

S06E12: How the Revolutionary War Reshaped Haudenosaunee Governance

Mon, Jun 08, 2026 9:46AM • 40:04

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Revolutionary War, Haudenosaunee governance, Mohawk tribe, Joseph Brant, clan mothers, decolonization, Warrior Society, Christianization, matrilineal clan system, population decline, traditional leadership, cultural preservation, trauma, condolence process.

SPEAKERS

Sandy Bigtree, Tom Porter, Philip P. Arnold, Jordan Loewen-Colon, Speaker 1

Jordan 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 introducing your hosts, Phil Arnold and Sandy Big Tree.

Philip P. Arnold 00:30

We're here with Tom Porter again, talking about the Revolutionary War and the Haudenosaunee role and the Mohawks, and how the consequences of the Revolutionary War, what that was, was for the Mohawks, and especially after Joseph Brett, and you've called him a traitor, and maybe you could just kind of tell us a story and kind of your perspective on that whole thing.

Tom Porter 00:58

Well, I first, I didn't know that he was my great great great grandfather. I didn't know that all my life for you. I just found this out only about 10 years ago, maybe not even that, maybe I didn't know that. And but they did genealogy work in Grand River, and they're the one presented me the big plaque with all my father's relatives, right to George Brett. That's how I found out before that, you know that. And it turns out that all those four Moha kings, they went to Europe, they were all cousins, and that one is, they're all cousins, so they're all my father's direct descendant from them, including, including Hendrix, and Hendrix's mother, I think, was a Mohegan, father was a Mohawk, but they put him up as a chief, Hendricks, even though he was a Mohegan, but I think back in those days they followed more what your natural ability and talent was, rather than being technical about your lineage.

Philip P. Arnold 02:09

Yeah,

Tom Porter 02:10

I think you see, but nowadays we're, we're more following more rules of European style bureaucracy. It's not, it's not. We don't recognize the natural talents that we're born with, or whatever. So, if technically you're not a Mohawk, then you can't be a chief. But back in those days, that didn't matter. It only mattered if you had the ability, the skill to lead, and you had all the natural abilities, they recognized that they were more natural in those days.

Philip P. Arnold 02:45

Well, did it have also to do with just the fact that there are fewer people? I mean, after colonialism, there's disease and there's warfare, and there's just fewer people. So,

Tom Porter 02:55

so what? Because there were fewer people still embracing that, they had to hide to do that, they couldn't come out in the open because the consequences were severe, so that didn't help the colonization. The colonization was bad enough as it

Philip P. Arnold 03:13

is,

Tom Porter 03:14

but then when you put the other one under another suppression, self suppression, like within our own people, so so, so, they didn't have much choices anymore, so, so that's how it became now, where, where the titles are passed, just like in the monarchy of England, it goes into the line of the family of that particular family, not the whole clan, just from your, if your grandma was a clan mother, then her daughter, and then her daughter, like that, it's not really supposed to be like that,

Philip P. Arnold 03:51

right? No, the clan decision, the whole

Tom Porter 03:53

clan is supposed to be their decision, and who's going to be the clan mother if they're, if they got the talent, and if they got the natural gift for that, then that's the one that would become that.

Sandy Bigtree 04:05

We're talking about survival, though. And even their names were changed when the church came in. They targeted the matrilineal clan system and tried to reorganize society under patriarchal Christian, so

Tom Porter 04:27

where we are today, a lot of those people, because the population was small, because of the wars and measles and smallpox, and all that. I used to even hear that the Senecas had lost a lot of their men, and so they had to call the Mohawk men to go there to impregnate their woman in order to keep the population going, and that's that's where, how come John Mohawk has the name John Mohawk because. That time of history.

Philip P. Arnold 05:01

Wow,

Tom Porter 05:02

I don't know if that's true or not, but that's what they.. I heard that John Stone told me that himself, and usually John is got his stuff accurate.

Philip P. Arnold 05:14

Oh, he was a great writer. Just, yeah.

