

COLONIALISM AND INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE IN CANADA

MARCH 2022 SOURCES: PSAC AND NVISION



SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL

The phrase used by Indigenous peoples: "since time immemorial" reflects the concept that Indigenous people have no memories of journeying from another place. There are many origin stories, rooted in a particular place, but they all begin in the lands we now call Canada. Like the Christian creation story of Adam and Eve, Indigenous creation stories are an expression spiritual and cultural truth and reflect a way of looking at the world.



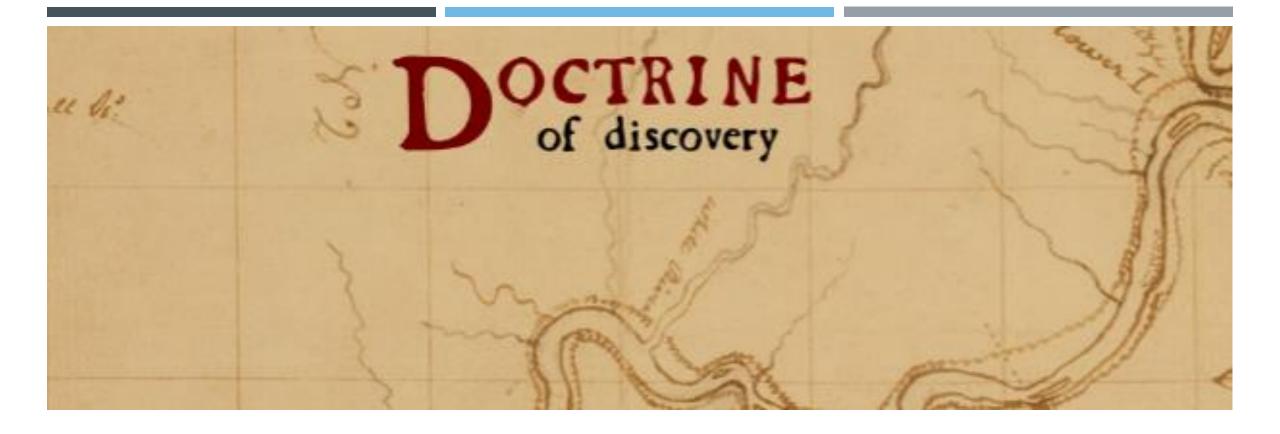
20,000 YEARS AGO

One scientific theory is that ancestors of some of today's Indigenous people crossed the Bering land bridge as the glaciers retreated and eventually moved south and east However, new discoveries, theories and evidence are pointing towards the possibility of multiple origins and that some parts of North America have ben inhabited for longer than current theories suggest.



5,000 YEARS AGO

Before European contact, First Nations and Inuit had self-government and recognized the sovereignty of other First Nations. They had unique systems of government, law, order, punishment, healing and justice and practiced trade with each other. Each also developed complex material cultures (tools, clothing, shelter, transportation, etc.) There were hundreds of thriving languages and distinct cultures. Stories and learning were passed along orally, but images were also used.



1095 - TERRA NULLIUS

At the beginning of the Crusades in 1095, Pope Urban II issued the Papal Bull *Terra Nullius* - a decree explaining the policy of the Catholic Church regarding "empty" land. This decree gave European kings the right to "discover" and claim land in *non-Christian* areas even if there were people already living there.



