Jordan Brady Loewen-Colon (00:07):

Hello and welcome to the Mapping the Doctrine of Discovery podcast. The producers of this podcast would like to acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, Firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands Syracuse University now stands, and now special video episode with Phil Arnold.

Philip P. Arnold (<u>00:31</u>):

So value change for survival, what does that mean? It means we have to change the way we value the world completely in economic monetary terms. It implies that our survival, that our survival is at stake in this value change. And one of the things that is consistently mentioned by the Haudenosaunee is that the earth, and I've mentioned this to you before, but the earth will be fine without us. The earth doesn't need us. The earth will be better off without human beings on it. So we have to get out of the framework that we're going to save the planet. We're not. The planet has to save us from ourselves. That's the indigenous values, the indigenous perspective speaking, the modern value system of everything being connected to the bottom line is clearly unsustainable.

(<u>01:44</u>):

Now, the weight of all this seems overwhelming, seems like how are we going to change the monetary system? It's what, and I've said this numerous times to many students, I hope you all get great jobs coming out of SU, that you make money, but that can't be the only thing that you're concerned about. And it seems like the change of values of the modern world could be really overwhelming, but it's really just a change of perspective, and that's what we've been discussing in the class.

(<u>02:25</u>):

So this book, Basic Calls to Consciousness, discusses a trip that various indigenous peoples from the United States from all around the United States took to the UN, United Nations, in Geneva, Switzerland in 1977. So what, 47 years ago. And this delegation included Crow people from Montana area, the Hopi from the Southwest, the Haudenosaunee. So they were from all over. These are very traditional leaders, and the Haudenosaunee delegation traveled on their own passports as we talked about before. They delivered this dire message called the basic call to consciousness to the western world, that we don't have much time left. That was almost 50 years ago. They said to the assembled nations, states from around the world, the ice is melting in the north. That was their message. It's been their message consistently for the last 50 years.

(03:50):

So I want to go into it a little bit. These quotes appear in the epilogue of my book and I'll just read from that. So this is page 223. All right. So in the beginning, we were told that the human beings who walk about the earth have been provided with all the things necessary for life. We were instructed to carry a love for one another and to show a great respect for all the beings of this earth. We are shown that our life exists with the tree of life, that our well-being depends on the well-being of the vegetable life, that we are close relatives of the four-legged beings. In our ways, spiritual consciousness is the highest form of politics.

(04:42):

So the spiritual understanding that Jake Edwards so eloquently put in his discussion on Tuesday is a form of politics, is a form of leadership of the organization of human beings into a polity. They go on to say, "Ours is a way of life. We believe that all living things are spiritual beings. Spirits can be expressed as energy forms manifested in matter. A blade of grass is an energy form manifested into matter, grass matter. The spirit of the grass is that unseen force

that produces the species of grass and it is manifest to us in the form of real grass." So using grass, just the most basic kind of living force there is, we can appreciate how all of life is considered sacred because all of life then participates in what they call the tree of life.

(05:55):

So in the language of the history of religions that I was trained in, this is an example of the manifestation of the sacred, a hierophany. We talked about that earlier in the semester. So a hierophany, manifestation of the sacred, but not in some kind of big, like God reveals themselves in a burning bush, we'll say, like in the Old Testament or the Torah and God reveals himself to Moses. This is an everyday kind of manifestation of the sacred. That is what human beings are responsible for. So when the guy in the little clip from Buy Now says, "How are we going to reconcile being in these corporate entities as human beings?" I think that's what he's going for there. How are we going to reconcile? How are you going to reconcile fitting in the bottom line in your job, making money with being human and depending on other living beings for your humanity?

(07:11):

All right, so these are long quotes. You don't have to write them down, and they're also in the book. So in another section called the Importance of Creation, so we're talking about creation not as a kind of moment in the history of the world, not at the beginning of things only, but as a kind of ongoing reality. So for the Haudenosaunee, all things of the world are real, material things. The creation is a true material phenomenon, and the creation manifests itself to us through reality. So it's not just about the creation story, it's about what the creation story points us to, how it imparts those values or relationships. The spiritual universe then is manifest to man as the creation, the creation that supports life. We believe that man is real, a part of the creation, a part of the creation, and that his duty is to support life in conjunction with other beings. That is why we call ourselves Onkweho'n:we or real people, the real people, because they're real human beings of creation.