Tom Porter 05:16

So, my point is, now we have clan mothers and everything, but because of that period of history where they had to hold on in a small number to keep it going, they had to pass it down to their daughters, because that's the only one that grew up or has knowledge of

Philip P. Arnold 05:33

it,

Tom Porter 05:34

whereas all the clan, they were Christianized, they were sent to residential school, whatever, so they can't depend on them anymore. They didn't want nothing too much to do with it, only few upholding it. So it passed down in close family. So now we got, they got used to it now, they're used to that now. So they don't realize there's a reason why it happened. So how do you detach them from that monarchy kind of environment, that's how clan mothers and chiefs are put up now. That's part of the decolonization we have to go through, so we have to find a way how to do that, where they, where we don't have to force them or criticize them, but how do we, how do what method do we use to retrieve them to revitalize or make it back to the way it's supposed to be. Well,

Sandy Bigtree 06:35

when the peacemaker came, he was spreading this message with Hiawatha Java's saying, then the Tata Taos mind is turned, but the whole thing was that everybody united, and they agreed, yeah, to the peace message, because, because,

Tom Porter 06:52

because, even today, with all the interruption of tradition, it's doing pretty good, actually, but, but there's still interruption from what it's supposed to be, so to how do we fix it? Back, I always, I always myself describe our leaders, kind mothers and leaders, and and how they hold council, they're still doing it, and everything to the best, I guess, that they can. At least that's what is claimed, and sometime I agree, too, that it is. And then other times I don't agree, because I think they could do better. So I describe it as a rattlesnake, and the rattlesnake sheds its skin, and so if you see a rattlesnake skin shed it, you'll get scared, because you think it's a real rattlesnake, but it's not moving, it's just the skin's dead, it's not nothing. So our grand council leaders, it's like that rattlesnake shed its skin, it doesn't have movement, it doesn't, it looks like a real rattlesnake, but I don't have life, and that's the way our confederacy, I look

at it today. I don't know if I'm right or wrong, but that's my analyzation, or my, the way I see it, and so, so how do we get rid of that, shut its skin, and get the real rattlesnake back.

Philip P. Arnold 08:26

You guys, you guys were like, you said, in just a, you know, an hour ago, you said your generation were the ones that really kicked the door in. Yeah, and I think that's the right way to say it, because those were really bad times in the 50s, you know, and 60s, the maybe the worst, you know, you had termination and all that going on, but then we had to go to

Tom Porter 08:51

jail, yeah, few times to

Sandy Bigtree 08:53

take that stand before the Religious Freedom Act, for people to take that stand, and you're identifying with being traditional, not Christian. That was that took so radical, and there's so

Philip P. Arnold 09:11

many.. I mean, even even the Aimers, you know? You know, Oren is tells you a story, it tells us stories going out to, you know, Wounded Knee or wherever, and the aim people just didn't know how to behave, because they grew up in a city, and you know, they, but they really wanted to recapture that, and there you were telling them, you know, about the original instructions, you know, so that's whenever Russell means used

Tom Porter 09:39

to see me, he goes the other way, because he always had whiskey on his Brussels beans. Oh,

Philip P. Arnold 09:45

yeah, he always had whiskey on his

Tom Porter 09:48

bretts. I saw your tradition. I tell him right to his face, real tradition, don't use alcohol, they'll get it our ways.

Philip P. Arnold 09:58

Well, I think maybe we need something. Like that again, you know, I mean, you know, wake up

Sandy Bigtree 10:03

a lot of people today that are Christian and profess to be Christian, and then they also profess to be traditional, and I don't see how that can happen, and I wasn't raised traditional like you were, so I can't, and this is what you're talking about. I did raise this before. You told me, you know, it's kind of watching our people. It's like an accordion, you know, the sound is coming out different. It's just always in flux,

Tom Porter 10:37

but we were told by our grandmother, them not to, not to disown them or to be mean to them. They're lost, and one day they'll wake up and come home. So, so we should not burn bridges. Always make it so there's a way for them to come home,

Sandy Bigtree 10:58

but it is really hard when you have, you're having to talk about the laws of the United States being really Christian-based through the doctrines of discovery that Christians have the right to force you to change your names, force you to go to boarding schools. You know, this is the legacy we all have to unpack now. There's so many damage.

