

BUILDING UNDERSTANDING & RACIAL SOLIDARITY: WORKSHOP SERIES

建立理解以及族裔团结: 工作坊系列

# COLONIALISM & INDIGENOUS HISTORY

## 殖民主义 & 原住民历史

Educational Toolkit

### What is This?

This educational toolkit is based off of CCNCTO and Yarrow Intergenerational Society's first workshop, which tackled topics of colonialism and Indigenous History in "Canada."

In this resource, you'll find information about Chinese-Indigenous Relations, settler-colonialism, and current issues faced by Indigenous communities.

To learn more and stay in touch with our organizations, you can find us at:

CCNCTO: <https://www.ccnctoronto.ca/> and @ccncto

Yarrow: <https://www.yarrowociety.ca/> and @yarrowociety

Stay tuned for more toolkits to come from this workshop series!



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Canada



YARROW  
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世代同行會

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# Chinese-Indigenous Relations

## "Discover Canada"

Many Chinese newcomers learn about Indigenous history through Discover Canada, a book for newcomers to prepare for their citizenship test

This book fails to tell the history of colonialism, genocide and ongoing issues faced by Indigenous communities

## Who We Are

Canada is known around the world as a strong and free country. Canadians are proud of their unique identity. We have inherited the oldest continuous constitutional tradition in the world. We are the only constitutional monarchy in North America. Our institutions uphold a commitment to *Peace, Order and Good Government*, a key phrase in Canada's original constitutional document in 1867, the *British North America Act*. A belief in ordered liberty, enterprise, hard work and fair play has enabled Canadians to build a prosperous society in a rugged environment from our Atlantic shores to the Pacific Ocean and to the Arctic Circle—so much so that poets and songwriters have hailed Canada as the "Great Dominion."

To understand what it means to be Canadian, it is important to know about our three founding peoples—**Aboriginal, French and British.**

(From Top to Bottom)  
Métis from Alberta  
Cree dancer



### ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The ancestors of Aboriginal peoples are believed to have migrated from Asia many thousands of years ago. They were well established here long before explorers from Europe first came to North America. Diverse, vibrant First Nations cultures were rooted in religious beliefs about their relationship to the Creator, the natural

them into mainstream Canadian culture. The schools were poorly funded and inflicted hardship on the students; some were physically abused. Aboriginal languages and cultural practices were mostly prohibited. In 2008, Ottawa formally apologized to the former students.

In today's Canada, Aboriginal peoples enjoy renewed pride and confidence, and have made

# Chinese-Indigenous Relations


## Resource Extraction

Chinese labourers who came to Western Canada were systematically discriminated by the Canadian government

When building the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), Chinese workers were paid half compared to white workers and were assigned the most dangerous work

Hundreds of Chinese Canadians working on the railway died from accidents, cold winters, illness and malnutrition.

Indigenous communities, such as the Lytton First Nation, welcomed the Chinese and offered them food and shelter during perilous work conditions while building the CPR



Vancouver's Chinatown was a safe haven for both Chinese and Indigenous peoples as other neighborhoods excluded people of color from living in and purchasing property

**We must remember and stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples as Chinese settlers in a settler colonial state, as they have done with us in the past**

# Colonialism

## What is colonialism?

Colonialism is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers

It often includes resource extraction and economic exploitation

## How does it impact our communities?

For many Asian communities, the history of colonization back in their home countries is a source of trauma and pain

Many Asian communities immigrated abroad because of the instability and lack of opportunities caused by colonization in Asia

## Colonialism in Asia

Asia was colonized historically by different forces, for example, the Imperial Japanese colonization of China, Korea, and the Philippines and the colonization of southeast Asian by France

# Colonialism

## Other examples of colonialism

Removing children from families and their culture and language through residential schools and the foster care system

Cutting off Indigenous food systems (eg. buffalo, wild salmon)

Forceful violence and neglect through police (arrests, racial profiling, murder, etc)

Displacing entire communities to reservations

Medical testing on Indigenous children (eg. tuberculosis hospitals)



# Colonialism

## How does colonialism impact us?

Chinese communities as migrant workers still have limited and/or no rights or healthcare

Chinese immigrants often have to work for lower wages compared to their white counterparts despite having more qualifications and often work in more precarious and dangerous employment sectors

Read CCNCTO's [Our Lives are Essential: Chinese Canadian Frontline Workers Pandemic Report](#) to learn more about the conditions of precarious Chinese workers during COVID-19

我们的生命是不可或缺的  
《新冠病毒期间, 华裔前线工人处境报告》

### Our Lives Are Essential: Chinese Canadian Frontline Workers Pandemic Report



Chinese Canadian National Council  
Toronto Chapter  
金加华人平权会多伦多分会

# Settler Colonialism

## What is settler-colonialism?

Settler-colonialism is a form of colonialism that seeks to replace the original population of the colonized territory with a new society of settlers

## Settler Privileges

As settlers, we have land, rights, and privileges: our culture, language, comfort is prioritized over those of Indigenous peoples

The Chinese community takes part in settler-colonialism as we benefit from the land taken away from the Indigenous community

Colonialism operates systematically and impacts Indigenous people on Turtle Island to this day, for example, by taking land and rights away via treaties, laws, pipelines

## Examples of Settler Privileges

Chinese cultural centres, Lunar New Year parades, the establishment of Chinatowns

- There is a lack of Indigenous neighbourhoods with their own services, restaurants, and businesses that is recognized by all levels of government

The government operates only in English and French, and other languages are taught in schools, but not Indigenous languages

Chinese-Canadians were given (back) the right to vote in 1947, but Indigenous peoples could not vote until 1962



# Settler Colonialism

Settler colonialism often disguises itself as investing resources to “develop, civilize and educate” the Indigenous community.