(08:35):

So you'll notice that in this cosmology, in this worldview, there are no things, no objects. In English, it's almost impossible to talk without things in our language. Consumerism is all about things and the commodification of things, but there is a living world that surrounds us. The Haudenosaunee know this because they are alive, they are human, they are real people. They're Onkweho'n:we. So creation then is something that is constantly unfolding every day. That's what Jake was saying when he said, "That's why we give the Thanksgiving address every morning." It's not about prayer, it's not about asking for anything, it's about being human, it's about being in proper relationship with the material world.

(09:39):

So how does this modern self contrast with the indigenous self? A consumerist self, capital S-E-L-F, is the whole point of consumerism. All goods flow towards me as a consumer. I am the center of the world for the indigenous self. The entirety of creation is involved in oneself, which is a biological fact. So consumerism gives us a narrative of who we are in relationship to the world around us, where indigenous peoples understand that they are materially/spiritually connected to the entirety of creation. As they say in this book Basic Call to Consciousness, our roots are deep in the lands where we live. We have a great love for our country, for our birthplace is there. The soil is rich from the bones of thousands of our generations. From the ancestors, we are descendants from those people we don't even know, have never met, and yet they're the reason we're here. And we talked about this.

(11:10):

Each of us was created in those lands and it is our duty to take great care of them, because from these lands will spring the future generations of the Onkweho'n:we. As they say, the seven generations. Jake was talking about seven generations. They're looking up at us from the ground. Their faces are in the soil. We walk about with great respect for the earth is a very sacred place. The modern self, I'm sitting here in my house, which is very nice house, I love my house, but it's mine. So the land in this modern evaluation belongs to me. The house belongs to me, but really the house is over 50 years old, almost 60 years old. I didn't create it. I'm not in charge of it. I'm just a caretaker for my house. Someone else is going to occupy this place later. (12:24):

So consumerism property gives us a kind of an illusion that it's ours, but what does that mean? But the indigenous self states very clearly that we belong to the land and not the other way around. The land does not belong to us. Really, in fact, it doesn't. We belong to the land. And an illustration of that, some of you might be Irish, Irish American. I've got some Irish ancestry. So we had the opportunity to go back to Ireland. I think I've talked to you about this already, but going back to Ireland was quite an amazing experience. We went to Galway and Dublin. And in Galway, there's a very strong, strong relationship to the language. The language is coming back, and with it comes a very strong relationship to the land.

(13:27):

So Irish political bodies have been very active in this front. For example, and I mentioned this in the last class, that when they build a highway, let's say from Dublin to Cork or someplace, when they build a highway, they will take into mind some of the sacred places along the way. And someone was just telling me about them building, a friend of mine at the meeting in San Diego we went to over the holiday, he was telling me that they built a highway, four-lane highway, modern, super modern highway, but they built it around what they call a fairy tree because that's where the little people of the land come together. And historically, that is an important site for not only the little people of the land, but also the human beings and their relationship to it. So Ireland, I think, is experiencing a new kind of indigenous value. It's also one of the richest countries in Europe right now at this time. So think about how you can bridge a monetary modern self with a gift economy, indigenous self.

(15:01):

Responsibility. We are not a people who demand or ask anything of creation of the creators of life. That's all of the creators of life. Instead, we give greetings and thanksgiving that all the forces of life are still at work. To this day, the territories we still hold are filled with trees, animals, and other gifts of creation. In these places, we still receive our nourishment from our mother earth. So it's not like they're not eating animals or eating the berries or tapping the maple tree. They're consuming all of those things. But what do you do in exchange? We don't think in those terms. When we go into Wegmans, we're not thinking in terms of like, "Well, where does this come from? How was it harvested? What does it mean?" So taking something requires an exchange, a gift. If not, there are dire consequences. That's the thanksgiving address.

(16:20):

So then, they get into liberation, what in religious studies we call liberation theology. Liberation theology is a big category in the history of Catholic theology. It's not often taught and what they're doing in this book, Basic Call to Consciousness, is changing the attitude, the reference points for what liberation means. It's the liberation not just of human beings, but of all living beings. The people who are living on this planet need to break with the narrow concept of human liberation and begin to see liberation as something that needs to be expanded or extended to the whole of the natural world. What is needed is the liberation of all the things that support life, the air, the waters, the trees, all things that support the sacred web of life.

