



The Bark

Fall, 2013

Welcome to Aspen Foundation's first edition of *The Bark* – Harold Neth, editor

News & Events

- November 16 – [International Day for Tolerance](#)

- November 20 - [Universal Children's Day](#)

- November 22-24, 2013 -
Parkland Institute Fall
Conference: Facts Fictions and
the Politics of Truth
<http://parklandinstitute.ca/fallconf2013>

- December 10 – [Human Rights Day](#)

- Dec. 12, 2013 - Public Interest
Alberta Open House
<http://pialberta.org/events/listing>

- Watch for Aspen Foundation
Convention Presentations:

*North Central, February 6-7

*Central Alberta, February 20-21

- March 13-14, 2014 - ATA
Diversity, Equality and Human
Rights Conference
[http://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Pages/In
dex.aspx](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Pages/Index.aspx)

The title *The Bark* makes reference to the protective covering of the aspen tree as well as to its healing properties, long known to our First Nations peoples. *The Bark* also harkens to the call or shout to inform about something of importance.

In many communities, the values and institutions that have sustained us are changing and arguably under threat. Education has long been seen as a means to make for healthier communities and societies.

The Aspen Foundation for Labour Education believes students need to become aware of situations where fairness, equal opportunities, and human dignity do not exist in our communities and our world. Students need opportunities to explore the circumstances and social structures that contribute to such situations.

They further need to be encouraged to understand and be allowed to change their. Students also need opportunities to learn how to become engaged in individual and collective actions allowing them to challenge injustice and contribute to a socially just society and world.

Through *The Bark*, we intend to inform you about the Aspen Foundation, the social studies units we have developed, resource reviews, the work we are doing, upcoming events that we or other progressive organizations are hosting, and how you can make a contribution and aid us in our work.

If you are receiving *The Bark*, it means you are one of our valued members, you have made a contribution, or you are one of the teachers who has attended one of our workshops on one of the social studies units we have produced and you have provided us with your e-mail or mailing address.

We hope *The Bark* becomes an important resource for you.



Resource Review



Common Ground: Defending The Public Sector –Tom Radford

What do Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Chris Hedges, the Wild Rose Party, the Koch Brothers, union busting, farmers co-operatives, the Montreal Student Protests, and Occupy Wall Street have in common? The common thread is the battle over the future of democracy.

In *Common Ground*, veteran Canadian filmmaker Tom Radford takes Albertans on a journey through the province's history – from the coal mines of the Crowsnest Pass, to the fight to save the Battle River Railway, to the province building of Peter Lougheed – documenting the community values that grew out of the frontier experience. The 42 minute film emphasizes the importance of protecting public institutions in an age marked by the ever-present danger of privatization while exploring the legacy of populism and union history in "next year country".

Last summer's strikes at seniors' care facilities in Edmonton and Calgary sounded a warning of what's to come: the "capture" of government by big business; the attack on public sector unions; the fight for the hearts and minds of Albertans. Public institutions are standing up to the barbarian at the gate, the privatization agenda of global capital.

Shot on location on picket lines, demonstrations, and the final days of the Recall Walker campaign against The Tea Party in Wisconsin, *Common Ground* explores the brave new world of the plutocracy. It is a provocative film that asks important questions about the future of our fragile democracy.

Common Ground was produced by Clearwater Documentary in association with the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees. It was directed by Tom Radford, photographed by Sergio Olivares, and edited by Adam Kidd. It has been telecast regionally on CBC Alberta and nationally on The Documentary Channel.

(Editor's note: Find the link to *Common Ground* at our website: afle@telus.net. Watch for Aspen Foundation's series of lessons on *Common Ground* for social studies students coming soon.)

Related Links & Info

- Union Style!
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhKJEuoOvcU>
- AFLE Teaching Resources
<http://aspenfoundation.squarespace.com/teachingresources/>
- ATA Magazine Vol. 92: DEHR to make a difference
<http://www.teachers.ab.ca/Publications/ATA%20Magazine/Volume%2092/Number-3/Pages/Dehr-to-make-a-difference.aspx>
- Social Studies Council
<http://www.atasocialstudies.ca/>

Always review resources before use in class.

Support Social Justice and Labour Education in our Schools!

If you believe it is important that schools teach a perspective that re-engages youth for change and the building of a new, fairer, more kind, and more just workplace, community and society, then please send us your support. WE are not financed by big business, but by YOU!

See our web site below, or go to:
CanadaHelps.org

