

Book Club Meeting - The Inconvenient Indian
February 1, 2018

In attendance: Sarah, Steph, Julie, Lisa, Nathan, Michelle, Nayda, Douglas

Douglas: I love the book by far out of every book we've ever read. The other ones sit on my shelf but this one I go back and I looked at it and I looked it up in YouTube. I think it's just it's fascinating part of history that in my upbringing (at my age group) we didn't learn this.

Lisa: I really enjoyed the style of it, it was funny but it wasn't funny. He just has a way of writing that is very engaging. I think about having lived through Oka and not having a clue.

Nathan: It makes you wonder about what is happening now but that we don't know about. Described visiting the Chilcotin territory and how the local indigenous people won back their land title - autonomy. Gov't can't come in and mine or make changes

Steph: I didn't care for this book because it had too many lists. I was really excited about it in the beginning, where he talked about his wife, and brought in interesting experiences, but then he lost me when he had to have so many examples for each thing. The voice and concept was very powerful and a great idea.

Michelle: I like how he didn't come across as a victim but was more of an advocate.

Julie: I see the part about the lists but I really enjoyed it and encouraged many of my family and friends to read it and it brought forth some very powerful conversations. I appreciate that even though it was a heavy read he incorporated humour into the book.

Lisa: He is not a researcher and I think perhaps he felt the need to support his "stories" of history with details and research.

Nayda: I spoke with my really good friend, whom is indigenous, that I have known since we were kids and we talked about a lot of things that she was feeling or experiencing as we were growing up. Something that she shared was how when they were out as kids in a restaurant or wherever they were always so well behaved because they knew that people were watching them. Some great conversations about the assumptions that people make.

Julie: I found myself looking at other issues (homelessness) with a different lens and wondering if this was because of my eyes being opened about assumptions that people make when they don't know everything.

Nathan: I went to the First Peoples conference and was excited to hear John Elliot speak and it was so fascinating to learn about how the children are engaged with sencoten and how they are texting in their language now, it seems like this wave of empowerment and entitlement.

Nayda: I was talking with my neighbour, who works in corrections, and they went on a retreat and had all these experiences with the elders and he said he was bawling his eyes out, had a new understanding and felt transformed. It is nice to see that these transformations are happening in areas outside of education.

Douglas: My fiance lives in Massachusetts and it was interesting to see how the first nations people have been removed from the coast, as described in the book - relocation. It is a big difference from here where we see indigenous territory near the water.

Sarah: The Umbrella lesson in the Team Drive talks about the impact of having the reserves/villages being divided and spread out.

Michelle: I think as educators we are doing a better job, on the right track, especially as a result of the Pro D that we have been doing.

Steph: I was thinking about how my thoughts have changed about the new curriculum. At first I thought it was too much but now that we have had some experiences, some proD and have tried some things that it is not as hard as I thought it would be, it comes more natural now, and it is very powerful for me and my students.

Group Discussion:

Great conversations at the recent NID about infusing indigenous ways of knowing and learning, as well as letting go of doing it all but rather just picking one thing to change. So nice to have Gail speak to the group about how important it is for us to just try.

Recognizing that through our PD collab sessions it is positive and all the speakers seem to appreciate our interest.

Lots of great discussion!

Several of our book club members talked about how they have passed the book on to colleagues, family members, and friends.