(<u>17:27</u>):

So human beings are really not the center of the world. Physically speaking, biologically speaking, we're dependent on the world that surrounds us and we need to focus on liberating those elements of the living world upon which we depend. So want to think of this in terms of slavery, the stain of American history is slavery. You could say the sin of American history is slavery. What is slavery? It's discussed as dehumanization of human beings. There is such a thing today as modern-day slavery, sexual slavery, all kinds of different elements of slavery. But really, slavery just comes down to the commodification, the reduction of human beings to monetary value, therefore sale. And they are consumables. Slaves are reduced. They take them from their human form and put them into a monetary form. That's the history of slavery. That's what it is.

(18:58):

Now, there's a difference, there's all kinds of slavery, I'll say because indigenous people of Africa were enslaved in the transatlantic trade, and that's chattel slavery because they were enslaved for not just themselves, but all their generations. That's where the one-drop rule comes into play. They're enslaved, all their generations. So that's chattel slavery. That's the most dehumanizing type of all. My folks came over as indentured servants, as a kind of slavery that you could buy off with working for one year, two years, three years in the fields and then you are free. At some point, the first Arnold is called a freeman, and that's what that refers to.

(<u>20:00</u>):

What they're doing in this book, Basic Call to Consciousness, is that they're saying that slavery or enslavement happens when any living being is reduced to their monetary value, their use value, their exchange value. So you go into Wegmans, the idea is that what we're experiencing is enslavement of all of those elements of the living world, of living creation. So the question is how do we reconcile the enslavement of all living beings, not just human beings, but all living beings in a way that ensures our survival because in the bottom line, that's what we're talking about.

(20:53):

Then they talk about leadership, which is very interesting because it's like nothing in our world today, given our recent experience with the election. Because as I said, it's obvious to me that we are in a kind of crisis mode right now, and it's being reflected in our choice of leaders. Our choice of leaders have to look like strong men, have to look like intolerant of diversity and elements of what the Haudenosaunee are talking about, it's just it's obvious and there's a certain kind of religious force that is sweeping them into power.

(21:48):

According to the book, in accordance with our ways we are required to hold many kinds of feasts and ceremonies, that is leaders are required to hold many kinds of feasts and ceremonies, that can best be described as giveaways. In the Northwest, native people like Kwakiutl and others, Hidatsa, they had elaborate forms of giveaways that they called potlatch, but this is true for many, if not all, indigenous peoples. It is that said that among our people, our leaders, those whom the Anglo people insist on calling chiefs, the real word for the leader is Hoyaneh, men of the good mind or women of the good mind are the poorest of us. They have the least because they give it all away.

(22:47):

By the laws of our culture, our leaders are both political and spiritual leaders. They are leaders of many ceremonies that require the distribution of great wealth. As spiritual and political leaders, they provide a kind of economic conduit, the distribution, redistribution of the stuff of

life. To become a political leader, a person is required to be a spiritual leader, and to become a spiritual leader, a person must be extraordinarily generous in terms of material goods.

(23:26):

So leadership in among the Haudenosaunee means on the one hand they're very tough, tough-minded, but also very humble. They're serving the people and they're generous. They're generous with their time, they're generous with all their worldly possessions. This is diametrically opposed to modern ideas of strong leadership. Strong leadership essentially, if I'm to guess, over the next four years, strong leadership means being extraordinarily selfish, extraordinarily focused on one's own personal gain. And this comes with a kind of monetary value system. Look out because it's going to get really bad, I predict, in the next few years. So I wanted to include that idea of leadership as well.

(24:39):

All right. So now, moving to value change for survival. So value change for survival is the title of the epilogue of this final chapter, but it's actually a report that was given at the United Nations in 1991. So celebrating its 40th year in 1995, remember the United Nations was established in 1945 immediately after the Second World War. So in 1985, the United Nations established the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders. In other words, spiritual leaders and political leaders coming together to discuss human survival.

