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Bullfrog Community Screening & Discussion Guide

Roll out the red carpet! Use your film screening of DIRTY BUSINESS as a tool to build community. Spark discussion and action to address the continued use of coal energy and promote renewable alternatives. This guide offers some background information plus helpful tips and discussion questions for a stirring, informative, and rewarding screening. **Good Luck!**

For additional resources, visit dirtybusiness.bullfrogcommunities.com/dbiz_resources

About DIRTY BUSINESS

Can coal really be made clean? Can renewables be produced on a scale large enough to replace coal? In the digital age, half of our electricity still comes from coal. DIRTY BUSINESS reveals the true social and environmental costs of coal power and tells the stories of innovators who are pointing the way to a renewable energy future. Guided by Rolling Stone reporter Jeff Goodell, the film examines what it means to remain dependent on a 19th century technology that is the largest single source of greenhouse gases. The film seeks answers in a series of stories shot in China, Saskatchewan, Kansas, West Virginia, Nevada and New York.



About the Director

Director Peter Bull is an independent documentary filmmaker and Emmy award-winning producer of documentaries for PBS, ABC News, Discovery, CNBC, among others. From 2002-2004 he served as senior producer of the weekly PBS newsmagazine NOW with Bill Moyers and produced several documentaries for Moyers. He has won four Emmys and many other awards, including a DuPont/Columbia Silver Baton, an Edward R. Murrow award and awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and the Society of Environmental Journalists.

ready to watch!

Here are some ideas and best practices to help make your community screening of DIRTY BUSINESS a success!

- 1. Publicize Your Event!** This is the most important step. Not only can you tell the world about your screening, but you can also let the Bullfrog Community team know about your plans so we can help you publicize your event. Visit dirtybusiness.bullfrogcommunities.com/dbiz_screenings to register your screening of DIRTY BUSINESS.
- 2. Visualize Your Goal!** What do you hope to achieve with your screening of DIRTY BUSINESS? Your goal could be to generate a lively post-film discussion with your audience about the use of coal as an energy source and “green”, renewable alternatives. Or, you can simply provide an opportunity for families to watch and learn together.
- 3. Where To Host?** Consider which locations in your area would be ideal for accommodating a community film screening of the size you anticipate: churches, town halls, private homes and even high schools have been venues for many successful community screenings.
- 4. Find A Partner!** Give some thought to who is already working on this issue in your community. Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Speak on a panel discussion after the screening? Some potential partners include: academic departments at colleges, universities, and high schools, representatives from energy companies, and renewable energy advocacy groups. Links to some of these organizations are available at dirtybusiness.bullfrogcommunities.com/dbiz_resources.
- 5. Invite A Guest Speaker!** Guest speakers and panels are a great way to encourage discussion and debate after a community screening. When people are engaged and thinking about the issues they will stay engaged long after the screening has passed. Contact local non-profit representatives, teachers, professionals, or government officials who have expertise or insight into the issues raised by the film, and invite them to attend and participate in a discussion or Q&A session. The filmmakers are available to appear in person or via Skype for a Q&A. [Contact Bullfrog Communities](#) if you are interested.
- 6. Engage Your Audience!** Included in this handout is a section called Ready to Act! which is meant to be a hand-out at your screening. It will help your audience know what they can do to educate themselves about key issues brought up in the film.
- 7. Spread The Word!** Think about the best methods available to you for publicizing the film screening to people in your community. Sending emails, creating event notifications on Facebook or Meetup, using Twitter, and placing screening announcements in local newspapers and newsletters is a good start. Find the DIRTY BUSINESS screening poster, discussion guide (includes handout), and press photos on dirtybusiness.bullfrogcommunities.com/dbiz_resources to help publicize your event around town.
- 8. Tell Us How It Went!** Visit dirtybusiness.bullfrogcommunities.com/dbiz_discussion to tell us about your event. Where it was held? Who attended? What went well, and what was challenging? Your feedback will help others in organizing their own successful events and will energize the Bullfrog Energy Community as a whole.

ready to talk!

