



# “Doctrine of Discovery” Documentary & Dialogue April 29, 2014

As part of Minnesota’s inaugural Genocide Awareness Month, Healing Minnesota Stories is hosting a showing of the documentary film: “Doctrine of Discovery.” It will be **Tuesday, April 29, 7:00 p.m., at Hamline University’s Sundin Hall**. A post-film dialogue will be led by **filmmaker Sheldon Wolfchild**, a member of the Lower Sioux Indian Community, with **Steven Newcomb**, founder of the Indigenous Law Institute and **Howard Vogel**, professor emeritus at Hamline Law School. Please join us. The event is free and open to the public.

Last year, at the urging of the group World Without Genocide, Minnesota passed a law declaring April “Genocide Awareness Month.” Wolfchild’s film focuses on the little discussed Doctrine of Christian Discovery, the religious justification early explorers used to claim lands from indigenous nations. Based on papal bulls (edicts), the Doctrine allowed explorers to claim dominion over lands that were not already occupied by Christians. It saw native people as less than human and created the justification for killing them.

This is an important issue for Christians and others to understand, acknowledge and discuss with Native Americans. Several religious denominations have taken formal action to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. Importantly, the Doctrine remains a standing legal principal in U.S. case law. Wolfchild has extensively researched the history of Dakota people in Minnesota and he also has appeared as an actor in a number of films and television shows. Vogel is trained both in law and theology, and has written on the Doctrine of Discovery.

Co-sponsors: The Wesley Center for Spirituality, Service and Social Justice at Hamline University, World Without Genocide, Jay Phillips Center for Interfaith Learning at St. Thomas University, Cherokee Park United Church, Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Community, United Theological Seminary, MIGIZI Communications, Grace Lutheran Church/Apple Valley, and the Minneapolis Area Interfaith Initiative.

Healing Minnesota Stories is an initiative of the **Saint Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN)**. Watch the [SPIN website](http://www.spinterfaith.org) ([www.spinterfaith.org](http://www.spinterfaith.org)) for more details and other upcoming events.

