



THE BROWN HOMESTEAD

Transcript: Enduring Oka

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[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:05.6] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to the Open Door, brought to you by The Brown Homestead, in the heart of the beautiful Niagara Peninsula.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:17.4] Andrew Humeniuk: Welcome back to The Open Door. We're kicking off our new season, season four, with a trip to the movies. Today is National Canadian Film Day, which celebrates the diversity of Canadian culture through film, and here at The Brown Homestead, we are participating by hosting a free screening of the award-winning film, *Beans*. The title is the nickname of the protagonist, a 12-year-old

Mohawk girl living in Kahnawake, a Mohawk reserve outside of Montreal, in the summer of 1990.

This was of course the summer of the Kanehsatake Resistance, also known as the Oka Crisis, a protest and armed standoff between Mohawk protesters and the Quebec police and later, the Canadian Army, which serves as the context and focal point for this coming-of-age story and I'm very happy today to welcome the award-winning filmmaker of Beans, Tracey Deer. Welcome Tracey.

[0:01:08.7] Tracey Deer: Hi, happy to be here.

[0:01:10.5] AH: It's wonderful to talk to you and I'm looking forward to talking to you about Beans and about your other work but let's start first with Oka, the Kanehsatake Resistance, which I consider to be a critical event in Canadian history.

[0:01:22.6] TD: It's a watershed moment. I think for indigenous people, but also for this country and it's the backdrop of the film.

[0:01:29.3] AH: Now, I mentioned the protest and the armed standoff but for listeners who are less familiar with it, the actual details, how would you summarize what happened that summer?

[0:01:38.5] TD: I will do my very best because it is a massive event with many moving parts but in a nutshell, the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake, which is about 45 minutes outside of Montreal, the neighboring community of Oka wanted to expand the golf course onto what has been disputed land essentially for centuries. The Mohawks rightfully claim it as their land but the neighboring community of Oka claimed it as their land.

So, when the community decided to develop this land, the Mohawk said, "Enough is enough." And they occupied that land so that it couldn't be developed. That peaceful protest ended up becoming what is now the Kanehsatake resistance when the provincial government sent in the riot squad and it kicked off a violent armed conflict

between Mohawk people and the province and ultimately the country when the army was sent in as well, all over nine holes of golf.

[0:02:38.4] AH: And it was really startling how it escalated so quickly and to be pretty blunt, it was in the analysis afterwards, there was a lot of discussion about how the initial contact was mishandled by the Quebec police and handled poorly, which led to the premier requesting the Army be sent in which was, let's say, overkill in the worst kind of way and created a very dangerous situation for everyone.

When you talk about legacy, my argument would be that it didn't really lead to the kind of change that it should have, being such a watershed moment as you call it.

[0:03:10.3] TD: Beans is a period film, it happened in 1990 but when I do talk about it, I do like to make sure audiences realize that these types of events, these types of armed conflict are still happening across the country between indigenous people and either the provinces or the country in dispute of indigenous rights and values.

[0:03:32.8] AH: I'm curious you were there, how were the Mohawk communities around Montreal changed by these events and how did they react to it? I hope you'll say, recover from the trauma of this.

[0:03:43.1] TD: Yes. Well, one of the other positive things I think that came out from that summer and what makes it a watershed moment for indigenous people definitely is, it was the Kanehsatake resistance. It was a time when indigenous people banded together, stood up, and said, "Enough." And since that time, you know, this type of resistance has been going on now across the country.

And we are much more united together in these fights whereas before, it was small community fighting. It was David and Goliath essentially. When we can all get together and we can all stand up for one another, that's when it seems the governments start to pay attention, the communities around us start to pay attention. So, I think that kind of rallying is now of course very, very common.

And of course, with social media and the reach and the way we can organize so quickly these days, that's apparent and clear but I believe that all really began after the Kanehsatake resistance in summer. In terms of you know, healing from that summer, absolutely. You know, the relationships between the communities both Kanehsatake and my own community, Kahnawake with our immediate neighbors was very hostile for quite a while after that summer.

