

Reflection Guide for

Force of Nature: The David Suzuki Movie

David Suzuki is an iconic Canadian scientist, educator, broadcaster, and activist – the godfather of Canada’s environmental movement.

This film melds David’s reflections on his own life experiences with segments of a “last lecture” given on the eve of his 75th birthday – a lecture that he describes as “a distillation of my life and thoughts, my legacy, what I want to say before I die.”

The places and events of David’s life, together with the story of his own responses to those happenings, create a powerful account of personal evolution as well as the evolution of human society over the past 70+ years. For those of us who share those memories, this film evokes reflection on our own lives and our responses to those historical events and movements. For those who are younger, this is a potent lesson in recent human history.

For all of us, it is a warning that our species has become a powerful “force of nature” at the very center of the environmental crisis - both as cause and as victims. It is also a call to look at the world with different eyes – to realize that far from being separate from the rest of nature, we are deeply embedded in and utterly dependent on the generosity of the biosphere.

Interested in seeing this film?

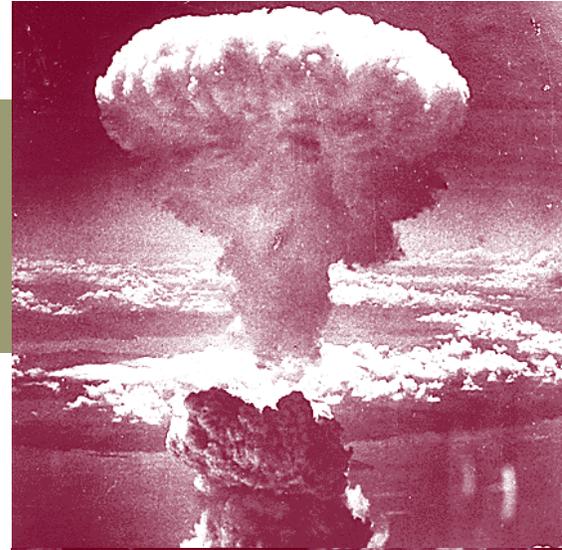
Force of Nature: The David Suzuki Movie may be borrowed free of charge from the Justice Resource Library—e-mail: dtaylor@cscsisters.org; phone: 574-284-5500; fax: 574-284-5596.



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Suggested questions for reflection and discussion (Italicized texts are quotes from David's narrative)

1. As you viewed the film, what happenings in David's life touched you most deeply? What elements of his narrative struck you?
2. David says we humans have become a *potent force of nature, a superspecies altering the very life support systems of the planet*. What assumptions and attitudes about our species' relationship to nature have allowed this to occur?
3. *...we cannot continue along the same path that got us here. The crisis is real and it is upon us. We need to search for the root causes of the problems and discover new solutions that are truly sustainable.* What do you view as the root causes of the crisis in which we find ourselves? What solutions do you see?
4. David attributes much of Earth's devastation to current economic beliefs and practices, especially our obsession with ever-increasing economic growth and consumption. *Let's look at the world though different eyes, he says. What do we really require to live full, rich, healthy lives?* How would you respond to this question?
5. During the Vietnam era, a graduate student challenged David's justifications for involvement in scientific research as "just too easy." This remark re-directed David's life. Have you ever realized that some of your own justifications for action or inaction were "just too easy"? What was your response to that realization?



Suggested questions for reflection and discussion (continued)



6. *Our sense of awe and wonder in places like Windy Bay changes us, our perspective of time, and our place in the nature of things. Have you ever experienced such awe and wonder in pristine places? What was that experience like for you? What did you learn from it, especially about our human place in the universe?*
7. *The Haida do not see themselves as ending at their skin or their fingertips. To be Haida is to be connected to the land. The air, the fish, the birds and the trees are all a part of who the Haida are. What do you see as implications of the Haida worldview? How might our lives change if we adopted such a self-understanding?*
8. *So now the challenge is to get things right...to understand that nature gave us birth and is our home and the source of our well-being, to imagine a new way of living in harmony and balance.... There is no silver bullet to solve our problems. The change begins with each of us.... What changes do we need to make as a species to create a new way of living in harmony and balance? What changes do you feel called to make in your own life as a result of viewing this film?*



I believe we are capable of even greater things. To rediscover our home, to find ways to live in balance with the sacred elements, and to create a future rich in joy, happiness and meaning that are our real wealth....I am filled with hope to imagine a future rich in opportunity, beauty, wonder and companionship with the rest of Creation. All it takes is the imagination to dream it and the will to make the dream reality.

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