Philip P. Arnold 11:20

Well, I'll tell you, there's a lot of people, a lot of Christians in our department that are trying to recover from their own upbringing. They don't have the resources of, you know, long house or something else, you know, and that's, you know, some of our students are recovering from abusive childhoods when they were raised, you know, very Christian, you know, very fundamentalist, you know, that that term fundamentalist means, you know, that they were, they were, they were not allowed to be children, you know, and experience, you know, be free, and so I think a lot of people are experiencing a similar kind of frustration, I guess. Sometimes

Sandy Bigtree 12:05

some talk about fixing their Christian religions.

Philip P. Arnold 12:10

Oh yeah, reforming.

Sandy Bigtree 12:12

How do you do that? Yeah, when it's a faith-based religion. Longhouse is not faith-based, because these relationships are real, these special relationships with the natural world and with each other. They're not imagined. It's not based in faith. None of it is.

Tom Porter 12:36

Yeah. Well, I think that the main thing, I think the key to it is to always contain the peace within yourself, the teachers, so that you don't have to fear them, so that trust can be built and get bigger and bigger between the teacher and people who are lost or got lost their way, but the minute, the minute we threaten them, or, or they

Philip P. Arnold 13:06

feel unsafe, then they

Tom Porter 13:07

feel unsafe, and the trust goes away. So now you burn your bridge, you've got no more way to get over to them. That's a tricky thing, especially with the Warrior Society, and the dogmas of colonization, and you mix all that up, it's like a marble that's got all kind of cloudy in there, you don't even know what's that, what's really in the marble.

Philip P. Arnold 13:32

Well, do you? Maybe see our listeners, this is the podcast, maybe our listeners don't know about the Warrior Society. I mean, it's complicated. I know up at Akwesasne, particularly. Maybe you could kind of talk a little bit about that, give them some sense. Well,

Tom Porter 13:50

first of all, I don't think that some of the traditional leadership, most of them, I would say not all of them, but most of them think that there's no such thing as a warrior society, and they're somewhat right in a way, but the way the warriors of today are doing things is not really what a warriors of long ago would do, there's a big difference between day and night, so that brings confusion, and a lot of the young people don't know or have nothing to judge what a real warrior is about, either. What's his name, Torada? Before Leon Shenandoah, he used to translate the word the warrior, the word for warrior, and it doesn't mean a warrior, it doesn't mean like what people think it should mean. He says, like. 50, that's what they call the men, it's any man, it doesn't, it's not a society man, it's any men, whether it's old, young, or middle aged, or a baby little boy, that means in what Leon says, and I can see it too, because it's almost the same language as my language, the discon legislative that it's like us, can it's a bones, so the gift that means they're carrying it on their back, they're carrying

Philip P. Arnold 15:34

it,

Tom Porter 15:35

so the bones, they're carrying it from our ancestor, that's the job of the men is to carry the bones of our ancestor to the future, that's what that means. Don't mean warrior society, but a lot of young people don't know that. See, so if you run your, you run all your ceremony from midwinter all the way, maple ceremony and planting ceremony, and bean ceremony, harvest ceremony, all the way one year, and you embrace all that. That's what a man's job is, and a woman too. That's what they're talking about, carrying the bones of an ancestor. All ceremonies never stop. So, your job is to protect our language, to protect our clans, to protect our everything

Philip P. Arnold 16:27

rather than,

Tom Porter 16:30

but now, now, even though in the great law it says that he uprooted the tree, and then he comes summons all of the men to put their weapons of war in there. Some of the leadership thinks it's forever, you can't, but I always tell people I don't think that's what it really means, that you forever, because you have to hunt the deer, you got to use your weapon, you got to use your spear, your club bury that for that, and so if we're in a room here and children in here, grandchildren here, woman in here, and all of a sudden somebody should put that door open and got a gun or a hatchet or a knife is ready to stab you, and kids, are we going to say, "Oh, we bury our weapons under the tree, we can't depend. No, if somebody hangs here, your impulse is right away to no matter what, to try to take that away from them, so they don't hurt you. So that's that's what the men will do, you protect your people, your women, your

kids, so they have to be careful when they say buried, they have to be more technical to detail and explain what does that mean.