You know, for everyone else, the bridge was reopened, the project was halted but it wasn't all happy and roses for us after that. You know, our communities had been at war with one another and so it's still incredibly hostile and it was scary to leave the community. You know, as a 12-year-old girl not knowing what we would face, you know, there was stores with signs that said, "No Indians allowed."

If we were out in public, my mom would you know, give us the rules of, "If anyone came up to us, get away. Get away from them immediately." That type of thing. So, it was a scary time for a while and it took time for that healing to happen between communities. I will say, now, it's mostly harmonious. I mean, sure, there's still things but it's a much different time, and in relation to the film that I made, this kind of peace and harmony is important to me and it's valuable.

And so, in making this film, I didn't want to open up any old wounds within the community. So, a lot of the big recreations we do in the film, we actually shot them 40 to 45 minutes outside of the space that they actually happened because that was not my intent, was to you know, destroy what we've all worked really hard to build over this last 30 years.

[0:06:29.2] AH: That's an interesting area, basically talking about not opening old wounds and you're talking about in reference to the community but like Beans, you were yourself a 12-year-old girl growing up amongst this and I have to think that was something you had to navigate in the making of this film was revisiting some of your own experiences and you didn't have the opportunity to relocate your experience, you were making this film.

[0:06:54.0] TD: It was incredibly difficult and talking about it still brings up a lot. So, the writing process took about eight years, mostly because some of those memories were buried so deep and I had so much resistance bringing them back and not just bringing them back but then, having to put words down on a page, you know, to remember exactly where my mother said to remember her cries, to remember my sister's cries, to remember the slurs.

To remember, it was one thing, to put words to it was another. So, the writing process was very, very challenging and I had moments of PTSD. You know, I'd sit down to write and I would start shaking or I would get nauseous. I would start crying and I'd have to stop. I would just say, "Nope, not today." And like, I'd get up and walk away and say, "I'll try again another day." And that day could take months.

I was very fortunate to have partners on this that never gave up on me. I'm really grateful to them because there are times where I think I was ready to give up, I was scared, I was scared of not doing the story justice. I wanted to be a filmmaker ever since I was 12 and that was the same time that I lived through this, and so as a 12-year-old, the dream was one day, I'm going to make it against all odds.

I'm going to become a filmmaker and when I do, I'm going to tell this story and so, I had a lot riding on it just for myself, for that little 12-year-old girl. So, the fear of letting her down and letting down the dream was huge. So, it took eight years but then it was there. It was all there and it was everything I wanted to say, and then we were off to the races and it was time to make this film.

And that was a whole another difficult time for me, figuring out how to make this film in a way that was safe for everyone involved. There were times on set I needed to go to some of my trusted partners, my DOP, my co-writer, and just hug it out for a minute, take some deep breaths. What I kept reminding myself in those moments was that unlike when I was 12 and powerless, I now had all the power.

I was the director, I was telling the story and I was able to tell it the way I wanted to tell it and I was surrounded by people who were supporting me in doing so, and remembering

that I was no longer powerless was one way to keep myself grounded and keep me able to doing the work. See, even though it was very, very hard, it was also incredibly healing because again, this was something I've carried for a long, long time.

I still find myself processing it, it influenced me on so many levels, both good and bad that summer, and to make this film and sort of give it back to the world and say that you know, as a 12-year-old, this was never mine. This never should have been mine and to give it back to the world and say, "Here, now you take it and you do something with this, you go into the world and try to make it better so that this doesn't happen again." That really is my goal and to be able to do that was very healing for me.

[0:10:04.0] AH: I'm glad to hear you say that, that there was a healing side of it and then, and there's so much harder in this film that I can see that and I hope also too, there was healing for your community.

[0:10:15.3] TD: I will say that my community has never forgotten. I mean, this is something that we don't forget. It's something that lives on, this is what intergenerational trauma is all about. So, all the things that have happened, you know, it lives within the community, with individuals and it gets passed down. So, it's Canadians, it's the country, it's our government, it's our people in power that I really do feel need that reminding.

