

Being Innu

A documentary film

For thousands of years the Innu lived off the land. They were nomads, sometimes also known as the Montagnais. In the 1960s, government policy forced them to settle and form communities in Labrador and Quebec. Ancestral ways collided with modern ones, and gave rise to ongoing struggles. Now the grandchildren tell their own story.

Being Innu takes an unvarnished look at life in the village of Sheshatshiu, Labrador. Six savvy, gutsy young people talk to Montreal filmmaker Catherine Mullins about addiction, suicide, lack of jobs, hopelessness. They will grab your heart with their stories: *"I first thought about suicide when I was 7,"* says April, 16. They will make you laugh with their wry humour: *"What do you do when you live in a shoe?"* Jimmy, 25.

Interviews with Elders, grandparents and teachers round out this portrait of a community in crisis - sadly a situation not unlike that of many other aboriginal nations.

What is remarkable about Innu youth is their love of the land and of their native language. For them, being Innu means finding a balance between the traditional ways of the past and today's reality.

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77- and 52- minute versions.
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