished with beautiful cinema, photography and sound, and the music is fabulous. It's all terrific. And the elders that we were able to interview certainly have a very profound worldview. I hesitate to say worldview, but it is a worldview, but it's beyond that in the language itself, when the people come together, they're actually creating an entirely different mental world than exists in English. And I think few people really understand what that's about. So that that profound wisdom and philosophy built into the language is just amazing, and it comes through. Yeah, I think the the really amazing example that they give a fairly early in the film is tumkashila, which is sort of conveniently translated grandfather, but which they unpack as being it is a view of reality, you might say So, beyond a worldview, but it includes that because breaking the words, the word down into its constituent parts, says that when you use that word, you're actually describing a whole trajectory back into the mystery of existence and your personal connection to it through the person that we would say is your grandfather, the person who is coming from that and who is caring for you. So all of that is packed into that simple word, sounding simple when it's translated as grandfather, we think, Oh, we're referring to a specific person. Oh, yeah, there's my grandfather. Oh, and I have two of those grandfathers. But within the Lakota language itself, we're speaking about something far more profound than what's you know, how to put it into English words becomes the problem. And that's what I think when you're talking about the language reclamation. And what the film allows people to see is that this is an effort to climb out from under, the attempt at genocide, and that when we look at at how people's exist today, whose languages have just about been rubbed out. And many of the languages have been rubbed out by the assimilation process, which started heavily with the boarding schools, but certainly extends beyond that, and I think extends into today that the language reclamation is happening in many places, some more successful than others, but the effort itself shows the recognition that we are still here and that there's been an effort to rub us out, but it hasn't been successful so far. And I and I think that all of that is captured. It's a hard film to watch in the sense that the film is reminding us about this, these histories, and it's difficult, and it's difficult in part, if I can touch on this, because it's done during the time of the lockdowns and the social distancing. And so you can begin to see how there's a a domination, to use the word that you were, I'd like to ask you about in a minute, but there's a domination system at work which is being exemplified in the the work of these people to recover from the domination of the boarding schools and assimilation, but also is still an active part of the global regime of states to lock people down, to press people apart from each other. And all of that comes back to a viewer who watches his film, which was made during that time, that there's a sense of, oh my god, I remember. It wasn't too long ago that this domination was being exercised on everybody around the planet, and all that mixed together is what I said. It makes the film hard to watch by the end of the film, I don't want to give away, you know anything, but by the end of the film, there's a very amazing statement being made by a. An elder man who had already earlier described his experiences in the boarding school being whipped Wayne hollow horn, bear, yeah, and his statement about forgiveness is profound. It's amazing, and it goes far beyond the situation that he describes in the boarding school for himself, it becomes a lesson for every human being, it seems to me. So there's quite a lot of value in the film, quite a lot packed into it. Very well done, as you said, professionally, technically and really exemplary in its truth, in its adherence to the truth of a people as a right now. Can we segue to the word domination? I know that's like jumping right into the middle of the fire here, but you have contributed out of this long work that we've done, you've contributed a very serious sharpening of the discourse by insisting that we pay attention to the fact of domination and the way in which domination is embedded in language and in cultural actions. That's

why, when I refer to the lockdown as an example of them. But can you talk to us a little bit about what is it that over the last few years brought you to see so clearly the need for what you call a domination translator of seeing how domination is embedded in so many words, sure, well, the interesting thing is that I had already understood this by the mid 90s. If you go back and look at our indigenous Law Institute website, which you so graciously and generously maintained and have maintained over such a long period of time, you'll see the Empire domination model referred to. So at that time, I already had understood that pattern. What I didn't have is the confidence to speak to that. And there was a psychological something that I had to overcome to get myself to begin to speak about that. And so now it's all these years later, I have made that sharpening process of that that very insightful way of zeroing in on that concept and helping people to understand that. Basically, English as one example. I don't know if there are others, but English for sure, English is an operating system of domination, because you look at all these terms that are synonyms for domination that people are using every single day, and they don't even notice it, because they're synonyms for a concept that is not active in English. It's my understanding now that domination is not an active term in English. In other words, if you listen to people speaking, you'll hear them talk about oppression, racism, white supremacy, all