As you said, we were still – we still have these types of incidents happening across the country. We didn't learn the lesson, we didn't learn the lesson we needed to learn. So, for all those reasons, I think it's important to remember.

[0:10:53.9] AH: Well, because history is not a moment, history is a continuation, and really that incident which you know, we're isolating by talking about it, was the continuation you said earlier of, of centuries of frustration, of dealing with a dispute other than the justice that goes back to the early 1700s in terms of that land particularly.

[0:11:12.0] TD: That land particularly and also just multiple acts of genocide that have been perpetrated to try to make us go away.

[0:11:19.2] AH: Going back to your own personal experience, you have a quote on your website where you say, “Oka was when I learned that I was different.”

[0:11:25.3] TD: Yeah. Before that, you know, I was growing up in my community, I wasn't really aware that being indigenous was a problem in this country. I certainly was learning about it, I was in a Mohawk immersion school, I was learning all about my culture, I had my language but I didn't at that point know that that was a problem for other people and it was this summer that I learned that and I tried to portray in the film at least, the early part, the fun of it.

So, for me and my sister, it was like, we were living in a movie. It was this massive adventure, you know, the community was shut down, our families were no longer going to work, there was no longer gasoline in the community. So, us kids on our bikes, we were super important to be delivering messages, to go to the food bank and get food, and the food bank was like, “Oh, what are we getting today?” It was all very exciting for a 12-year-old and a 10-year-old until it wasn't.

You know, until that first experience with violence, and then all of a sudden, for me, it became very real and very confusing. The grownups, my parents, they all had a lot on their plates and it was – I can imagine what a stressful time it was for them. So, they weren't doing a lot of talking with us, they weren't doing a lot of explaining. So, we were really left on our own to try to understand what was happening, that was difficult.

[0:12:49.9] AH: I have no doubt and I smiled when you were saying that because I relate to that idyllic sense of childhood. Now, in 1990, I was a little bit older than you, I was – in the summer of 1990 I was a 21-year-old student in Montreal. I sort of left my idyllic home to go out in the world, and watching these events unfold around the corner from where I was living, had a huge impact on me.

And if I had a quote, it would be Oka was when I learned that Canadian history was different than what I'd been taught and most people, I admit to being one of them initially, bought into, you know, the official position that the Mohawk reaction was unjustified and violent but despite the fact, it continued to be largely reported that way. A

lot of people began to read between the lines and realized that there was a lot more to the story.

And become aware that the, for lack of a better word, the apparatus of government, including incredibly, our military was being used to oppress a group of people who had very legitimate grievances.

[0:13:52.2] TD: So, that notion that you know, people started waking up once we were really in the thick of things, that was a really important part of this because how long would we have been able to hang on without a groundswell of support? I don't know. We were cut off from food, from medicine, from telephones, electricity at one point. So, how long could we have held out? I'm not sure.

But this groundswell of support that did end up happening towards the middle and of course, as the crisis went on is an important part in the film. Towards the end, you know, I use archival footage in the film and the protests that started happening across the country by Canadians, in support of my people and it was important to me in the film to show that. It wasn't the entire country against us, you know, this was a really complicated time, and many Canadians stepped up to help us.

[0:14:53.0] AH: And I think you deserve certain kudos for the generosity of including that in the film because given the – some of the really venomous things that you had to deal with, you could be forgiven for focusing more on that but there is a great balance there. Obviously, we've talked about how close to your heart the story is and I really love the character Beans and I think, really wonderfully portrayed by a young actress.

But the character Beans, who is she to you as you went through the process of writing her and bringing her to the screen? What does she mean to you now?

[0:15:30.7] TD: So, the writing process as I explained took about eight years and in the first couple of years, it was very autobiographical. I was really sticking to my own experience and that created some challenges because I wasn't at all of the event that you see in the film. I was a 12-year-old girl, you know? And it was also very personal for it to be me, for it to be my sister, for it to be my mother, for it to be my father.