1452

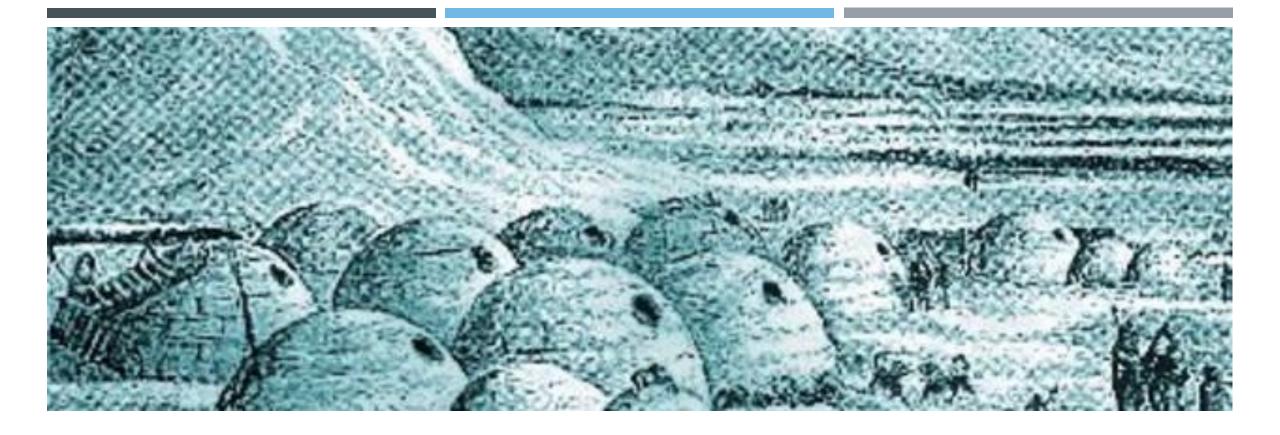
Pope Nicholas V extended the Doctrine of Discovery through the Papal Bull *Romanus Pontifex*. It declared war against all non-Christians and authorized the conquest of their nations and territories.

Like the Doctrine of Discovery, this decree was based on the assertion that Christians were the only civilized peoples and thus non-Christians were subhuman. Christians, therefore, felt they had a God-given right/duty to "subdue and vanquish pagans, and other enemies of Christ."



1492 - FIRST CONTACT

Christopher Columbus, in search of a trade route to India, landed in the Caribbean – making the first contact with Indigenous people. Columbus's "discovery", led to the colonization of Turtle Island.



1576 - ARCTIC EXPLORATION

Encounters between Inuit and Europeans began in the late 1500's when the first explorers sailed into the icy waters of what are now known as Davis Strait, Hudson Strait, and Hudson Bay. Between the arrival of Martin Frobisher in 1576 and the disappearance of John Franklin in 1848, about 22 explorers entered Inuit territory. With each trip, the map of the Arctic became more European and Inuit land started to be claimed by outsiders.



DISEASE AND DEATH

It is estimated that there were at least 2 million people living in North America before European contact. The first wave of explorers brought smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, malaria and other diseases. Indigenous people had no immunity and scientists estimate that between 50 and 90 per cent of the population was wiped out over the course of a few generations.

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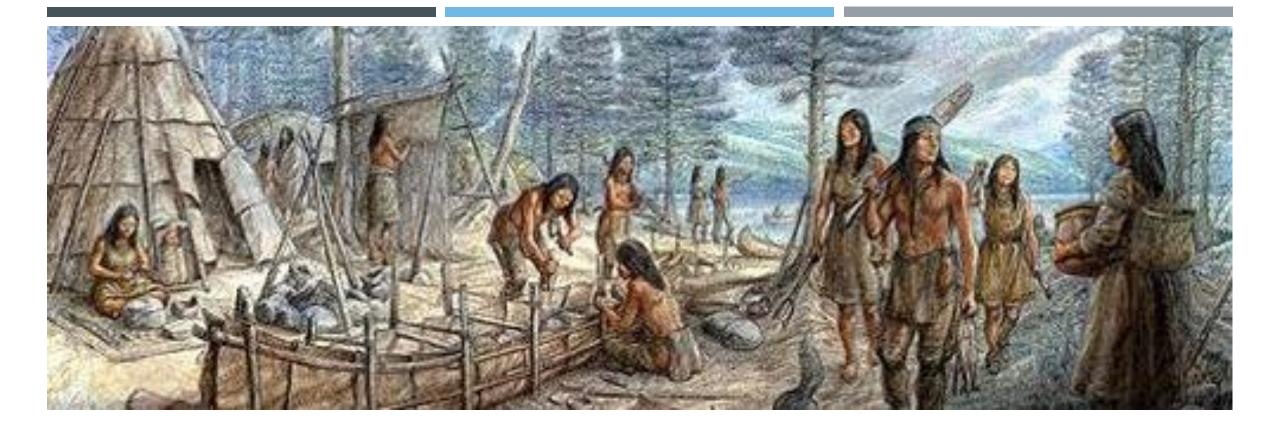
1763 - THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION

Britain had just won the 7 Years' War with France and acquired all French territory on east coast of North America. The Royal Proclamation of King George III laid the ground rules for the "future colonization of Indian and Crown lands." It established the right of Native peoples to use and occupy "Crown" lands and presented First Nations as allies, rather than as British subjects. It require the Colonies to clear, by law, "Indian title" to any land required for Settlement.