kinds of negatives that they're identifying as problems. Very, Very seldom do you ever hear anyone speak of domination in an ordinary conversation, in everyday conversation, and so when you realize that civilization, state, sovereignty, ascendancy, Dominion, property, Empire and government are eight terms that are synonyms for domination, it basically is like the binary code of computer science, the zeros and ones repeated over and over and over again give us the opportunity to have a conversation like this, Visa v this technology, and the algorithms and everything else that go into this type of technology, but we're not thinking about that operating system. We're just having a conversation. And so once we become hyper conscious of the fact that domination is the premise the claim. I want to put it this way, the claim of a right of domination is a presumption on the part of the domination called the United States of America, or whatever state you want to call it, the state of domination called Canada, if you want to talk in international terms about a state, once you understand that, then there's something about reality that shifts, because you realize, oh my gosh, there it is over there, there it is there, there it is there, and it's just constant once you become hyper conscious of it. So most people have no under. Understanding of what I'm talking about, and it takes a while, but teaching the course on the doctrine of discovery and domination at the Isle of School of Theology for a couple terms now, just completing up the second term of that, the students become very well aware, because I'm using what I call the domination translator, which is a simple technique, take a term for domination, such as property, put the word property there, and then put the word domination in brackets and red lettering afterwards, so that it trains the brain the mind to make that association. And once people become very much aware of that. It's a whole different insight and understanding of the nature of the reality that has taken over the entire globe. And so, because it is an organizing principle of the planet, the claim of a right of domination, and you use the term just a phrase, just a bit ago, the having to do with the states of of the planet, the states of the world. Well, the states of domination would be a way to complete that, that phrase, so the of domination is always out of focus, because people say, down with the system. Back in the 60s, there was that, that slogan, right? Well, they had said down with the system of domination, it would have been the complete thought, but that's what's out of focus. So one of the features of English is that we speak in metonymies, or synecdoches, meaning the part that stands for the larger whole. And so we're speaking in partialities. And then when we complete that phrase of domination, then we complete the you know, we have the holistic understanding rather than the partiality. So these are some of the things that we're up against and and I think making that clear to people, enabling people to become hyper aware, hyper conscious, of what we're talking about gives a different insight into what we're really up against, yes, and I think that thank you for talking about all of that. But I think one example you you talked about people talking about racism as and that's a negative term, and so if you were saying race, domination, then you would be saying something about, what is the phenomenon actually about? And so, and it occurs to me that this is we're making. I'm going to make a little shift here right now. But yeah, there's to me that the focus, the persistent focus on race racism as the explanation for all bad things

that are going on right now is not only missing. Well, what is it that is racism? Where is the domination? But if you try to identify the domination as it's simplistically done, oh, it's white people versus, you know, so called people of color, then you miss the fact that there's a the the system, if we just say the economic system, the economic and political system that is in in being involved here, also affects so called white people. So I just read something about, you know, the corporation's economic domination over people of color, and so on and so forth. And I thought immediately about, what about all those miners in West Virginia that were mostly white, not necessarily all white, but what about the white workers that are oppressed? And so I know there are people say, Oh, well, that's they aren't depressed as much. Well, what are we talking about? By focusing on the domination system, we begin to see what is the target of our concern. The target is not somebody with a different skin color. The target is a system of organization, of domination, organization which is in operation no matter what color person is at the helm. So we can have a so called Black president of the United States. That black president of the United States is the chief executive officer of a massive system of domination. And another example would be, if we switch to gender, you can have somebody named Margaret Thatcher who becomes the prime minister of the ancestor, or it's not the ancestor, the result of the British Empire, which spanned the globe with a system of domination long ago and still has residual powers like that. And the fact that this is a woman did not suddenly mean this is not a system of domination anymore, that it did not mean. So if people say, Oh, well, putting a woman in, putting a black person, and this is really progress from the point of view that your domination system, or domination translator provides, we can say, No, there's really been. Change here. We change we we put a different color paint on the wall, but it's the same structure building. It's one of the things that it makes it difficult to make the move that you're suggesting must be made in which I agree to see this systemically