Here are some questions that will help get people talking about the issues after watching DIRTY BUSINESS!

1. What are the health and environmental risks of coal energy?
2. Do the drawbacks to the continued use of coal as an energy source outweigh the benefits?
3. The film asserts that “clean coal” and related technology is not viable or practical, and has been pushed by the coal industry to continue its use and ensure future profits and subsidies. Do you agree?
4. What is “carbon sequestration”, and does it seem to be a viable way to handle carbon emissions from coal-burning power plants?
5. The New York Times has compiled data from the Environmental Protection Agency on coal-fired plants with permits to discharge pollutants, including factories that generate their own power, and produced an interactive map: <http://projects.nytimes.com/toxic-waters/polluters/power-plants> Sourcewatch has also compiled a map of existing coal plants in the U.S: http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Category:Existing_coal_plants_in_the_United_States Are there coal-fired power plants operating near or in your community? Have they ever been cited for violating the Clean Water Act?
6. How does coal mining and extraction affect local communities in areas where the industry is present? Do you believe that there is a link between coal mining practices and water pollution or the health of people living near coal mining operations?
7. What is a “carbon footprint”? How does the carbon footprint of coal compare to that of oil or natural gas? How does it compare to renewables like solar and wind energy?
8. Does the practice of “mountaintop removal mining” seem like an efficient way to extract coal from the earth? Do you believe Massey Energy’s claim that this method actually benefits the surrounding environment?
9. How does campaign finance and lobbying relate to the continued use of coal as an energy source?
10. The continued use of coal is made possible in part by large government subsidies to the industry. Do you think these subsidies are warranted? Do these subsidies take away from possible investment in -- and promotion of -- renewable energy sources?
11. What percentage of electricity consumed in the U.S. comes from coal? What percentage comes from renewable sources?
12. China is the largest consumer of coal for energy in the world; China’s coal consumption in 2010 was 3.2 billion metric tonnes per annum. Is it possible for the U.S. to have a significant impact on coal use when countries such as China continue to use coal in such quantities? If so, how?

ready to act!

handout

Share this handout with your
DIRTY BUSINESS screening audience!

1. Call for an end to subsidies for the coal industry.

Subsidizing the continued production and use of coal as an energy source prevents us from investing more capital in renewable energy sources like wind and solar; ask your state and federal representatives to end subsidies for the coal industry and “clean coal” technology development. Oil Change International’s “Dirty Energy Money Campaign” tracks subsidies as well as political contributions by the fossil fuel industry: <http://priceofoil.org/fossil-fuel-subsidies/> Have your Congressmen or Representatives accepted money from the industry? Find out: <http://www.dirtyenergymoney.com/>

2. Know where your electricity comes from.

The U.S. electric grid is not actually a unified system, but rather a complex network of local and regional power authorities. As the demand for electricity in the U.S. has increased in recent decades, the aging infrastructure built to carry the power has been stretched to the breaking point. National Public Radio has produced an interactive map of the U.S. grid, detailing existing and proposed transmission lines and the locations and primary fuel sources of power plants throughout the country: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=110997398>

3. Understand your own energy consumption.

Recognizing our own energy footprint and reducing our personal consumption of electricity can have a positive impact on energy use overall, and helps us better understand how fossil fuels affect our environment. The Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Energy Web site can help you understand what clean energy is, how energy use affects the environment, what your personal impact is, and how you can help mitigate that impact: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-and-you/#howclean>

3. Promote alternatives.

Research and discuss renewable energy sources and be ready to explain their benefits.

4. Demand a safe working environment for miners and coal industry workers.

Coal mining is a historically dangerous endeavor, and accidents at coal mines are still a very common occurrence. As long as coal production in the United States continues we should demand that the industry adhere to safety standards and guarantee the safety of miners and other coal industry laborers. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration, established in 1978, is responsible for enforcing the Mine Act at all coal mines: <http://www.msha.gov/programs/coal.htm>