AFTER 1763

Prior to 1763 there had been many Peace and Friendship Treaties signed which were about ending hostilities and strengthening relationships. After 1763 treaties like The Treaty of Niagara were signed which gave legal recognition of Indigenous land rights. After the War of 1812, and a flood of Loyalists to the British Colonies, more land was needed. More treaties were signed but the rights of Indigenous people were not respected whether there were signed treaties or not.



THE OMAMIWININI

The Ottawa valley is homeland to the Omamiwinini – Algonquin people who have inhabited this land for over 10,000 years. Despite the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara between First Nations and the Crown that required agreement on both sides for any of the land to be sold to settlers, settlers gradually took over the land, pushing Algonquin people aside. Lanark County, where we live today, is unceded Algonquin territory. This disregard for Indigenous rights occurred and continues across the country.

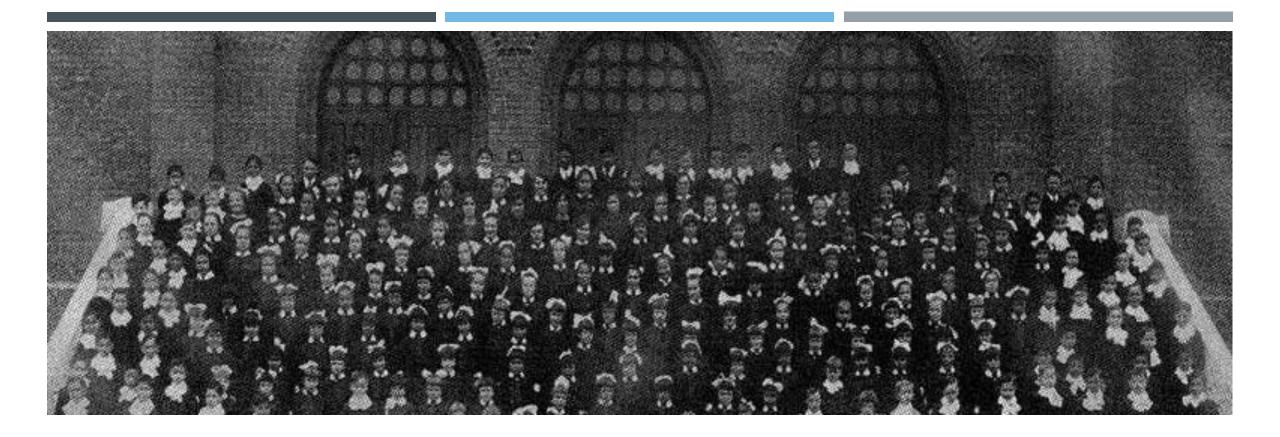
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HEREAS it is desirable to encourage the progress of Civilization among the Indian Tribes in this Province, and the gradual removal of all legal distinctions between them and Her Majesty's other Canadian Subjects, and to facilitate the acquisition of property and of the rights accompanying it, by such Individual Members of the said Tribes as shall be found to desire such encouragement and to have deserved it: Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Assembly of Canada, enacts as fol-

