

Treaty Education for Truth and Reconciliation: Allyship and Action

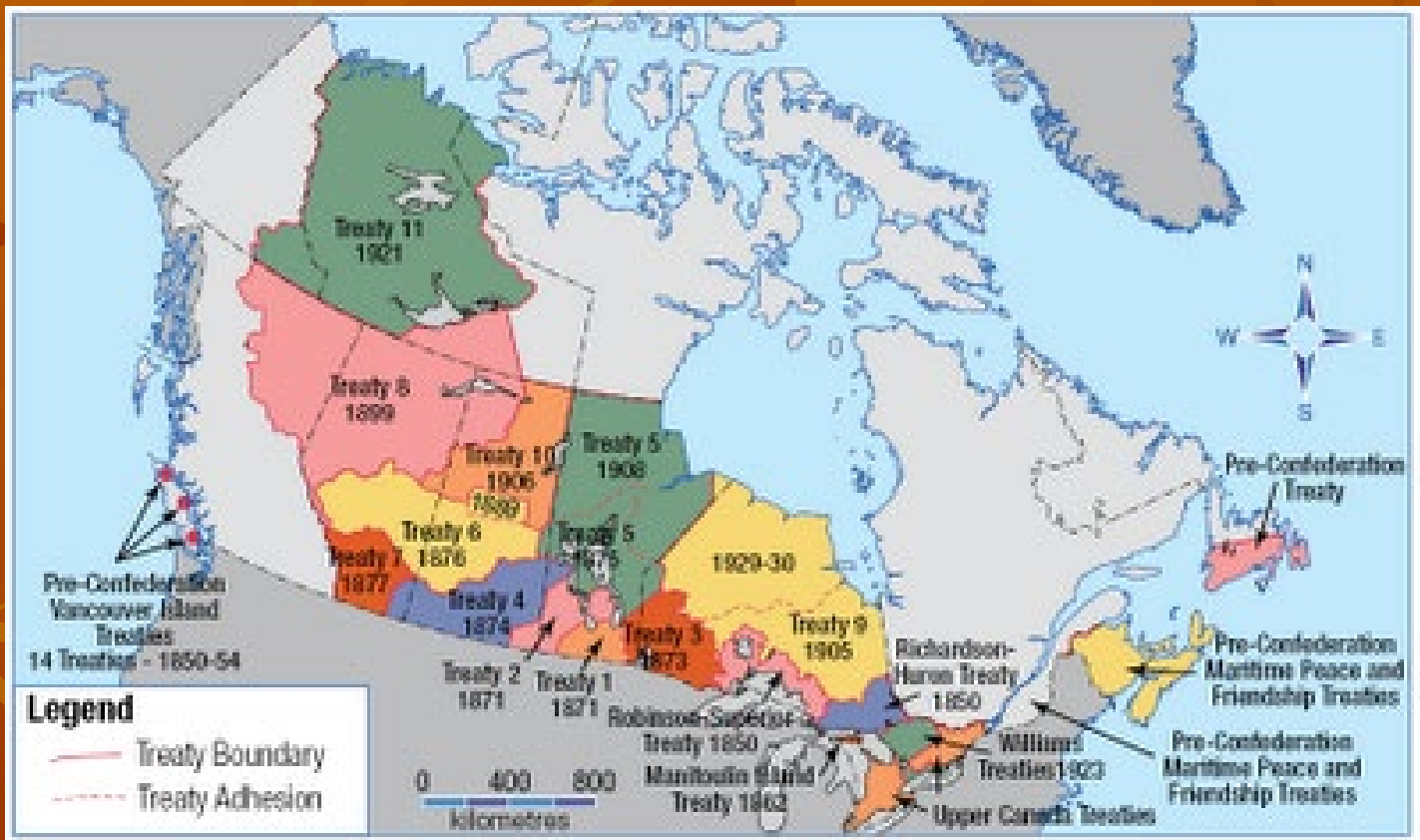
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What Does it Mean to be a Treaty Person?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1E6xDhWT8y8>

Treaties in Canada

“Treaties between Canada and Aboriginal peoples are one of the paradoxes of Canadian history. Although they have been an important feature of the country since the earliest days of contact between Natives and newcomers, relatively few Canadians understand what they are or the role they have played in the country’s past. Unfortunately, even fewer non-Native Canadians appreciate that treaties are a valuable part of the foundation of the Canadian state” (J. R. Miller, 2009, p.3).



Questions for Consideration

- What are Treaties?
- What do we know about Treaties?
- Why is Treaty Education important?
- What do treaties have to do with Reconciliation?