as as frames of domination. One of the reasons it's difficult is because, as you said, this is out of sight of people in the use of the language, so people can continue to talk about something without actually talking about what has to be talked about. There's a puzzle there, which you and I have and others have been working on for a while in this specific field of so called federal Indian law, which you know, as you know we my book says, and we both now understand it's a federal anti Indian law. And even in that, even in some of the latest discourses, has been gone on the fundamental claim of domination, of owning the land, is set aside. It's usually not talked about. It might be mentioned. But then the discourse shifts into race theory again, as if the thing to do here is to just somehow recognize that, oh, there's people with reddish colored skin, and we have to treat them somehow more equally, quote, unquote, under the Constitution, which, of course, is saying that there you're actually acquiescing to. This is the claim of domination that is in the Constitution. That is the Constitution, and an even deeper claim, which is not based in the Constitution, it's based on the doctrine of Christian discovery. And so that that deeper domination framework is missed, and in when the discourse is just about skin color and so on. And I guess the one other thing I would say here is that when you miss that, you really you're kind of just spinning your wheels. But how were you anywhere? And in a sense, what you've done, you're participating in the success of the assimilation project. So that, rather than talking about the fundamental claim of a right of domination, we're talking about the superficial aspects of did these people get the same amount of funding for the Indian Health Service on an equal basis as you know, blah, blah, blah, whatever it is and those and I'm going to say that's not an important issue Indian Health. I'm saying Indian Health is an important issue. But if we connected it to the fundamental framework of the claim of right of domination, then we'd have some possibility of some traction, right? Well, and the other part of the of the challenge is that English maintains the system of domination while it hides it simultaneously hides it. So it's being it's being perpetuated and perpetrated at the same time as it's being cloaked by these other synonyms. So you're not when you think you could, I probably you could give the word dominion to a million people. Would any of the million come up? Oh yeah, that's domination. Or you could put, put the word property in front of a million people, 10 million people, for that matter, and how many of them would ever say, Oh yeah, that's that's domination. Probably none of them. And there's a reason for that, but what is that reason? And I think that it's just one of these oddities of the English language that hasn't been noticed. And so what you there's a statement I make

in my book. What you focus on determines what you miss. So while we're focused on racism, what are we missing? There's, there's a bunch of things back here. I can see it up on the screen there, but, but ordinarily I don't see what's behind me, so what I'm focusing on is here, but that that doesn't mean that's all there is. It's just what we could be talking about oranges right now, you know? And then suddenly you switched cars, and just that quick, oranges Go, go out of focus. And now we're on to something else. And it's that little subtlety that is so extraordinary in the way that reality gets created and maintained. So the normative process, what happens is domination becomes normal and normative and ordinary because it's viewed as things that are just every day. So domestic violence, I all the time pick constantly, pick up books that have to do with topics that would just obviously lead to the theme of domination, such as domestic violence. Look through the index and never see the word domination. I do that with all kinds of books. How have they got an awareness of this? And it could be a book on racism, and I look through there, and there's no mention of domination. How can that even be possible? Was very possible because it's out of focus within their understanding of that particular analytical framework. That's why I think that you. To a great extent, the obsession with race, and I'll call it that the matter of race, is something that is basically diverting our attention away from that which we ought to really be focused upon, because it makes it seem as if, oh, it's the use of the color spectrum, and only this part of the color spectrum is virtuous and and got it going on, and this, this whole other side of the color spectrum, just universally is somehow negative. I think that's a very sloppy, shallow way of thinking about the complexity of these issues. You know, I'd say yes to all of that. And another example is if people are talking about equality. So just to focus specifically on on the position of the original peoples of this land vis a vis the Constitution, the real position of indigenous peoples has nothing to do with the Constitution the original peoples, as you have used the phrase from looking from the shore, these people were already here when the intruders came. And the the structure that the intruders built was a structure of domination. And when we begin to see it that way, then we say, well, so if we look at the situation today, so the real problem is that the native people are not equal under the Constitution. What? What that translates to? Using the domination translators, they're not equally dominated, or maybe they're more dominated, or maybe there's other people who are less domain, but there are goal if we're talking about equal everybody ought to be equally dominated here. Now that gets inverted, because people say, oh, what we're talking about is equally free. They should all be equally