Philip P. Arnold 17:49

Yeah, so

Tom Porter 17:50

you don't get caught defenseless,

Philip P. Arnold 17:53

right? Right, not to be the guy coming in, yeah, not to be the aggressive that's trying to hurt,

Tom Porter 18:00

but then also other Indians. I don't know if Ojibwe or Algonquin or whoever they used to call us the rattlesnake people, especially Mohawks, get that name, but all Iroquois, they would call us that rattlesnake people, because in our law, too, if somebody bother us, we always tell them stop, don't bother us. Then, if the second time they continue to bother, they warn it more strongly this time, but they don't do nothing, they just warn them, and then the third one, that's when they fight them and strike them, and that's why they call us Rattlesnake, because Rattlesnake never bothered you. He warned you first, and you gotta, he warn you again, but if you continue, he now, he, but he can bite you, and that's why they call us the Rattlesnake people. So, it's

Philip P. Arnold 18:57

not like a, not like your snakes or something, it's not, it's not a no, it's no, it's our descriptive term. Wow,

Tom Porter 19:05

it's the procedure of so that you don't get angry right away. You always give a first warning, second warning, and that's the same thing when you discipline kids, that's what you do too. That's when you do great feathers, what you do is free again. Remember telling them drug telling them repetitive all the time. Three,

Philip P. Arnold 19:25

wow.

Sandy Bigtree 19:27

Well, I was reading, you know, about the Jesuits coming into, like, Wyandotte territory, and Emu, and when they brought Christianity in there, they wouldn't even let them fish or hunt unless they accepted Christ, and then they were trying to get the children. Right, this is the early 1600s trying to get the children, you know, educated and Christianized. So they came in full force, and it before. That the Wyandot and Enya were under the great binding piece, so it was a different relationship. But once the Jesuits started sending all the furs to Europe and creating, you know, this antagonism with the natural world and with their neighbors, that's when it started. I imagine the wars started to become more frequent, and they really couldn't listen to warnings because the Jesuits were armed right with weapons, and it happened so quickly. Well, the other thing, the other thing I said

Tom Porter 20:37

in the guy who you said, whenever the European colonies people had any dealings with any other Indian people preferred trade or whatever with other else, they also made them get drunk before they would trade, so that they don't know they get cheated all the time, so the relationship has always been faltered on the other side with never the intention of being honest, so and the Indian realm that's almost foreign not to be honest. I even heard some judges say that usually non-native people, when they go to court, it's not hard for them to say they're not guilty or argue that they're not, even though they are guilty. But some judges actually said that when Ojibwes or Mohawk go to the court, they always right away say, 'Yeah, I did, I stole this, or I did like this. Need to tell it right away, whereas the non-natives, they keep lying, and that's the big difference, because it's in the.. it's in our.. it's in our the way we think every day, like.. so we don't really know how to lie. I

Sandy Bigtree 21:59

got a skating ticket one time, and I had to go before the judge, and she goes, 'Were you speeding? And I said, 'Yes, I was. And she goes, 'Let me rephrase this, were you speeding? And she was like, telling me to die. Yeah,

Tom Porter 22:16

well, that's what it says. Put your hand on the Bible, you tell to tell the truth, and of the truth of what the truth, you put your hand on a Bible, and you did it wrong, but they're telling you to say not guilty, so they're telling you to lie on the Bible. So I don't understand either yet.