So, I was really struggling in those first few years, and so once I had a story editor come on board and we really – we were starting to talk about the challenges I was having, I had the great advice of, “Well, maybe you need to fictionalize and just be able to separate yourself from her and the family so that you’re able to do what you need to do, to tell the story you want to tell.” Obviously, there’s many, many layers to the story.

So, that was great advice and then, I went about the work of doing that and just figuring out, “Okay, what parts of me do I want to keep, and then what do I want to change?” So, she did ultimately become her own character and the family became their own unit that I know very, very dearly. They are inspired by me and my family but there are some key differences as well and so, the relationship with these characters became separate from me and my family.

Which was an essential part in the storytelling process to, again, I guess, be in control, of the situation and to be there for her, both the character and the actress as we went through everything and to do everything in my power to take care of both of them was important to me and the pride I feel for both Beans and Kiawentiio, the actress, for what they went through and what they learned and how they stood back up when they fell.

You know, and because so much of it is related to my own experience, there was just, you know, a great sense of pride and love for this character and her family and my actors who brought them all to life.

[0:17:47.1] AH: And definitely a wonderful cast and you’ve talked here and elsewhere, about your partners on the project and I’m sure it was a real work of love for them as well just based on the end result. From a filmmaking perspective, I’m intrigued by the fact that you’re telling these two parallel stories as a fictional story and one is a true story that you really, it’s important to you to be faithful to that true story.

Were there times where you were constricted or pulled into a different direction as a filmmaker by you know, the needs of one of the story versus one of the other?

[0:18:21.0] TD: Great question, and that actually was another part of the eight-year struggle of writing this film, the earlier versions, I really was trying to tell the entire story

of the Kanehsatake Resistance, what happened, why it happened, what this person then said, what this person did and it is, it's a massive, complicated summer. I was feeling the responsibility to make sure the audience understood sort of all the nuances, as much as I could within a two-hour span of course.

And then meanwhile I had this – I had a coming-of-age story also to weave in there and so, it really was not working and the breakthrough moment happened when I realized, again, you focus in on the character and the truth of the character and it was in me the whole time because I just had to remember that as a 12-year-old, there was so much. I had no idea what was going on, I was so confused that nobody was sharing you know, information with me, and so you know really – and kids who live in the moment.

Kids are living in the moment, so you know, one minute I am having fun with my sister, and the next minute, I have like rocks are being thrown at me by grown adults and they are laughing and cheering when it happens. So, once I zeroed in on the truth of the coming-of-age experience, which is really that's the story that I wanted to tell of what it's like to be a child in an event like this and the damage that it does.

Once I was able to zero in on that, then it became much easier because then, the audience's experience of the Oka crisis was going to be guided along by views as experience of this crisis. Now, within that, the audience does need a certain amount of context just to understand what this little girl is going through and that's where these four archival pillars in the film come into play, where we go into archival footage.

And I give view the audience, I hope, just enough information to understand some pivotal moments going on and the level of violence going on, the level of hatred going on to situate you back into the story of the little girl. So, once I clued in on, "You know what? What's her experience like?" That made it much easier.

[0:20:42.6] AH: And I think that creates a great potency because by giving us her perspective, there's an authenticity there and as you said, it would have been impossible to tell the whole story and I think the use of archival footage was wonderful. It blended together more seamlessly than it would have expected. Now, I read

somewhere else, you talked about using them and a part of your reason for doing that was because you didn't want anyone to be able to say it was made up.

[0:21:08.7] TD: By using the archival footage, it was to ground it in truth and reality and also, there's an entire generation that's not even aware that this happened. So, I felt that the archival footage really also just grounded it in the fact that this is a historical event, this really did happen, not something from my imagination or an amalgamation of different events. No, this really did happen, and some of the most hateful ugly things that happened, I left for the archival footage to show as opposed to me recreating all of it sort of with my fictional characters.

Because yeah, I didn't want anyone to go, "Oh, it was never that bad." I wanted them to see that it really, really was that bad.