free, but the people were free before there was a constitution. And freedom in a sense, if we think about it, this is gets to be you can get people incendiary when you're talking about this. The constitution is not the source of freedom. The Constitution sets up a government in brackets system of domination. And if you read the discussions that were happening in 1787 to create that constitution, it's all quite explicit. There were people at that time who were very clear about this, we don't need a central government. And there were other people saying, Oh, we definitely need a central government say, we're talking about how to fine tune systems of domination that were either in effect or they were being proposed at that time. And so the if you talk about the original free existence of native peoples, which is a phrase, again, I really appreciate that you put together, you realize that actually it's to say, let's get out from under this thing called the Constitution. I mean, that's what the treaty system is really about, is that you have independent peoples negotiating with each other. And that has been twisted in the system of federal anti Indian law to say, oh, that's just a particular way that this group of people get to deal with the US government, and it doesn't really mean anything in terms of fundamental value. Does not mean they're free from the system of domination. It means this is just a particular way they participate in the system of domination, and the US has made that clear. It was under Obama when the US was finally embarrassed into agreeing to the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which we could talk about as yet another example of cloaked domination. But in any case, that document talked about the right of free, prior and informed consent before the government the states could do anything on native people's lands, and that has been translated into, oh, we'll just have a consultation with you. And Obama was very clear about that. He said, Oh, we agree with this un document, but he had the State Department issue a signing statement saying, we just want to be clear that consent doesn't mean that they really have to agree. And I was thinking, Whoa, you talk about

understanding English. How you mean the word consent doesn't actually mean agree. What does it mean? Does it have any meaning at all? So we're seeing the twisting of ordinary English words all in the service of the perpetuation of a more or less invisible system of a based on a claim of a right of domination, right. And the thing is that what you were saying previously, we don't need a central government. Now, imagine people saying, well, we don't really need a central domination. Yeah, they were, if they would were using that. Or you hear people constantly say, well, our government, right? Our government, if they were saying our domination, how strange that would sound. Our domination. Now we're claiming. That word participants were willing participants in the system of domination, and we're perfectly okay with that. But people don't when they don't realize that it's domination they're referencing when they use the word government, then the government sounds very normal and unobjectionable. And so that consent implied, and all that our government is, I'm actually an integral part of this thing called government as a citizen, as a participant, but I don't recognize that it's a domination. Would I have the same sense of it as being a willing participant if it was a explicitly acknowledged as a system of domination, what I what is it? Well, you know, our government, our domination is, is a democracy. And I mean, suddenly your, your head starts to kind of come apart in some really strange sense, right? Yeah, because your your whole view of reality begins to shift the cognitive dissonance that occurs. And just shifting that word government to domination, which actually is what it is, go over men, put a T on the end, or go over the state or condition of going over others, m e n t means The state or condition of and you can break it apart like that. So isn't that interesting? Yeah, now you had the you sometimes quote one of the papal bulls about thanking him from whom all dominations. I know way, but you, it's, it's we. I only have the English memorized, but the English translation, but we trust in Him, or have confidence in him. Confidentes is the Latin word we have confidence in him from whom empires and governments and all good things proceed. This is what got me on to the understanding that governments means dominations, plural, singular, government means domination because I was looking in the the was it Carnegie Institute? The, oh, my goodness, my brain. But anyway, that were the book that the papal bulls are published in is you have the Latin and the English available to you. So I'm reading this English, and I got curious. Well, what's the what's the Latin for this word governments? And I, you know, went and compared, and I found it. Oh, my goodness, dominaciones, dominations. So we trust in Him from whom empires and dominations and all good things proceed, all the good things that come from empires and domination, meaning riches and wealth, right and power. So that was a staggering thing to realize. Here's a theology of domination. You can only understand that if you bother to go through the language of the Vatican papal documents of the 15th century and get deep into that so according to their plan, we as Native people are not even supposed to be here anymore, or not have any sense of awareness of ourselves to be delving into all this type of information. Yet here we are, and we're so deep into their ideologies and their systems of meaning and so forth, that is quite remarkable. Yes, yeah, which brings us to language back, circling back to the beginning, is that it's while the Lakota and others I know, Jesse little doe, for example, working with