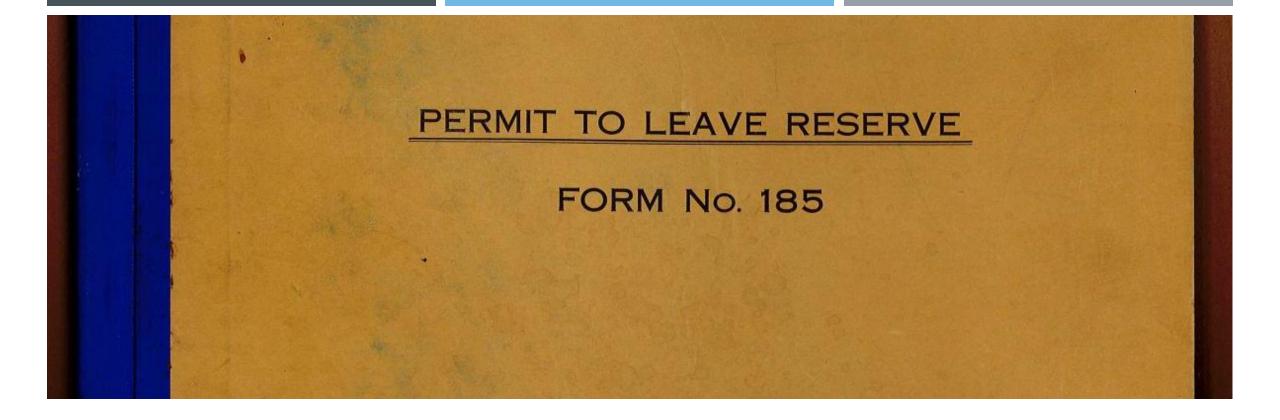
1857 – ACT TO ENCOURAGE GRADUAL CIVILIZATION OF SAVAGES

The adoption of the Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of the Tribes of Savages in the Province of Canada established a voluntary process through which any male Indian could apply to become "enfranchised" thus losing their legal 'Indian status' and become a regular British subject. This was a move towards assimilation.



1872 – RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS ARE ESTABLISHED

"When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents who are savages. And although he may learn to read and write, his habits and training mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write... Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence." – Sir John A. Macdonald (1879) Over 150,000 children attended one of 139 schools. Thousands of children died and as many were abused. Families were broken for generations. The last school closed in 1996. Alnwick Industrial School near Peterborough was the closest to Perth and was in operation from 1838 until 1966.



1876 - THE INDIAN ACT

The Indian Act evolved with separate pieces of colonial legislation. Over time it was amended several times and resulted in, among other things: the "automatic enfranchisement" (loss of status) of any Indian obtaining a university degree or serving in the military as well as any Indian woman who married a non-Indian/non-registered Indian. It banned Indigenous rituals, like the potlatch (until 1951), banned raising legal funds, made education (Residential Schools) compulsory for children and required passes for residents to leave reserves to sell goods, thus protecting the settlers market share.



1940S – INUIT DISC SYSTEM

Inuit names reflect what is important in Inuit culture: environment, landscape, seascape, family, animals, birds, spirits. The names were complicated for southerners to pronounce and, in the 1940s, the Inuit were given Disc numbers, recorded on a special leather ID tag, like a dog tag and were required to keep the tag with them always. Churches encouraged the Inuit to take Christian names. A woman who was known as "Lutaaq, Pilitaq, or Inusiq" to her family but was baptized as "Annie" under this system became Annie E17-21.



1953 - RELOCATION

Eight families from Northern Quebec were moved to the southern tip of Ellesmere Island and to Resolute Bay in the High Arctic. They were promised better living and hunting opportunities. They were joined by three families recruited from the more northern community of Pond Inlet. Inuit have said the relocations were forced and motivated by a desire to reinforce Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic by creating settlements there. The families were left without sufficient supplies for food and shelter and several died.



1960 - RIGHT TO VOTE

On July 1, Indigenous peoples win the right to vote in federal elections. Their right to vote in provincial and territorial elections was granted in various years, Québec being the last one to grant this right in 1969.



THE SIXTIES SCOOP

Beginning in the 1960s and through to the 1980s, Indian, Métis and Inuit newborns and children were regularly taken from their families and communities and placed in foster homes and adopted by European families, often far from their original communities and sometimes in other countries. This was another attempt at assimilation and "killing the Indian in the child". Sadly, the situation has not much changed. For example, in 2008 in BC, more than 51% of children in care were Indigenous though they only make up 8% of the population. Murray Sinclair calls it the "Millennium Scoop."



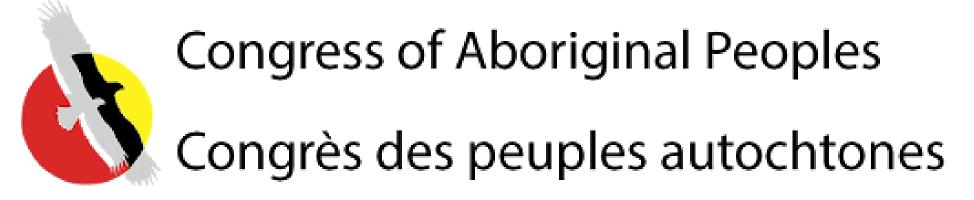
1969 – THE WHITE PAPER

Formally known as the "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy," the Liberal government White Paper proposed the repeal of the Indian Act, removal of "special status" for Native Peoples and abolition of all treaties. Its unstated aim was assimilation and it was rejected by Indigenous people. The outrage it created inspired political organization by Indigenous communities from coast to coast to coast.