[0:21:54.0] AH: It was and something that was noteworthy to me was that some of the harshest archival footage. As I was watching it, I was thinking, "I didn't see that on the news in 1990." That didn't make the news and they also came to mind to me when I was watching, well, whenever I watch movies by indigenous filmmakers is I tend to dwell a little bit upon the cultural importance of the role of storytelling.

And I am interested in what that means to you and do you feel as a filmmaker you're a continuation of that tradition or is this something new?

[0:22:23.0] TD: I think it is definitely a continuation, it's a more modern form of it but definitely storytelling is a massive part of the culture. It's a way to teach lessons, it's a way to pass on the culture, it's a way of entertain – it's always been a form of entertainment as well. I grew up loving stories, stories have also been a very safe place for me to learn about the world, to learn about myself, to feel.

You know, I come from a place where the message I received when I was little is that you know, feelings make us weak and I get it. For people that have been attacked and persecuted for so long, you know we have to be strong, we have to be tough. That's definitely a message I got early on. The stories was a place where I could go and feel my feelings and it would be okay, so I was always very, very drawn to them.

And as I said, I wanted to be a filmmaker when I was 12 years old. I started writing at 12, I started saving up my allowance to rent the big camcorders that you know, weighed like 50 pounds and I could only hold it on my shoulder for 35 seconds at a time. When people say like, “How long have you been a filmmaker?” I’ve been doing this, I like to say I’ve been doing this since I was 12 and I’ve been looking through a viewfinder since I was 12.

So, all my neighborhood kids like they were my first actors. They were the first ones that let me boss them around, I’ve been practicing a long time.

[0:23:51.9] AH: So, visual imagination and good at bossing people around, that pretty much says director all over right there. So, you were predestined, I don’t even have to ask you about that. I inventory by the fact though that you started in the area of making documentaries, documentary filmmaking and then now moved to fiction and I mentioned earlier when we’re talking, it took me a little while to connect to you as the director of Beans to your documentaries, which I was more familiar with.

And it is beyond our scope to cover them all and we’ll make sure we post a link to your website on our episode page but I wanted to mention a couple you made, Mohawk Girls, which was a documentary about three girls growing up in Kahnawake and also the subsequent CBC series based on. Can you tell me a little bit about that? Was Mohawk Girls your first feature-length documentary?

[0:24:37.5] TD: Yes, that was my first solo film. I did co-direct a documentary called One More River and that was about the Cree of Northern Quebec and the hydroelectric dams that went on there, so that was a co-direction. About Mohawk Girls, the documentary was my first solo film, yes.

[0:24:54.2] AH: And with the adaptation incredibly successful, very, very popular here in Canada but also available across the United States as well. That must have been a real adventure for you.

[0:25:04.8] TD: It was so much fun. I mean, it’s a dramedy, it’s a comedy, you know? So, we tackle real-world issues that affect you know, me and my friends and my family

but all from a lens of comedy and lightness and so that was a wonderful world to live in for those seven years. You know, you bring up documentary, I will say as a little girl, my dream was to make fiction but it was in university and I took a history of documentary course at university.

And that's what just blew me away and changed my world and the amount of truth and vulnerability in the films that I saw in this course, it just like reached into my soul, and at that moment, I thought, "Oh my God, this is where I need to live." And so when I graduated from university, I did 10 years in documentary, loved it, was honored to be in the lives of the people I filmed with and that they were so brave to share their stories with me.

The reason I ended up jumping over to fiction was only because my last documentary, which is called Club Native, again, deals with some really controversial and difficult subject matter within my community, I thought about that film and my subjects 24/7. I worried about it constantly, so it was a massive endeavor. It took about three years and so when it was done, I was just exhausted and just spent and that's okay.

You know, I took a little bit of time and then it was like, "Okay, what's next?" And I couldn't land on something that I was ready to devote another three years of 24/7 energy. Meanwhile, I now learned 24/7 energy, it's not healthy. It is not the way to create but that was my younger self, I've learned from then. I was a bit stuck, I hit like a documentarian wall and that went on for a little while, and then I started to panic.