Wampanoag, there are examples of recovering languages. I think that maybe there's a problem here. We need to uncover English. There's a recover and an uncover that that would be sort of like parallel projects. Let's see what's really behind so when you read that, when you have the notion of the papal bull, which just to remind the listeners here today, that's part of the ingredients that went into the United States Supreme Court decision Johnson V McIntosh, saying that the US was going to adopt this rule of Christian discovery, and therefore it was going To carry out its claim to own all the land, because that was precisely what was being the claim was being made in the papal bulls, that the Pope owned the world, that that God had given the pope the ownership position, the top position, and ownership, slash domination. And so, of course, the Pope is going to celebrate these systems of domination and the people whom the Pope was authorizing, the Spanish and the Portuguese, specifically, in these bulls where they were being sort of passed down, like, sort of like an inheritance, like, I'll give you this piece of it. You can have it, and under my domination as. No, but you'll get the lesser domination. And so these are wonderful things, empires and dominations slash governments. And we see that the Supreme Court adopted that, and that that has never been changed, that's still that

case is still regarded as good law, and a lot of the critique that's going on in the field of the so called federal Indian law recognizes that there's serious, deep problems here. But for some reason, they hesitate to touch that domination called property ownership. They'll talk about other kinds of forms of the domination, and it's become so embedded that it's, it's kind of like if you were to take what you just said, that, you know, government is domination. And people say, Well, geez. I mean, what would happen if there were no traffic lights? I mean, the government maintains the traffic lights that we'd have chaos. It's a good thing. We have this good thing. We have to sit and wait for light bulbs to turn on and off. Good thing. We have this vast system electricity grid that helps the light bulbs work and burn so we can see, otherwise we wouldn't know what to do. So, you know, at a simplistic level, that's why Philip Deere said that, you know, the American people, or the civilized, so called people, are so confused. They need lights on poles to tell them when to stop and when to go, they can't figure that out for themselves. Yeah, it's fun. Well, I think it's funny to think you have to have domination to have street lights. I mean, that's, it's a prerequisite, you know. But your, your larger point is, is, is interesting, because the what it what it leads me to talk about, is that we, I believe we have to slow down. Everybody wants to hurt. We gotta hurry up and deal with this situation. Sometimes it's better to just slow down and take it very meticulously take it a step at a time, and but most people don't have the patience for that. And the benefit that we've had of all the decades of examining all this language and these records and the thought processes and so forth, the arguments that have been put forth by institutions intellectuals working in institutions such as the Supreme Court, those ideas, when we delve into them very carefully and in depth, then things pop out for us that others gloss over. And so we can have a close reading of something, or we can have a very general reading and then a close explanation, or, you know, very detailed explanation, or very general explanation. And I think that's where our work is quite different, because we pay attention to the fact that Marshall gave the the royal Charters of England as examples of ample evidence, of ample evidence of the patterns that he was talking about. And so what is he talking about? The John Cabot charter to the Commission given to John Cabot and his sons to go across the ocean. And I, for many, many, many, many years, I wanted to get my hands on the Latin, the original Latin Cabot charter, and I could never find it that. Where did I end up finding it? It was in the book published by Congress or under order of Congress by the Government Printing Office that talks about the organic laws of the United States. So here are these foundational documents, the letter to Columbus from the King and Queen of Spain, the papal bull of 1493 and the John Cabot charter in both English and Latin. Then I go into the Latin and I say, Oh, the king is wanting the cabots to get the jurisdiction and dominium titulum, or titulum dominium. I can't ever remember which order they they are in, but it's the domination title, the he wants the cabbage to get for him, the King, the domination title and the jurisdiction, which means he doesn't have it by his own admission. Right there, he's admitted that he doesn't have it. If he wants someone else to go and get it for him. That's an amazing, profound thing. But unless you go slow enough and meticulously enough through these documents, you're never going to get to that insight. Then we have to ask, well, what is the significance of that insight? We can have an insight, big deal, but what's the significance? And one of the significance is can be exemplified in the fact that I was kicked out of the Supreme Court around 2004 I think it was by asking a question about Johnson versus. McIntosh, I went to the Office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court and asked to interview one of the justices of the Supreme Court as a as a reporter, a writer for Indian country today. And the clerk said, Well, which one? And I said, Well, could be any of them. And I said, I want to ask about the 1823, Supreme Court ruling, Johnson versus McIntosh, that says that the first Christian people to discover lands inhabited by natives who are heathens have the ultimate have the right to assume the ultimate dominion, to be in themselves. And she said, No one can speak beyond the law. And I said, What? As a native person, I can't come here and ask about a Supreme Court ruling that says that the first Christian people to discover lands inhabited by natives who are heathens have a right of ultimate dominion over that land. And she said, No one can speak beyond the law. Shall I Are you going to leave? Or shall I have you removed? Troublemaker? Yeah, I take, I'm very happy you talked about slowing down. I often speak so fast, and I jump from one kind of cartoon illustration to another. So the red light, green light, I owe that to Philip