1971 – ITK ESTABLISHED

Inuit of Canada came together as a political body with the creation of Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami (ITK) means "Inuit are united in Canada". The ITK promotes, lobbies and negotiates changes in government policy and program delivery to put control back into the hands of Inuit communities.



1971 – CAP ESTABLISHED

The Congress of Aboriginal People was founded in 1971 and represents Indigenous peoples (non-status, status and Métis and Southern Inuit) who live off reserves, in either urban or rural areas across Canada.



Native Women's Association of Canada

L'Association des femmes autochtones

1973 – NWAC ESTABLISHED

Native Women's Association of Canada is formed (NWAC). Its collective goal is to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women, girls and gender-diverse people within First Nations, Métis and Inuit Canadian societies.



1974 – QNWAC ESTABLISHED

The Quebec Native Women's Association (QNWAC) is formed. In 1976 they publish "Wake-Up Native Women!" a document recommending that Native women keep their status even if they marry a non-native man.

1976 - FRONT PAGE CHALLENGE AND JOHN AMAGOALIK

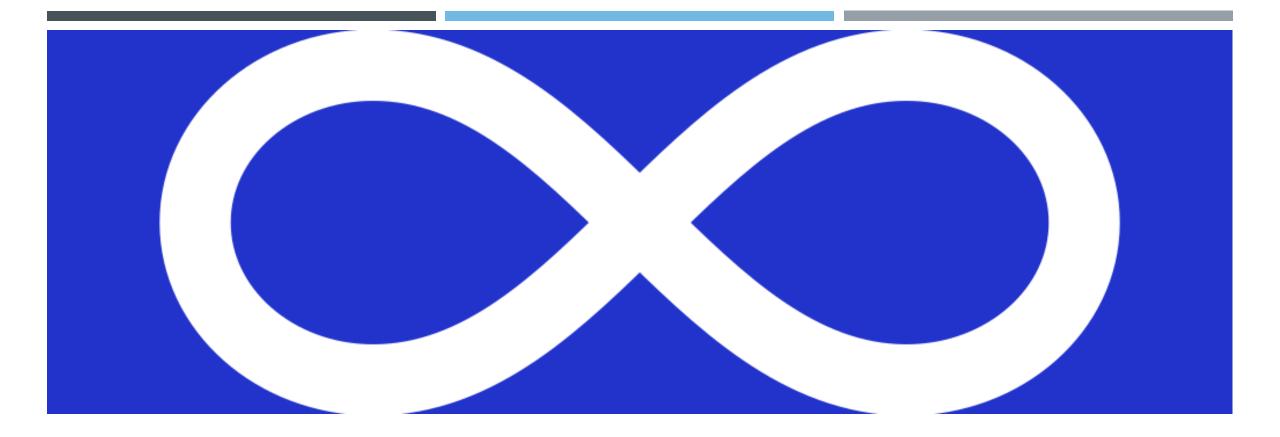
https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1752017199

This is clip from the CBC Archives of from 1976 of John Amagoalik, Director of Land Claims for the Inuit Tapiriit Kantatami. He is widely regarded as the "Father of Nunavut". Amagoalik, along with a group of Inuit, had asked then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau and his cabinet to settle their land claim before construction started on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. In this CBC Television clip, the panellists attempt to understand the what the claim means for the Inuit people. (4:23-7:30) The Berger Report, published in 1977 was a culmination of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry and recommended that any construction be delayed until land claims were settled.



1982 – AFN ESTABLISHED

The Assembly of First Nations is modelled on the UN General Assembly and emerged from the National Indian Brotherhood, which dissolved in the late 1970s. The aims of the organization are to protect and advance treaty rights and interests of First Nations in Canada, including health, education, culture and language. It represents primarily status Indians.



1983 – MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL ESTABLISHED

The Métis National Council was formed in 1983 to support the recognition of the Métis as a distinct ethnicity who identify separately from other aboriginal groups, share Métis Nation ancestry (e.g. the Northwest and Red River, Manitoba settlements) and form recognized communities. This Council was formed to advocate at the federal level in Canada. There are regional Métis organizations in several provinces.