(25:30):

So this international group of about, I don't know, I've seen a picture of this group at Oxford. There's probably maybe like 500 people in this group. It's huge. The Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa, Archbishop of Canterbury at the time, Senator Al Gore before he was vice president, President Mikhail Gorbachev who's passed away, and that's just to name a few. And they met for six years in New York, Moscow, Oxford, and Tokyo. Representing Native America was Oren Lyons, Joaguisho, Faith Keeper of the Turtle Clan of the Onondaga Nation. At the forum's final meeting in Tokyo, the group was called upon to summarize their work by the executive coordinator, Akio Matsumura. All agreed the work could be distilled in four words, value change for survival. Now, Oren speaks about value change for survival regularly. And what I'm submitting to you is that the values that we have to aspire to should be indigenous ones, because indigenous peoples have been organizing themselves with their various languages around their lands for millennia, and it's something that we should really pay attention to, listen to, and think about.

Jordan Brady Loewen-Colon (27:13):

Do you need help catching up on today's topic or do you want to learn more about the resources mentioned? If so, please check our website at podcast.doctrineofdiscovery.org for more information. And if you like this episode, review it on Apple, Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. And now, back to the conversation.

Philip P. Arnold (27:34):

So I might've played this for you before, but I want to play it again in this context of, it's a YouTube called Value Change for Survival. It's part of the Wampum Chronicles. It's a discussion with Oren, probably 15 years ago now, maybe 10, at Onondaga Lake where the great law piece was founded thousands of years ago.

Oren Lyons (28:06):

We begin this conversation with our historical perspective but also with the understanding of where we are in this contemporary times. We're in a very, very serious situation and we're

sending out an alarm. We're sending out an alert. We were told that when this whole earth begins to deteriorate, there's going to be certain signals that will alert you to the degradation. And the first one was the acceleration of the winds. They said, "Watch the winds. When the winds start to accelerate, you're in a downgrade." And they said, "And how people treat their children, watch how people treat their children. When they abuse and misuse the children, you're in the downgrade." You don't have to go far to see.

(29:16):

So 7 billion people, soon to be 8, soon to be 9, and we're caught in nature's law of compound. In 1950, 2.5 billion people in the world, that's 64 years ago, and today, 64 years later, we have 7 billion people. That's a problem. That's a compound action that you're not controlling. And so, we've created what they call a global warming, a situation where carbon has got into the air to such an extent now that it's impacted the very system that supports this whole planetary system. You've impacted the system. Now, what's the result of that carbon? What is the result of that toxic gases that we're releasing? Is that it too is compounded and so it's causing the ice to melt and the ice is melting very fast.

(30:34):

There was a great writer, name was Hemingway, and he wrote a story about the snows of Kilimanjaro. There is no snow there anymore. It's gone. You would think that that would concern people. You would think that they would be concerned that the ice is melting so fast, the waters are rising, and we're experiencing really change, severe change. You're not going to fix that. There's no screwdriver, there's no wrench, there's no instruments going to fix that. It's only the conduct of the people working with nature in its own laws that will bring that back into any kind of a peaceful, comprehensive way of life.

(31:28):

2000, the year 2000, we were invited to United Nations by a great gathering of religious spiritual leaders and they asked us to make a message. And so, we made that message and that message was the ice is melting. And no matter how profound your declarations are, and no matter how mind-bending, influential those statements are, the ice is melting. It's not listening to your words, it's not listening to your ego, it's not listening to your ideas, it's simply melting because that's the law. That's nature's law. And so, nature will prevail.

(32:28):

When the peacemaker planted that great tree of peace here, very symbolic tree that he planted, and he said, "This tree is going to reach to the sky and everyone can see it, this great tree of peace, based on the spiritual laws, the spiritual laws of creation." He said to our leaders and all the people, he said, "Never challenge those laws because you will not prevail." That's good instruction, but something that we don't listen to and something that we haven't done. So we've challenged those laws right up to right now, and we seem to be hell-bent I guess if you want to go in that direction, they'll be plenty hell-bent that from the consequence of what we're doing now.