And thought, "Oh my God, am I just done? Like did I do 10 years and now I am finished?" And then I remembered, I reconnected to the little girl and you know, her dreams and her passions and the passion when I was little was fiction. So, I thought, "You know what? Why don't we try making a short film and just see if this one is the skills transfer from documentary to fiction and let's see if I like it? Let's see if it is something I enjoy."

So, I made a short film and it was that short film that we used to pitch Mohawk Girls the series and it took off and so that started my career in fiction television and I was doing

that for a good 10 years and it was within that timeframe that I thought about my dream project, which is Beans the feature, and so I started writing it and it took the time it took and through all the different things I was up to in those eight years, every experience, you know you grow with every experience.

And you learn new things with every experience and so, I'm a storyteller, I was growing, and that's what finally got me to the finish line I think with this script.

[0:28:07.6] AH: And I love to hear that. I'm glad you mentioned Club Native because that was the other one I was going to mention, which was very powerful. You referred to Beans as your dream project, yet you are a young filmmaker. You are, I would like to think, I'm sure you would like to think at the beginning of your career still, what comes next? Where do you go from there?

[0:28:25.2] TD: I feel like it is pretty incredible that, I mean, I finished Beans, I was 42 I think. So, at 42, I had you know, tackled documentary, I tackled fiction television, now I had my feature and Beans was my ultimate passion project. It's like everything I wanted to do, everything the little girl wanted to do. I had like checked it all off at 42 and so yes, it felt incredible.

And it also was very freeing because I had been chasing this dream and working hard and every time I fell in my face, I got back up and you know, I was going to accomplish this. I was going to prove to everyone that little girl who was made to feel so worthless that summer, I was going to prove to everyone that I mattered and that I am special, and that I had something to say.

Since doing Beans, you know, I've been able to work on some really, really incredible television shows, Amazons, Three Pines, I was able to work on that, Stars, Outlander series, which I'm a huge fan of the series. I am a huge fan of the books, so to be able to be a part of that series was incredible. I went over to Scotland for three months and shot there, you know, dream come true to just travel and work.

That was amazing, I brought my family with me, and now, I have a series I'm developing that I'm really excited about also based on true events. I have a feature film that is also

sort of in early stages, another story based on true events. I do think that I'm quite drawn to that and I think it marries both my love of documentary with fiction together. So, it does seem like that's my path from the very beginning of my career.

You know, all the stories I've shared about my communities like this has all been straight from my heart so I've been able to live in passion and I want to continue to live in passion and I feel very fortunate as a filmmaker to have been able to live in passion for 24 years now. So, I am using that as my guide and I think there's some really exciting things to come.

[0:30:38.5] AH: I can't wait to see what comes next and I've been telling people they need to see the movie Beans and you've done a better job than I possibly couldn't convince you that the movie and everything that you have been saying. So, for anyone who is listening who wants to see it, where can they see it? Where is it available today?

[0:30:53.4] TD: Any of the streaming sites that you might go to, whether it's Apple or Amazon. It's not on Netflix, I can say that but it's available on multiple sites for either rent or to purchase. Do a Google search, there's plenty of places you can find it.

[0:31:13.1] AH: Google will lead us to it, yes, and I am interested as a filmmaker, are there other films that you've encountered that you, for people who are interested in this for subject matter, you have – including Beans, other filmmakers, other films you would recommend that would go with that they might not have heard of.

[0:31:30.6] TD: Alanis Obomsawin's series on the Oka crisis, there's four films in total all through the national film board. So, you know, anyone who wants to know more and learn more and understand more, I would definitely go check out those films.

[0:31:46.0] AH: That would be a great one, we'll include the link to that as well on our episode page. Now, you've said that for you, one of your goals is for your work to be an impetus for social change, and for people who are listening, you know, people of all backgrounds who are listening to this, what are the things that you would say they can do, that they can get involved, to have the most immediate impact?

[0:32:06.8] TD: So, the simplest – the simplest way, you know, that I like to tell people, we all hold tremendous influence within our circles, that’s where our power is. So, you know, if I were to sit down with your boisterous uncle and you know, give him a talking to about his opinions or his word choice, chances are he will blow me off. You know, he will put up a wall and he will go, “Oh God.” And like, he will not listen.

