

de·col·o·ni·za·tion:

/dē,kālənə'zāSH(ə)n,dē,kälə,nī'zāSH(ə)n/

Oxford Dictionary: “*Noun*. . . the process of freeing an institution, sphere of activity, etc. from the cultural or social effects of colonization”.

To wit, unscripted television.

At its root, decolonizing unscripted television is an act of survivance¹ that nourishes Indigenous ways of knowing, being and producing. It is based on the notion that Indigenous peoples should be in charge of their own narratives which is consistent with Articles 16.1 and 16.2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as they apply to the commercial media sector.

Decolonizing unscripted television is an active, ongoing process and a collective pursuit among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. It is aimed at reforming and reconstructing the dominant view of the unscripted television genre to be healing and empowering for storytellers, cast, crew and viewers.

At IndigeKin Productions, our vision is to produce exemplary works that inspire and enlighten audiences. We target mainstream broadcasters and audiences but we are not mainstream in our views nor how we work, tell stories and make decisions. We challenge the status quo through self-determination, alternative narratives, amplifying Indigenous perspectives and creating inspiring content. We do not exploit or contrive for the sake of entertainment.

Although unscripted television is intended to reflect “real life”, it is very white, heteronormative and cisgender which can impact how we see others and understand ourselves. IndigeKin’s work challenges this artificial worldview and aims to contemporize it. As such, our productions aren’t simply about or by Indigenous people. As Indigenous producers who are committed to inclusion, our work reflects many gender identities, sexualities, races, body types, faiths, abilities and social classes.

Decolonizing unscripted television can shape public opinion by not perpetuating negative stereotypes and by shedding light on important issues. Our unscripted productions are an arena for expressing identities, promoting positive social change and sparking viewers to celebrate life.

As individuals, we and our team members decolonize ourselves as part of the process. We rely on and are grateful for our Elders, Teachers and Ancestors who share their wisdom and guidance along the way.

Notes:

1. Coined by Gerald Vizenor “survival” and “resistance” combined. From Sage Hatch: “[An act of ‘survivance’ is Indigenous self-expression in any medium that tells a story about our active presence in the world now.](#)”
2. We are committed to [ImagineNATIVE’s On-Screen Protocols & Pathways: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories.](#)