1984 – PAUKTUUTIT ESTABLISHED

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada is formed. It is a national non-profit organization that exists to foster a greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, and to encourage their participation in community, regional and national concerns in relation to social, cultural and economic development.



1992 – APTN ESTABLISHED

The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) is established. It is the first television network by and for Indigenous peoples.



1991-1996 - ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was established in 1991 with the aim of investigating the relationship between Indigenous peoples in Canada, the Government of Canada, and Canadian society as a whole. It was launched in response to status and rights issues brought to light following events such as the Oka Crisis and the failure of the Meech Lake Accord. The commission culminated in a final report of 4,000 pages, published in 1996 and set out a 20-year agenda for implementing recommended changes. Many of the recommendations have never been acted upon.



1996 - NATIONAL ABORIGINAL (INDIGENOUS) PEOPLES DAY

On June 13, 1996, after consultation with Aboriginal organisations, June 21st was officially declared National Aboriginal Peoples Day. Now called National Indigenous Peoples Day, since its inauguration, it has been part of nationwide festivities held from June 21st to July 1st. June 21st was chosen because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice and because many Indigenous groups mark this day as a time to celebrate their heritage.



2006 – SISTERS IN SPIRIT VIGILS

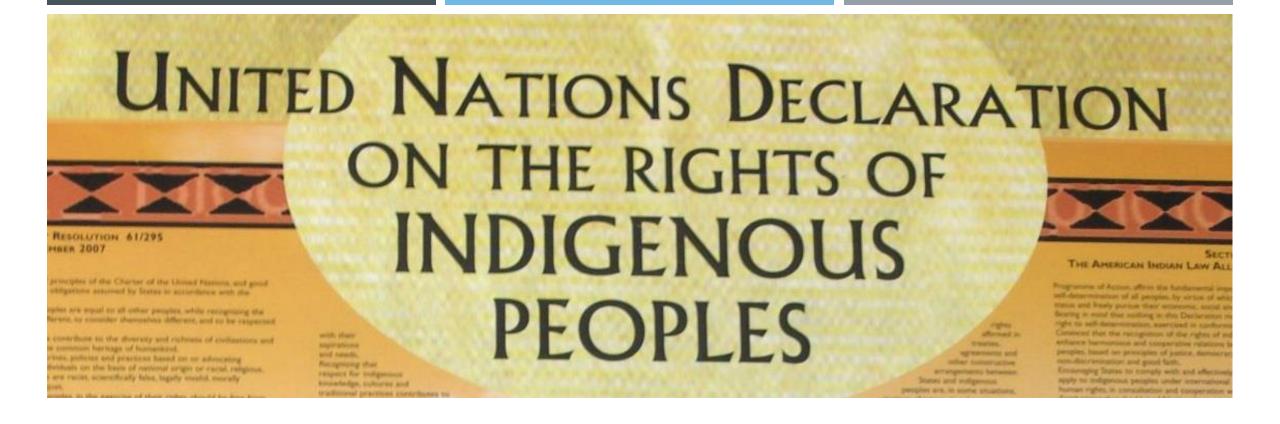
Sisters in Spirit Vigils have been held since 2006, when NWAC and family members of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls held peaceful demonstrations on Parliament Hill. There are now vigils held every year on October 4 in communities across the country, including Perth. Over a thousand Indigenous women and girls have been murdered or gone missing in the last half-century.



Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

2008 - 2015 - TRC

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is formally established. It was organized by the parties of the *Indian Residential Schools Agreement* with the purpose of documenting the history and lasting impact of the Residential School system on Indigenous students and their families. It issued its final report in which detailed its findings and outlined 94 Calls to Action for Canadians.



2007 – UNDRIP

Canada finally signs on to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2010, after three years of intense campaigning by national Indigenous organizations and their allies. Canada was one of four countries that resisted signing it. One of UNDRIPs most important tenets is the "right to free, prior and informed consent."



2012 – IDLE NO MORE

Sparked by the hunger strike of Attawapiskat chief Theresa Spence and fuelled by the actions of 4 women from Saskatchewan, the *Idle No More* movement began. The movement was initiated by activists Nina Wilson, Sheelah Mclean, Sylvia McAdam, and Jessica Gordon during a teach-in at Station 20 West in Saskatoon called "Idle No More" held in response to the Harper government's introduction of Bill C-45 which would have deregulated protection of forests and waterways.