(33:22):

And as global warming advances, when heat comes and rain comes, it will be wetter, here is going to get much wetter than it is. We'll have hard time getting your plant in the ground in the spring because it'd be too much rain. And then, it will dry out at the end of the year when you're looking for rain, you don't get it. And then where it's dry, it's going to get drier. Right now, California is in a crisis. They have one year of water left. Can you imagine? No, it's hard to imagine. Here is the most brilliant as they tell us, technologically smart people in the world running out water and being surprised by it. How come we're running out of water? What happened? It's pretty late in the day. It's pretty late in the day. But let's see how this goes.

(34:49):

Beetles, nature. You can't negotiate with a beetle. They're not going to listen to you, because they're going to eat your trees. That's all you can do. Everything was in balance at one time. The beetle could eat the tree, the tree would survive. But now, with things getting warmer, the beetle has two life cycles. The second life cycle will kill that tree in one year. And that's what he's doing. He's chewing his way right up the West Coast all the way to Alaska. He's killing trees. He's over here just coming over here. He's going to chew these trees down now. How do you negotiate with a beetle? Well, you don't, you can't. He's got a different leader and listens to a different leader. Nature is what peacemakers said. Don't challenge those laws because you can't prevail.

(35:45):

And so, common sense and the message that we're sending you right now, the message we're talking to you about, what we're saying is listen, listen. We're all people, that's where indigenous people have something to add to this discussion because they talk about long-range thinking. They talk about seven generations. They talk about responsibility to the future. No discussion about gold or silver or money. Discussion about protecting water, protecting life. That's what this discussion is about now. We don't have a lot of time, and so this message that we're sending, this message that we're saying right now is a message of common sense. It's just common sense to do what's right. To share, the message is to share, share equally everything.

(36:57):

And then, the prophecies that we have that we've been told, and we're careful with those prophecies because they're not good, they're not good but there is hope in that prophecy when actually when the peacemaker said, "It's up to you." When the peacemaker finished this great work here, a woman asked him, she said, "Well, now that you've done all this, how long is it going to last?" He said, "That's up to you." So everything is in our hands. It's up to us. There's no lightning coming, no savior coming, no nothing coming. Only the law one way or the other. Don't wait. So the fight is on, I would say. Not over, it's not over at all. I think we're at a good time. It's a good time to be here actually, good time to be in a fight. It's a good time. Let's see what you're made off and see how strong you are. Value change for survival, change your values. The other equation is we're not going to be here. Simple as that.

Philip P. Arnold (38:40):

So as I said, that's Oren talking about value change for survival. And I think in the end there, he was really pointing us in a direction. If it's not a solution, at least it's a way through that we need to pay attention to what really matters, protecting water, protecting life. So as you move into your jobs, and I hope, like I said, hope that you all get great jobs, but you're going to be working for corporations that have different priorities. Some of them will be priorities that align with the future survival of the world. Others who are indifferent to that, that the bottom line is the only thing that matters. So how do we move ahead in a way where we have a viable future? Because consumerism, and I want you to think about this, consumerism is built completely on a fabrication, fabrication of values.

(39:53):

We talked about how the monetary economy is completely an act of faith. So it is easily changed, easily manipulated. It has no intrinsic value in and of itself, and yet that's what we're all chasing, include myself in it. It's what we're all chasing is the almighty dollar. I think first step is to realize that this is all just a complete mythic or a fiction, we'll say, a fiction. Creation came out of somebody's mind. It's not real, but it is kind of so we have to pay attention to it and it's determining how we're going to be able to survive into the future.

(<u>40:49</u>):

So there's another movement afoot. There are different kinds of solutions that are coming up, alternatives to this way of thinking. Some people, for example, in the film Buy Now, there are people who are doing a kind of waste management practice. They're recycling goods, they're digging through trash. And this includes people in other countries where we ship our iPhones or old tablets or whatever, that we no longer use, millions of these a day. And so, they're focused on the end process. One of the things that comes up in the film is that corporations really need to figure out how things can last longer and how things can enter the waste cycle more responsibly.

(<u>41:55</u>):

There's another movement going on, it has been for almost 15 years now, called Rights of Nature. So the Rights of Nature movement, for example, legally imbues lakes like Lake Erie, for example, or rivers or mountains or trees, old growth forests with rights that they have a right to exist. So this is lawyers working, environmental lawyers working through the legal system in various ways. I'll give you an example of that later. Then, also, Winona LaDuke I think in this epilogue, she's an Anishinaabe woman activist, but also a Harvard-trained economist, and she talks about how when we create our mega projects, development projects for strip mines or whatever, oil pipelines, those kinds of things, we only think in terms of its profitability, its monetary value. That's how corporations think.

