

Decolonizing Cleveland - collective imagining

A discussion surrounding indigenous community within greater Cleveland with Kyle Powys Whyte (Potawatomi)

Saturday, October 14th 10:30am-2pm
Case Western Reserve University
11130 Bellflower Rd., Clark Hall, Rm 309
(lunch will be provided)

***Please join Kyle Powys Whyte for a Charrette Discussion on Indigenous Decolonization
in greater Cleveland***

Dr. Kyle Powys Whyte is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. His research, teaching, training, and activism addresses moral and political issues concerning Indigenous peoples' relationship with the environment and the ethics of cooperative relationships between Indigenous peoples and scientific organizations. Kyle Whyte, a leading researcher and authority in the ethical and political issues surrounding climate policy and indigenous peoples, has been named as the inaugural Timnick Chair in the Humanities in the College of Arts and Letters at Michigan State University.

Indigenous movements such as the Dakota Access Pipeline often call for “decolonization” as a goal of social justice advocacy. What does decolonization mean? What are the different forms decolonization could take locally? The greater Cleveland area may assume its history starts with the formation of the U.S. and European colonization of North America. But the area is also home to a much longer history of diverse Indigenous peoples. In fact, this area has been known by many names. Moreover, more recently, Indigenous persons and communities make their home in the Cleveland area, bringing both traditions from this region and from many other regions in North America, and also beyond.

In the last 200 years, additional groups, including African-Americans, have created homes, communities and cultures in the area. But the current infrastructure, maps, buildings, artwork, and other markers of the physical landscape in the Cleveland area do not appear to include or honor these connections to Indigenous peoples and other groups. In fact, in some respects, the physical landscape and urban/suburban ecology reflect U.S. desires to take the land from other groups and erase their histories and contemporary lives. What would it mean, then, to change this situation? Indigenous movements in Ontario, for example, have sought to create physical changes in the landscape and urban/suburban ecology to reflect Indigenous histories, languages and concepts of sustainability. Is the same possible for Cleveland?

At this participatory event, Kyle, members of the Cleveland indigenous community, and representatives of the Social Justice Institute will lead us in an open discussion and envisioning process about whether decolonization has a place in the Cleveland area, what decolonization might look like, and how it might be achieved.

Open to the Cleveland community, this event is sponsored by the Beamer-Schneider Professorship in Ethics with support from the Social Justice Institute. **Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to either Renee Holland-Golphin at renee.holland@case.edu or Lisa Kollins for SJI at lbk24@case.edu by October 11.**