Deere, but really, I'm not encouraging people to go crazy in their cars. There's enough craziness in cars already. What I'm saying is, let's look at the examples of the way in which our lives have become assimilated to being dominated, to being told to do. And there are intersections where I wouldn't dare move through without waiting for that light to change, because everybody, including me, has been conditioned to know what those lights mean. And there are other situations in which the light is totally extraneous. And there are days before lights, I mean, old enough to remember, when there would be police officers at intersections, and the police officers paid attention what was actually happening in the intersection and directed traffic that way. It was not automatic. They didn't stand there and count to 100 and then turn and stand the other way, they just took charge. There was a leadership at that point. You could say that police officer was dominating that but then here we are with dominations within dominations, because the automobile was dominating the landscape and the automobile corporations were dominating transportations. So this is not this is like an endless, interconnected system. And when I pick out an example like that, it's just as a way of saying here, any one of these places can be an entry point to talking about what's really going on, what is reality. Who am I? As Joe day likes to say, our Yakima colleague that you start off with identity. It's like, you know, who am I? What am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? And then larger, the the whole body of people, you know, what is, what isn't? Why? These are fundamental questions. Well, where do you start? You can start almost anywhere. You start with the lights on the pole. You start with a book that you find in a library that was published by order of Congress, which admits the theoretical basis of a claim of a right of domination. So you can start deep in the library. You can stop. You can start while you're sitting in your car at an intersection. You can start. There's so many points of entry, and once it starts unraveling, it's kind of like the ball of wool that has been knitted into this sweater of domination. Begins the sweater begins to come apart, and you begin to see, wow, it's very interesting. It's all interconnected. And if you move slowly enough, as you're saying, You're not going to do anything foolhardy or rash, like saying, Oh, it's all domination. I don't care. I'm going to go take my neighbor's barbecue pit because I want it. It's not their property. I'm just going to go use it. I'm just going to rush through this intersection. I'm going to go crash into the court building. These are all crazy actions. Well, I think that's an important point, because this analysis is not a license to go nuts, right? And I think that there are ways in which people could use some of this information to rationalize behavior that is not beneficial. And that's why I come back to our original instructions, our teachings as indigenous or original peoples that basically can be stated very simply as behave in a manner that's beneficial to ourselves, one another and all life. And that's where the domination system does not do that. It only goes for profit. It only goes for that which will increase riches and wealth and power. And as a result of that, it doesn't have any concern with longer term consequences. So if a river is being poisoned, if a waterway is being poisoned, such as in Flint, Michigan, and all the lead in the water, and the lead in the children as a result of the lead in the water and all that, nobody's held responsible. Nobody cleans it up. But it's just a persistent problem, and to me, that's a direct consequence of domination. So these are very practical types of outcomes and consequences of what we're talking about. And yet, if you went to Flint, Michigan and asked all kinds of people there, do you think any of them would just bring up the word domination as part of the mix? I doubt it, because it's just not part of people's ordinary thinking or a way of speaking. And so then we can begin to catalog all of the consequences of domination just go through and just, I mean, we could have examples of domination, and have this endless list of massive devastation of ecological systems and the poisoning of waters, the poisoning of our bloodstreams, and all the toxic, toxic substances that are being put into what's called food, this artificial, hyper processed, I'll call them foods, but they're not nutritious, they're not beneficial, they're not building people's health. They're actually destroying people's health. Yet they're still called food. It's like Corbett Harney, you know he said that water came to him and said, someday it'll look like water, and you'll believe it's water, but you won't be able to drink it because it's not going to be water, because there's so much toxicity in there that you'll be fool foolish if you actually drink drink that, right? Yeah, and that's what has happened, you know? So anyway, there, there are so many ways to talk about this, but I want to come back to your term entry point, if we had not gone into the Johnson versus Macintosh ruling in the way that we did, with this deep, deep