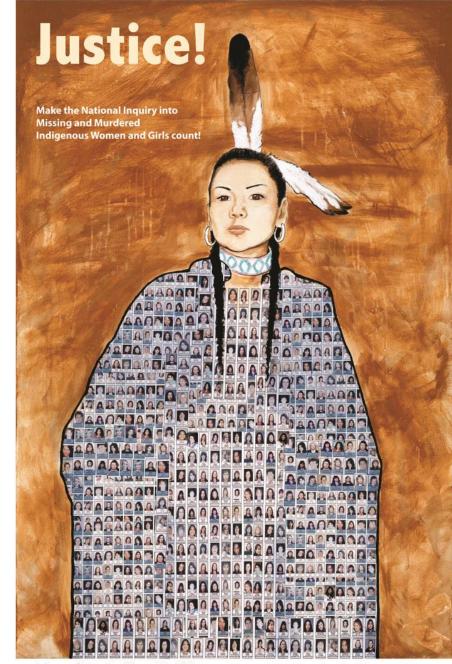
2015 - 2018 MMIWG INQUIRY AND REPORT

The Government of Canada announced the launch of an independent national inquiry to address the high number of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people. Indigenous women are 12 times more likely to be murdered or go missing than other women in Canada.



2021 – CANADA VS FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CARING SOCIETY

In this ground-breaking decision, the Federal Court upheld a ruling of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) which awarded compensation to an estimated 54,000 First Nations children, parents and grandparents. The CHRT found that the federal government discriminated against First Nations children by (1) significantly underfunding child welfare programs for First Nations children, as well as unnecessarily removing thousands of First Nations children from their homes; and (2) failing to implement Jordan's Principle, which requires the government to provide services to First Nations children, regardless of disputes between levels of government over jurisdiction and financial liability. The Federal government has fought against this case every step of the way in this 14-year process.



Happy International Women's Day!

In honour of International Women's Day, 2016. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers Art: "Still Dancing" by Jonathan Labillois www.jonlabillois.com Donated to the Monteeal Native Women's Shelter



Mary Two-Axe Earley was a Mohawk woman from the reserve of Kahnawake, Quebec. She worked as an Indigenous women's rights activist against the gender discrimination in the Indian Act that caused Indigenous women to lose status. Her work eventually led to the passing of bill C-31 in 1985, an amendment to the Indian Act to correct gender discrimination. Only in 2019 did the issue become entirely resolved after years of court battles by other Indigenous women.

Daphne Odjig was an artist of Odawa-Potawatomi-English heritage. She was the driving force behind the Professional Native Indian Artists Association, colloquially known as the Indian Group of Seven, a group considered a pioneer in bringing First Nations art to the forefront of Canada's art world. She received a number of awards for her work, including the Order of Canada, The Governor General's Award and five honorary doctorates.



Kenojuak Ashevak was one of the most notable creators of modern Inuit Art. Her early years were spent living a traditional hunting lifestyle on the land at Ikirasaq on the southern coast of Baffin Island, residing in igloos and skin tents. Her imagery has been displayed on Canadian stamps and coins, her life portrayed in books and films, and her art sought all over the world by collectors, corporations and museums. She was awarded the Order of Canada.





Alanis Obomsawin is an Abenaki filmmaker, singer, artist and activist primarily known for her documentaries. Her best known documentary is *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*, about the 1990 Oka Crisis in Quebec.

Rita Joe was a Mi'kmaq poet and songwriter, often referred to as the Poet Laureate of the Mi'kmaq people. In 1978, her first book, *The Poems of Rita Joe* was published. Over her lifetime she published six other books, including the autobiographical *Song of Rita Joe,* in which the poet outlined some of her experiences at the Schubenacadie Indian Residential School.





Mary Simon was sworn in as Canada's first Indigenous Governor General in June 2021.

From 1994 to 2003, she served as ambassador for circumpolar affairs, becoming the first Inuk to hold an ambassadorial position. During this time, she negotiated the creation of the Arctic Council.