Sandy Bigtree 22:34

And then a lot of fear, I mean, Christianity is, let's face it, a fear-based religion, really. But then they used a disease, they infected our blankets, and then they blamed it that our God was weaker than their God, and just pitting you against, and people are dying every day, left and right. I mean, I just can't even imagine

Philip P. Arnold 22:59

what it was like,

Sandy Bigtree 23:00

what it must

Tom Porter 23:01

have been like, that's why, that's why, even though I had been critical of Joseph Brett before I knew I was relative to him. Well, then later, when I found out that he's my relative, maybe I better be a little bit more lenient in my criticism, but then of course I wasn't there when he was a born or the circumstances by which they had to live the environment that they had in the life they had and whatever forces were against them I wasn't there so so some of the people says well they all tried to do the best they could just to survive, but,

Philip P. Arnold 23:45

but you know, the consequences of his actions were more negative, I guess. You know, yeah, splitting the Confederacy things,

Tom Porter 23:55

but the positive thing is, though, is that he, he was granted that land in Six Nation for everybody to have shelter there would save lots of people. On the other hand, so if they would have stayed here, most of them would have been killed, probably.

Philip P. Arnold 24:11

Yeah, but he

Sandy Bigtree 24:11

was completely manipulated, yeah, yeah, with Christianity, and that has nothing to do with being kinder to him, or, you know, not criticizing him as much. It's about let's talk about those systems that have infiltrated us all. Yeah,

Tom Porter 24:28

yeah. And that's the same thing with the businessmen now that have cigarettes and all kind of stuff. They're making money in marijuana. They, in their mind, they're trying to be capitalist or make money for their family, and so, but they were never raised with tradition that would guide them to think otherwise,

Philip P. Arnold 24:48

right?

Tom Porter 24:49

So, so it's not really their fault,

Philip P. Arnold 24:51

right?

Tom Porter 24:52

Because how many? 200 years of being taught this is business, but it is

Philip P. Arnold 24:58

drama too. It's. They're working out of a trauma, and you know, being raised Christian myself, I know that there is trauma, because I think I, you know, I tell my students this, I think Christianity is a death cult, where indigenous traditions, native traditions are all about life, you know, really about trying to promote life, and what you were talking about, two poles, the positive, the negative, you know, and trying to figure out how to promote life, regenerate life, you know, rather than, rather than be focused on the death of the world, you know,

Sandy Bigtree 25:36

caring for death, yeah,

Philip P. Arnold 25:37

right. So I think we're all traumatized to some degree, we're all

Tom Porter 25:45

sorted in the same boat, and this boat is getting pretty crowded. You should

Philip P. Arnold 26:01

usually go to Nashville.

Tom Porter 26:04

Yeah, Kay Olin says that we were getting old. I said, yeah, we're on the same canoe, and this canoe is getting full. Then I say to people, I says, if you forgetful nowadays, I just, and if you don't know what I'm trying, but just give you a couple months, you'll know.

Philip P. Arnold 26:27

Do you

Jordan Loewen-Colon 26:30

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 dot doctrine of discovery.gov](http://podcast.dodiscovery.gov) work 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.

Tom Porter 26:49

Even though the word people did things to my own family and my own health and all that, I still, I still don't hate them, I still don't disown them. I just consider that they were never taught the right way, so what they're doing, they think it's right. So maybe one day they will wake up, and I will be there to welcome them home.

Philip P. Arnold 27:15

You've always been that way. I mean, we've known you for a long time, and I was thinking, you know, it was 1999 when you first spoke, or I invited you to speak, and John Mohawk was there, and Oren and Audrey was there, you know. They, we had a little conference here, you know. Do you

Tom Porter 27:33

remember that time? Well, you're there in Buffalo when John Mohawk, they had invited, and at the University in Buffalo, John Moore goes in there, and Bob Ben Tone and Billy Meyer, not Bill Myer, Mike Myers, to hang around together all the time, and so when we're having the conflict in Akwesasne, so they wanted one week to invite one fraction to tell their story, their side, and then the other one, myself and others, is going to go tell our side, so that people can understand the conflict, and I remember, so it was my turn to go there, and there was full of warriors in there too, they want to hear what I'm going to say about them, I guess, and I just said, you know all the trouble we have is because of colonization, that's why we don't have value of Indian anymore, or anything. I said, so I said, so it took them two 300