determination to solve a problem, a mystery, a puzzle, and reading it over and over and over, obsessively, and breaking down the sentences and going into the etymology of the words and so forth, we wouldn't be where we are today in terms of this conversation and the understandings and insights that we have. And I think that's where people miss the opportunity. They think, oh yeah, that's just Indian issues. That's just indigenous people's stuff. And they put us over in some, you know, bracket off to the side, as if we're not important, and the issues are not important, but they are the most important issues of all, because they're the foundational issues for this entire part of the globe, and that's on all kinds of levels. So it's to their own detriment, that they don't take that seriously. Well, you know, foundational issues makes me think of the word radical. So somebody hearing us talking to they're very radical. Well, the root and the meaning of radical, it means going to the root. That's all. It's very simple. It's like, go to the foundation. And you talked about original instructions. Those are a kind of a root of a people. So somebody went, I'm just responding your notion. Oh, well, I'm not Indian. I don't have to really think too hard about all this. It's like, no, I'm sorry. We're talking about stuff that is basic to, what does it mean to be a human being. That's about, what does it mean to be a human being? And that's why I quoted Joe day. You know, what is, what isn't? Why we're talking about reality here affecting all people. This is why this is beyond any discussion of racism or sexism or some other ism we're talking about something that encompasses all of that, and at the same time is obscured by all of that well. And even the term human gets us into a whole conversation as well, because, because it people assume that they know what that term means, but any type of meaning is context dependent. So in other words, we have to look at the context within which that term is being used, and that's going to differ from one context to another, other very likely anyway. And so the word human, a lot of native people, I think, people that have been horribly oppressed to the point of trying to annihilate them, they automatically gravitate toward the word human. Well, I'm a human being, God, damn it, you know, like, like, there's an indignation. Well, I should, it should be understood that I deserve to be treated a certain way, because I'm in that category of humans as well, right? And but then I came across that Supreme Court of California decision from 1930 called City of San Diego versus Cuyamaca water company. And in the midst of the decision, the court is going back over the history of the Spanish colonization. And the the court says the only thing existing in California when the Spaniards arrived was a state of barbarism. So then, if you take. That at face value, and you say, okay, so they weren't. They either were not human at all from the perspective of the Spanish invaders, or they were only partially human. By what means would they become fully human? Well, given the Spanish Catholic mission system, they have to be stripped of their free existence, baptized, given a Christian name, and then forced under the torment and misery and suffering inflicted by the soldiers and the priest to build the massive mission structures. And now, once they're under that control and that domination, now they're on their way. They're undergoing the process of becoming fully human. So how does that change our understanding of the word human in that in that case, yeah. Isn't that something, yeah. So then, if you take that and you say, well, oh, wait a minute, wow, that that's intense. In that context, the word human would mean living under domination, yep, yep. Now that's not the only way to interpret the word, but it's a very important, specific context that ought to be examined and taken very seriously when you and one last thing, when you look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the third preamble paragraph says that human rights should be enshrined in or or upheld by the rule of law, so that man will not be compelled to rebel against tyranny and oppression. Two words for domination. Isn't that interesting. So that could mean because in in upholding human rights and the rule of law, will end tyranny and oppression, so there won't be any need to rebel against it, or it'll be a red herring get people. It'll give them something to focus on other than the root cause of tyranny and oppression. Yeah, I'm you know, we're approaching our end, but I'm so happy we've had the chance to do this kind of conversation and record it. We have these conversations so often, and they're just, they benefit us, and then they come out in our work in various ways. But so I'm very happy we had this. But I'm also wanting to say we're we're just touching on something that could be another hour, which is the notion of rights. Rights, and if you break that down, rights is essentially still tied to a system of domination. And saying this system of domination has a list of things, and these are the list of things that it is going to give us, and we have certain rights. If

we didn't have these rights, then what? Then we would just be dominated. But the system of domination is what is determining whether or not the so called right exists and so called enforcing it. But I, I hesitate to say anymore, because mark off another whole conversation and this, this is probably a really good place to leave it, talking about another foundational word. So Steve, wonderful to see your face. Thank you very, very much. And I'll get this work together, and I'll put a couple of links around it, such as to the film that we started talking about, and and probably some other information. Great. Thank you, Peter, thank you very much. Bye, bye, see you.