(<u>43:17</u>):

But if we can think more long-term, seven generations thinking, and think of a triple bottom line, something that she didn't create, but it's now taught in Whitman, for example, a lot of business schools, that we have to also think in terms of its environmental costs as well as its spiritual costs, sort of the costs to our treasured environments. So thinking in terms of the triple bottom line when working on these projects. Anyway, there's a film called the Invisible Hand that it illustrates many of these movements that are going on right now.

(44:11):

So in 2010, also, in 2010, there was an indigenous president of Bolivia, Evo Morales, who created changes in the constitution of Bolivia, which I think have been rescinded since then because there was a hostile takeover of Bolivia by corporate interests because Bolivia is known to have a lot of lithium. And so, that's going to be very important for our batteries ironically in sustainable vehicles or electric vehicles and that sort of thing. But anyway, at this time, they came up with an inspiring statement that we can imbue the earth, we can take this indigenous perspective and really focus on how important the earth is as a living being.

(45:10):

So as we, the peoples of nations of earth, considering that we are all part of Mother Earth and an indivisible living community of interrelated and interdependent beings with a common destiny, thankfully, acknowledging that Mother Earth is a source of life, nourishment, and learning, and provides everything we need to live well. Recognizing that the capitalist system in all forms of depredation, exploitation, abuse, and contamination have caused great destruction, degradation and disruption of Mother Earth, putting life as we know it today at risk through phenomena such as climate change, convinced that in an interdependent living community, it is not possible to recognize the rights of only human beings without causing an imbalance within Mother Earth, affirming that to guarantee human rights, it is necessary to recognize and defend the rights of Mother Earth and all beings in her, and that there are existing cultures, practices, and laws that do so conscious of the urgency of taking care, decisive collective action to transform structures and systems that cause climate change and other threats to Mother Earth.

(<u>46:30</u>):

Proclaim this universal declaration of the rights of Mother Earth and call on the general assembly of the United Nations to adopt it as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations of the world and to the end that every individual and institution takes responsibility for promoting through teaching, education, and consciousness raising, respect for the rights recognized in this declaration and ensure through prompt and progressive measures and mechanisms, national and international, their universal and effective recognition and observance among all peoples and states of the world.

(47:15):

So that was their universal declaration of the rights of Mother Earth. That was done by Aymara people of Bolivia, so these are ancient peoples with indigenous values of their own, who saw that there had to be a reckoning. And so, all over the world, there are these efforts that are trying to push back against big money interests, extractive, economic interests that we read about in the Economic Hit Man that we've inhabited throughout the Industrial Revolution into the shopping season.

(47:56):

So one of the ways that we're trying to change values is to change the story of America at the Skä•noñh Center. I've gone through this in some detail, but I'll just put it here at the end because I include it in the epilogue, that we're decolonizing the narrative of the French Fort. The Jesuit relations present us with a certain idea that it was martyrs and not invaders, martyrs who tried to inculcate Christian values onto indigenous peoples, but the Haudenosaunee had their own record of that exchange, which is the Remembrance Belt just pictured here. It's the same history from different perspectives. We have settler colonial values versus the Haudenosaunee Onondaga values that are involved in that story. If we re-narrate our history in various ways and insist that that history be taught in various ways, then I think then we might also have a solution to changing our values as Oren was saying.

(49:15):

So the good news is we don't have to save the world. We don't have to save the world, we need to save ourselves. We need to change our world views. The world is going to be fine without us. How do we transform our cultural values? How do we value the world around us in different ways? This is essentially the work of religion in my view, and how we can change our values from a monetary system. And I hope to see you in the future and see you again soon.

Jordan Brady Loewen-Colon (49:56):

The producers of this podcast were Adam DJ Brett and Jordan Loewen-Colon. Our intro and outro is Social Dancing Music by Oris Edwards and Regis Cook. This podcast is funded in collaboration with The Henry Luce Foundation, Syracuse University, and Hendrick's Chapel, and The Indigenous Values Initiative. If you like this episode, please check out our website and make sure to subscribe.