Treaty (Mis)Understandings

- First Nations people were fooled by the Government into signing the treaties.
- First Nations people passively accepted the terms of treaty presented to them by the Government.
- First Nations people do not pay taxes.
- First Nations people do not pay for post-secondary education.
- First Nations people use treaties to ‘get a free ride.’
- Treaties are a thing of the past

The Need for Treaty Education in Canada

Corrective to the Dominant Narrative of
Canadian History

Ethical Relationships

Shifting Historical Consciousness

As a Principle of Reconciliation

Roger Epp (2008) argues that there is a need to rethink our relationship with First Nations people so that “instead of posing the question about reconciliation as a matter of what ‘they’ want – recognition, compensation, land – and what ‘we’ can live with, the subject under closest scrutiny becomes ourselves...the subject is not the ‘Indian problem’ but the ‘settler problem’ (p. 126).

Driving Highway 10...



Another Drive...



Treaty

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Treaty Failures

- 1876 Indian Act (an antithesis to the kin relationship that both sides had talked about during treaty negotiations).
- 1880 creation of the Dept. of Indian Affairs
- Compulsory Enfranchisement Bill (Duncan Campbell Scott – “I want to get rid of the Indian problem”).
- Creation of the pass system for First Nations on reserves in the wake of the 1885 Riel Resistance.

Treaty Failures (Continued)

- Failure to honour the treaty condition of allowing First Nations to select the land they wanted for reserves.
- Decreasing the amount of land promised to First Nations in treaty negotiations.
- Establishment of Residential Schools as another means of getting rid of the “Indian problem”.
- 1960’s ‘Scoop’.

Treaty Learnings

- Understanding the historical context of treaties & treaty making
- Considering Indigenous & settler worldviews
- Learning about Treaty promises
- Attending to the Treaty relationship
- Paying attention to contemporary Treaty issues
- Knowing the story of your treaty territory
- Taking a treaty walk

Ethical Relationality

- It is the ethical and relational commitments emphasized in Indigenous wisdom traditions that will foster and teach a specific form of historical consciousness among Canadians, and thus set the context for renewed partnerships. These teachings are the inspiration for the notion of ethical relationality—an ecological understanding of human relationality that does not deny difference, but rather seeks to more deeply understand how our different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other. This form of relationality is ethical because it does not overlook or invisibilize the particular historical, cultural, and social contexts from which a standpoint arises. It puts these considerations at the forefront of engagements across frontiers of difference (Donald, 2009, p. 76).

A challenge for education, and for public education in particular, is learning how to practice reconciliation on a daily basis such that it becomes woven into the fabric of schooling and curricula the way assimilation once was...Education for reconciliation must do more than bring awareness, it must bring about a change of intentions and actions (Furo, 2017).

Allyship and Action

- Do the work! Commit to deepening your knowledge. Being an ally requires listening, self-reflection and education.
- Learn about treaties and the treaty relationship.
- Understand that the learning is ongoing; it is a journey.
- Know what treaty territory you are in and who the Indigenous people of the territory are.
- Recognize the privilege that settler cultures have and take for granted.

Allyship and Action

- Listen to and learn from Indigenous people – in-person, podcasts, articles, blogs, films, etc.
- Recognize and speak out against the erasure of history or problematic representations of the past.
- Saviours are not needed – solidarity is!
- As a school council, ask that the treaty flag be flown, commit to learning together, lobby for the respectful inclusion of treaties and the treaty relationship in the curriculum in every grade.

Deepening Knowledge

- Thomas King “The Inconvenient Indian”
- Michael Asch “On Being Here to Stay: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights in Canada”
- Charlie Angus “Children of the Broken Treaty”
- Arthur Manuel “Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call”
- James Daschuk “Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Indigenous Life”
- Tanya Talaga “All Our Relations” (from her Massey Lectures
- Gina Starblanket & Dallas Hunt “Storying Violence: Challenging Colonial Narratives in the Stanley Trial”
- Bob Joseph “21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality
- Chelsea Vowel “Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Issues in Canada”
- Jesse Thistle “From the Ashes”
- Paulette Regan “Unsettling the Settler Within”
- Trevor Harriot “Towards a Prairie Atonement”
- Candace Savage “A Geography of Blood: Unearthing Memory on a Prairie Landscape”

Films and Videos

- Trick or Treaty (2014, Alanis Obomsawin): A film about Treaty 9 in Northern Ontario and the tensions between the government & Indigenous communities
- Treaty Talk: Sharing the River of Life (2018, Dr. Patricia Makokis). Treaty 6 teachings
- Treaty Walk: A Journey for Common Ground (2019, Dr. Patricia Makokis & Scott MacDougall). Indigenous & Settlers journey together on a 14 day walk from Treaty 6 to Treaty 7.
- nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up (2019): by Tasha Hubbard. Through the murder of Colten Bushie, the film reveals the stark history of colonialism and racism on the prairies.
- Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance (1993, by Alanis Obomsawin). Chronicles the 1990 Oka Crisis
- The 8th Fire (2012) – CBC Documentary Series hosted by Wab Kinew. Explores the need for Canada to heal its relationship with Aboriginal peoples.



<https://vimeo.com/299073411>