years to get us in this bad situation where we don't know ourselves. I said so, so, if, if we're going to get better, we have to decolonize every scene that was, we colonize us, they kind of, we have to decolonize, so whatever they ruin, we have to replace it, so that we big a hole again. I said, but we don't have the pleasure of having 200 years to do it, we have to do it. So, what we got to do with this is we got to circumcise it right here. And everybody started laughing, and I almost got mad at them because they're laughing almost serious. And so, when in the hall, and John Moore laughing, Mike might laugh, Bob, and they're all laughing. I said, "What's funny when I'm talking? Why you just laugh at me? They says, "Because you, you're not supposed to say circumcised. Well, I meant to cut you, don't have 200 years, so we got to cut it short. That's what I meant. They said, "No, it doesn't mean, and that's why they were John was almost rolling on the floor.

Sandy Bigtree 29:47

Now we're going to put an R-rated TV MA, or whatever.

Tom Porter 29:55

Now I know what circumcise means. Yeah, that

Speaker 1 29:59

would be a quick lesson. It, well, I never

Tom Porter 30:03

heard people never talk much of when what I did here, it just means to cut off

Philip P. Arnold 30:13

up there at Akwesasne. Now you've got warrior, you've got different long houses, right? The three different long houses, and they're all my relatives. I know, I mean, you got to negotiate between them all, but back in the early 90s, and this is when we started going up there, it was like

Tom Porter 30:33

shooting each other, shooting at each other. It

Philip P. Arnold 30:35

was like, so that was brave to be able to, you know, think about, well, how can we bring these two people, you know, six sides together?

Sandy Bigtree 30:44

Three,

Philip P. Arnold 30:44

yeah. So,

Sandy Bigtree 30:46

well, maybe they're.. I'll tell you, I'll tell you,

Tom Porter 30:49

they were shooting at us and everything, and even, even they burned my house, not the warriors, but the electric system people before that was burnt my house, and I had just finished building the house, brand new house, run it to the ground and all that, and this was in 79 In fact, John Moog and his family were living at my house. I had to abandon my house I had just built. I didn't even really finish it to go into the camp where I ran Thompson, so John was staying up, but they had just gone to Buffalo for the weekend, that's when they burned when you were Scott, so nobody was in there, but I had a cradle board in there that was at least 200 years old, belong to my great great grandmother, and it burnt up, and I have different bundles that bound medicine from my grandmothers and her grandma that they dash it to me. They all burn up too, and everything burn up all pictures of my kids when there were babies. I'll burn up everything completely, everything, but.. and I know who I know who did it well. I'm friends with them, and I never, I never put it to their face that you should burn my house, so, but they know they did wrong, but they can't have a, they don't want to talk about it, and so I said, we don't have to talk about it, it's burnt, not going to come back, so, so I'm friends with them, and if they ask me something, I'll do

Philip P. Arnold 32:24

it. Are you related to them?

Tom Porter 32:26

Some of them,

Sandy Bigtree 32:28

this was way before warriors. Yeah, this is

Philip P. Arnold 32:30

way before this was the elective. This was the elective. Yeah, so it's been a war zone periodically, you know, the up there 70s, 90s, and then so now is it less of a war zone. Well,

Tom Porter 32:48

myself, I told the people that I associate with is we tried to stop it before and our young men were killed and died over it, and nobody was ever prosecuted, and they're shooting at us and everything like they cut because we're trying to stop things, casinos and smuggling, all that, and but they've overpowered us, they're the more population than us, so we can't really win. So, rather than sacrifice any more of our people, young people, to die getting shot from our own people, it better just let them do, let it run out, fill up the gas tank, and it'll run out the gas once sometime they'll come to the realization it's better than sacrificing some young guys dead,

Philip P. Arnold 33:47

yeah.

Tom Porter 33:48

And so that's that's the position that I've taken out. So I'm friends with all of them now, that and they all say hello to me. We talk and say in passion, but if I got mad, we wouldn't be able to do that. It took, it took 25 years to where they can say hi and mean it.

