Student’s name:

Professor’s name:

Class name:

Date due:

Book Review on “Claiming Anishinaabe: Decolonizing the Human Spirit”

The book, “Claiming Anishinaabe: Decolonizing the Human Spirit” was written by an activist and indigenous academic named Lynn Gehl. The book is her latest publication, and it offers an enlightening narrative that invites readers to accompany her on her journey to develop into “fully human”. It is made up of four significant parts with essays connected to the subject of decolonization. The book is severely critical about the euro-centric contexts that govern the native existence. It affirms that ways of being and the concepts of indigenous acquaintance are not more significant compared to colonial perceptions. Gehl real contribution in the book, echoes the importance in ways of nature and the systems related to indigenous knowledge as the resolution to become a “fully human”.

I factually feel that Gehl’s remedy of the subject matter is suitable for the intended readership. The fact that makes me have that thought is how successfully the book has made its purpose of being achieved. It advances through numerous discrete phases and offers an effortlessly accessible and digestible narrative. Gehl guides this narrative as she details her journey regarding Mino-Pimadiziwin. Mino-Pimadiziwin can is described as the Anishinabek theoretical living standard that concentrates on balancing the four conspicuous personal elements, namely; emotional, mental, spiritual, physical (Gehl pg. no, 30). However, the concepts and the whole process has been discussed and written before, but this specific offering is far more relevant and personal. It can sometimes make you feel like you’re going through the author’s journal entries. For that reason, I decisively think that this book may be the kind of read many people require, and therefore, it has achieved its purpose.

This book reveals a story of both healing and a scornful indictment or condemnation of the colonial nation-state when unpacking the author’s “Debwewin Journey,”. Gehl describes Debwewin Journey as a process of disinhibiting the human spirit using a personal journey of obtaining and living in indigenous acquaintance (Gehl pg. no, 92). She believes that one’s connection to knowledge is one’s responsibility, and that view contributes a lot to Anishinaabe studies. This Gehl’s journey reassures Anishinaabe learning that is entrenched in both heart and mind, and emphases personal experience rather than an exploration of universal veracity. Resisting change that is influenced by rationalism, and which detaches studies from spirituality and emotions, Gehl utilizes her life experience to exhibit why “head learning” is not adequate for sympathizing how to relate with the world.

Another contribution that the book has on Anishinaabe studies is making learners more aware of how colonization has redefined the Anishinabek and Canada, the ruling state. Colonization can be termed as a process of covert and overt dominion that has encompassed all attributes of indigenous lives (Borrows pg. no,25). It has illegally seized lands, teachings, traditional knowledge, languages and ceremonies. It has as well eradicated people’s races and ruined entire cultures. Through the book, learners have come to release how colonization has redefined who people are and how it fortified the control and power dynamic between Canada and Anishinabek. It explains that, despite the biased structures practised by colonists, the native people endure to support the perception of decolonization. They embrace it through reinvigoration and reaffirmation of the systems in their traditional knowledge as a way to gain communal self-determination.

The subject matter displayed in this book is entirely decolonization of the human spirit, and it has been handled objectively. It happens where Gehl finally gets granted her indigenous status after fighting for decades to reclaim the good life she described as Mino-Pimadiziwin. In her journey, she has worked on environmental sciences and also done a study of Algonquin land and individuality or identity rights. She uniquely categorizes that work as “head learning” (Gehl pg. no, 56). Gehl’s passion in heart and head learning has taken her through incidents that result in profound connection with Anishinaabe traditions related to spirits. The link made her to respect their land and to share stories and songs mainly concerning the Anishinaabe. After many years of surveying Anishinaabe philosophy and its conceptions of veracity, Gehl displays how she eventually pinpoints her spirit and decolonize her individuality or identity. That is the part where she, therefore, transforms in being what she terms as a “fully human” (Gehl pg. no, 121). She also rebukes Canada concerning its significant anti-colonial battles, demolition of sacred sites, and sex discernment in the Indian Act.

The style of writing employed by Gehl is apparent and effective. She establishes a discourse language for the procedure she has developed, as a way to effortlessly share her wisdom, and assist others. Just like a person who is competent in academese, she maintains a conversation that is straightforward and accessible. She fills that conversation with images and graphs intended to outwardly present her Debwewin journey from the theoretical realm to the minds and hearts of readers from diverse contextual.

This book covers a comprehensive range of topics for discussions. Examples of such topics are the Certainty and Resolution Commission, Indian Act to Veracity, Dominion, and Self-determination. However, in the entire Claiming of Anishinaabe, the primary source of the conversation remains in the disparaging effects of destructive power on the human spirit (Gehl pg. no, 109). In the book, the discussion also appears to be based on persistence that both spirituality and intelligence are crucial in recovering one’s personality.

The book “Claiming Anishinaabe: Decolonizing the Human Spirit” can be pronounced as an inviting reflection on the need to encompass traditional Anishinaabe studies aiming to counterpoise human being’s self-immolation impulses. The author of the book seems to be a thoughtful and gifted storyteller. Even though some chapters in the book read like blog posts that are yet to be edited, patient and interested readers will benefit from her perspectives. She intentionally delivered them like informal discussions in a campfire to make the book straightforward for everyone to read. This book shares essential information concerning Anishinaabe studies from how Gehl was tackling the deceitful colonial governments to her Eurocentric conceptions of nature and science. It also reveals her many years of struggle with the legal system of Canada to recognize her long-denied Indigenous status. It offers a theoretical context for reimagining how human beings can examine and relate to the natural world. Several sections in the book maybe are unfathomable for general readers, like where Gehl explains how her study of laboratory science may demonstrate a “cognitive wrestle”. However, readers willing to venture more on what she truly meant will garner more truths about Anishinaabe. Some of these critical areas are where the author illustrated on body memory, insightful medications on feasting, and the power of songs. This book reminds readers, especially the ones studying Anishinaabe that human beings disregard a disconnect from nature at their jeopardy. Going through this book developed my understanding concerning decolonization and the knowledge about matters related to Anishinaabe. It profoundly encourages readers to be indigents and foresee a transformed future together.

Works Cited

Gehl, Lynn. *Claiming Anishinaabe: Decolonizing the Human Spirit*. 2017.

Borrows, John. *Canada's Indigenous constitution*. University of Toronto Press, 2010.