But if you were sitting with him, you know, at the Thanksgiving table and you spoke up and you let him know that that’s, you know, it’s not okay to speak this way or, “Hey, you know, there’s another side to this.” You would have a better chance of being heard and if we could all be more brave in speaking up where it mattered most and where it was most scary, which is within our circle of influence, I think that that could make a big difference.

That’s one of the things I tell everyone is, it’s both the easiest and the hardest thing to do. So, if you can step up and do this, you are doing something massive because the people that you love, it’s the hardest to talk to them about these things but it’s where you can have the biggest influence, and beyond that, there are you know, many different organizations, indigenous organizations.

You know if you just want to donate money to these organizations so that they can operate and do the good work that they do, or to schools, to community centers within our community, so that our young people have places to go, like, there’s plenty of places if you just want to, you know, open your chequebook, I think that’s wonderful but there’s also places where you can get involved.

I also want to encourage everyone to get rid of any guilt, any guilt that they feel because guilt is a place of inaction. My interest is not in everyone feeling guilty about everything that happened. I don’t want your guilt, I want your action. Find ways that you can be involved, whether it’s socially or politically or again, within your own sphere of influence, speak up, stand by us, it’s going to make a massive difference and it’s what we really need Canadians to do. So, that’s my message.

[0:34:29.0] AH: You're so right about guilt being the gateway to inaction and I think that we're in a time where people would like to see change and be – there is a genuine shift. Accepting the need for reconciliation and what reconciliation really means and – but the guilt is apparent for a lot of people. There's a fear, there's a fear even around saying something stupid. You know, you talk about the boisterous uncle but we're all the boisterous uncle sometimes.

And we pick the wrong words and there's a fear of looking bad but we have to talk to each other. We have to reach out and talk to our neighbors and the people around us, and you know, we're all in this together and break down those barriers, get to know each other as people, you know? And a movie like this, like Beans is you know, everybody can relate to Beans. Everyone likes Beans, you know?

It sort of breaks that down so there's no sense of other. She is like us and like people we know and we connect with her that way and we have to do that. We have to overcome that fear and if you can, you know, be brave enough to tell this story with everything that you carried into doing it, we should all be able to be brave enough to have a conversation, even when it's a little bit scary because change is long, long overdue.

And when I think of the summer of 1990, I remember my amazement, wondering how it was possible that in 1990, there were so many unresolved land claims across Canada but I think I would have been more amazed to learn that 34 years later, there's been so little progress in that area. How is it possible that in 2024, there are so many unresolved land claims across Canada despite the lessons of Oka?

And the more recent examples, protests against pipelines in British Columbia and closer to home for us against development on disputed land in Caledonia. You know, our representatives in Ottawa have failed to act on our collective responsibility to move, remove this barrier to reconciliation and there is a political component to this but we can't shift the blame and point the fingers at the politicians.

They haven't acted because we haven't demanded it of them. Until we do real change and real reconciliation will elude us and Tracey, are you happy with that as a call to action to conclude our conversation?

[0:36:46.9] TD: Well said, yes, absolutely.

[0:36:49.3] AH: Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me today, Tracey, it's been a real pleasure. As I said off the top, I'm a real admirer of your work and you've made me an admirer of you as a person, your heart, and your passion for what you do is really meaningful and I hope we can share with a lot of people and –

[0:37:05.4] TD: Thank you.

[0:37:05.4] AH: Keep doing what you're doing, keep fighting the fight and definitely you have an ally here.

[0:37:10.3] TD: Thank you. Thank you so much.

[0:37:12.3] AH: All right, have a great rest of your day, thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:37:17.9] ANNOUNCER: Thanks for listening. Subscribe today so you won't miss our next episode. To learn more or to share your thoughts and show ideas, visit us at thebrownhomestead.ca on social media or if you still like to do things the old-fashioned way, you can even email us at opendoor@thebrownhomestead.ca.

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