Philip P. Arnold 34:09

Wow, and it was hard on Sandy was talking about how was hard on your health. Yeah, I had a magic heart attack that was that was there over 30 years ago, yeah,

Tom Porter 34:23

yeah,

Philip P. Arnold 34:24

wow, so yeah,

Tom Porter 34:26

how much killed me,

Philip P. Arnold 34:27

yeah, so if you get angry, it's not good for you either, yeah, right, or

Sandy Bigtree 34:32

grief,

Philip P. Arnold 34:33

or yeah, do you feel like you need that, you feel like maybe condolence, I mean, that was one of the only, the one of the most brilliant things about the Haudenosaunee, I think, is the need for condolence, and everybody, I don't

Tom Porter 34:49

need it, because I, because the peace that the others that taught me grew inside my, my body, my mind. So I, I wish I had enough power to not let that track me down,

Philip P. Arnold 35:06

because I remember well, Tom Porter, I'm not sorry, Jake, Jake, Jake Swamp, Jake Swamp planted a tree right out here back in 9696 it's still there, it's got a plaque and everything, but that was his message, right, that we all need condolence in some way, need to overcome the trauma. He said, you can, I remember, he said, you can go out there, you can hug that tree, you know, you can touch that tree, it's got roots, it's got, it'll connect you, and that will, that will help you get through some things, you know. And that was a pop, that was a really important message. And I think, well, they'll think about it.

Tom Porter 35:52

One time I was at the dentist in St. Regis, waiting for a dentist appointment. I was sitting in there waiting, and one of the warriors went by, and he seen me sitting there, and he backed up, and I said, "Oh, we're gonna have a conversation right here anyways. So he went like this to me, maybe we'll have

white now. So I went over there and afraid him, and he looked at me, and he says, "I want to, I want to apologize to you, he said, "because I lost my mind for a number of years, he said, and I went against you and our people, and he says, and I was misled, really misled, and start to believe in those things that people try to mislead me, and that's why I went crazy, like I almost hurt you, almost killed you, and he says he cried me, he said, I'm sorry what I did to you, and that's my condolence in action. that's a lot. That

Sandy Bigtree 37:24

one action has changed the way you're dealing this today. That's so powerful, because she didn't know what he was doing.

Tom Porter 37:33

She thought it was right.

Sandy Bigtree 37:37

So many people are unwilling to admit something they've

Tom Porter 37:42

done,

Sandy Bigtree 37:43

but that's where the real healing comes from.

Tom Porter 37:46

Yeah,

Speaker 1 37:47

that's so powerful.

Philip P. Arnold 37:50

I think there's a lot of that, you know, mean, you know, a lot of, lot of non-native people in that room tonight, you know, we're listening to you and get something from what you have to say, I imagine you go around the state, and it's not all native people that you're speaking to, you know, you know, you're you're someone who is open, that's what's so impressive about you, you're always open to, you know, to whomever comes, so that's kind of rare, you know. We're in Onondaga Nation territory, and we've always respected them for hanging on to what they, what they have, you know. But they're very insulated, yeah. They're not like you, yeah. And it's, it's hard to sometimes, you know, be working with well, I used

Tom Porter 38:42

to be like them too when I was younger, yeah, well, yeah, you've got to protect,

Philip P. Arnold 38:50

Mapping the Doctrine of Discovery Podcast

and I, you know, I imagine that's something your grandma told you too, you know, you've got to hang on to this, you know, so that's how they work, but I think even now, you know, I think now they're, they're more interested in maybe going out and speaking. I mean, certainly there were Onondagas in

Sandy Bigtree 39:15

the room, Central Fire,

Tom Porter 39:16

hallelujah,

Speaker 1 39:22

there. producers

Jordan Loewen-Colon 39:32

of this podcast were Adam DJ Brett and Jordan Lawn Colon. Our intro and outro is social dancing music by Orris Edwards and Regis Cook. This podcast is funded in collaboration with the Henry Luce Foundation, Syracuse University, and Hendricks Chapel, and the Indigenous Values Initiative. If you like this episode, please check out our website and make sure to subscribe.

39:54

How.