Beginning in 2006, she served two terms as president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. In 2008, in the House of Commons, she delivered a response on behalf of Inuit to the formal apology on residential schools made by Stephen Harper's government.

She is the founder of the Arctic Children and Youth foundation and, until 2014, she was the chairperson of the National Committee on Inuit Education.

Ellen Gabriel, also known as Katsi'tsakwas, is born. She is a Mohawk activist and^I artist from <u>Kanehsatà:ke</u> Nation - Turtle Clan and known for her involvement as the official spokesperson, chosen by the People of the Longhouse during the Oka Crisis. She continues to be an outspoken activist for the rights of Indigenous People.





Cindy Blackstock is a Gitxsan activist for child welfare and executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. The FNCFCS fights for the rights of first nations children in education, health care and social services. She is also a professor for the School of Social Work at McGill University. **Christi Belcourt** is a Métis artist, author and activist. She is best known for her acrylic paintings which depict floral patterns inspired by Métis and First Nations historical beadwork art. Her work often focuses on questions around identity, culture, place and divisions within communities.





Judy DaSilva is a leader in the Grassy Narrows Blockade to stop logging which is contaminating the waters of Grassy Narrows, in Northern Ontario, with methyl mercury. The blockade eventually led to a significant court decision in 2011 when Ontario's Superior Court ruled that the province cannot authorize timber and logging if the operations infringe on federal treaty promises protecting aboriginal rights to traditional hunting and trapping. Willi Nowlan is a Mi'kmaq spokesperson for Indigenous groups protesting fracking in New Brunswick. The protests, which began in 2011 result in an indefinite moratorium on fracking in 2016. Indigenous groups throughout the country have protested fracking and its destruction of water sources for many years.

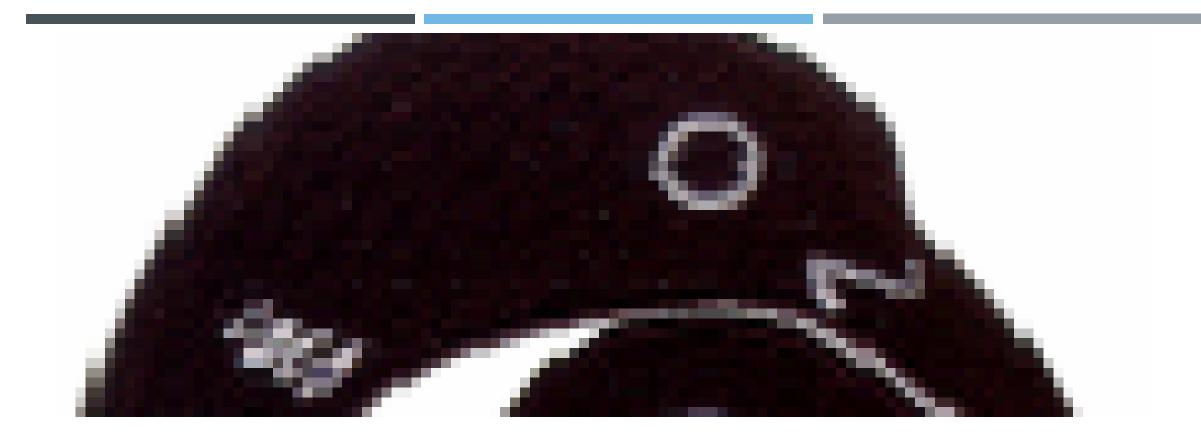




Kanahus Manuel (granddaughter of Indian Brotherhood Chief, George Manuel and daughter of Indigenous activist Arthur Manuel) is an activist and part of the Tiny House Warriors movement to construct tiny houses in the path of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. This action is a way of asserting control over the traditional Secwepemc territory on which the pipeline is proposed.

Shannen Koostachin of the Attawapiskat First Nation convinced her classmates to cancel their grade 8 graduation trip to Niagara Falls and instead travel to Ottawa to meet Chuck Strahl, then-Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs. Their community had been without a proper school for 9 years after it had been demolished because it sat above a toxic diesel fuel leak. Sadly, Shannen died in a car accident in 2010 but out of her activism, **Shannen's Dream** was born. The campaign demands safe, culturally-based education for all First Nation children. A new school was built in Attawapiskat in 2014 but Indigenous education remains badly underfunded.





DISCUSSION AND NEXT MEETING