For example, Indigenous peoples were portrayed as “backwards.”

## Example

A Department of Indian Affairs officer told a crowd of First Nations listeners in 1876:

“Many years ago you were in darkness killing each other and making slaves was your trade. The Land was of no value to you. The trees were of no value to you. The Coal was of no value to you. The white man came he improved the land you can follow his example—He cuts the trees and pays you to help him. He takes the coal out of the ground and he pays you to help him—you are improving fast. The Government protects you, you are rich—you live in peace and have everything you want.”

# Settler-colonial states & their Indigenous peoples

Canada: Coast Salish, Cree, Mi'kmaq, Anishinaabe, Haida, Inuit, Kwakwaka'wakw

United States : Cherokee, Choctaw, Duwamish, Tlingit, Haida, Chumash

- Puerto Rico: Taino
- Hawaii: Kānaka Maoli (Indigenous Hawaiians)
- Guam
- Samoa

Australia: Ngunnawal, Raukkan, Woorabinda

New Zealand: Maori

Taiwan: Tayal, Paiwan, Rukai

Japan: Okinawa (Ryukyans), Ainu

Mexico: Yucatec (Maya), Zapotec, Mixtec, Nahuatl

For example, the 8-Nation Alliance, Germany, Japan, Russia, Britain, France, US, Italy, and Austria-Hungary all invaded China

Territories in the Americas claimed by a European great power in 1750



# Current Issues Impacting Indigenous Populations

## Residential School Trauma

Residential schools are a systematic method of cultural genocide that aimed to eradicate Indigeneity

The last residential school closed in 1997

Children were forcefully removed by the government, police, and social workers from their family's homes and forced to attend these schools, where they faced various forms of sexual, physical, and psychological abuse and violence

The majority of schools were opened by Anglican and Catholic churches, and further sponsored by the government

Indigenous communities are commissioning inquiries and exposing truth to what has happened in the past

So far, the remains of over 1000 children have been found and counting



# Current Issues Impacting Indigenous Populations

## Foster care

Foster care in Canada is a modern version of residential schools

Indigenous parents and guardians are targeted and surveilled far more closely than any other race in Canada

52.2% of children in foster care are Indigenous, but account for only 7.7% of the child population

This means 14,970 out of 28,665 foster children in private homes under the age of 15 are Indigenous

## Indigenous children in foster care

**7.7%**  
of all children  
under 14 are  
Indigenous



Children 0-14  
in Canada



Children 0-14  
in foster care

**52.2%**  
of children  
in foster care  
under 14 are  
Indigenous

Census 2016 Data

# Current Issues Impacting Indigenous Populations

## High rates of incarceration & police profiling and violence

Indigenous people are overrepresented in the prison system

In 2017/18, 29-30% of custody admissions were Indigenous adults but only make up 4% of Canada's population

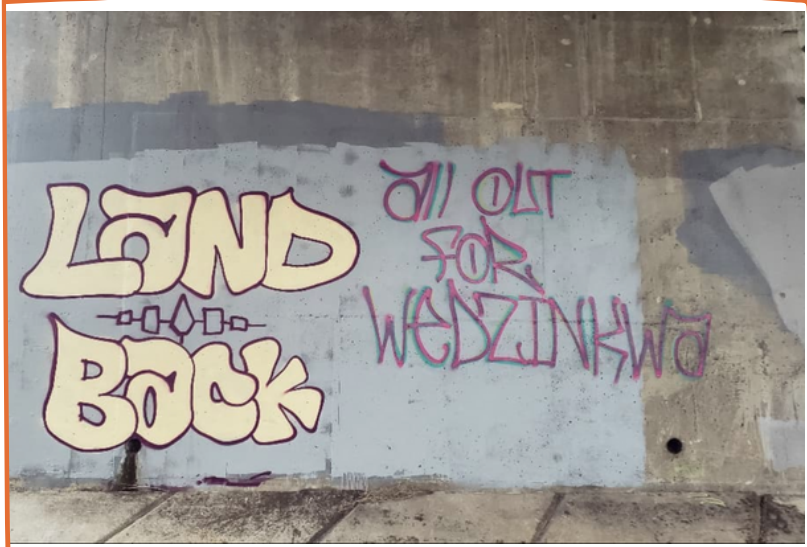
### "Starlight Tours":

Police/RCMP will pick up (unhoused and/or intoxicated) Indigenous people, drive them to a remote or undisclosed location and leave them there. This often happens in the winter and people freeze to death or need to find their way to safety in sub-zero weather

# Current Issues Impacting Indigenous Populations

## Resource Extraction

Settlers make huge profits off of stolen Indigenous land and resources, while Indigenous nations receive a fraction of the profits at most. Indigenous people's traditional governance is also not respected when matriarchs or hereditary chiefs do not consent to resource extraction projects on their territories



There is and has been active and consistent Indigenous land defense across Turtle Island (for example DAPL, 1492 Land Back Lane, Wet'suwet'en)



# Resources

Government of Canada. "Indigenous Overrepresentation in the Criminal Justice System." JustFacts, Department of Justice, 2019. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/jf-pf/2019/may01.html>

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