

Colonialism, History & Impacts Indian Residential Schools



RG-22-M

What were Indian Residential Schools

- To first understand this we must understand where it came from

Have to ask a few questions

- **What do you think of when I say “School”?**
- **What was the Indian Problem?**
- **Why was this a problem**
- **Who’s problem was it?**
- **What was Canada’s Intent?**
- **What were those Impacts?**

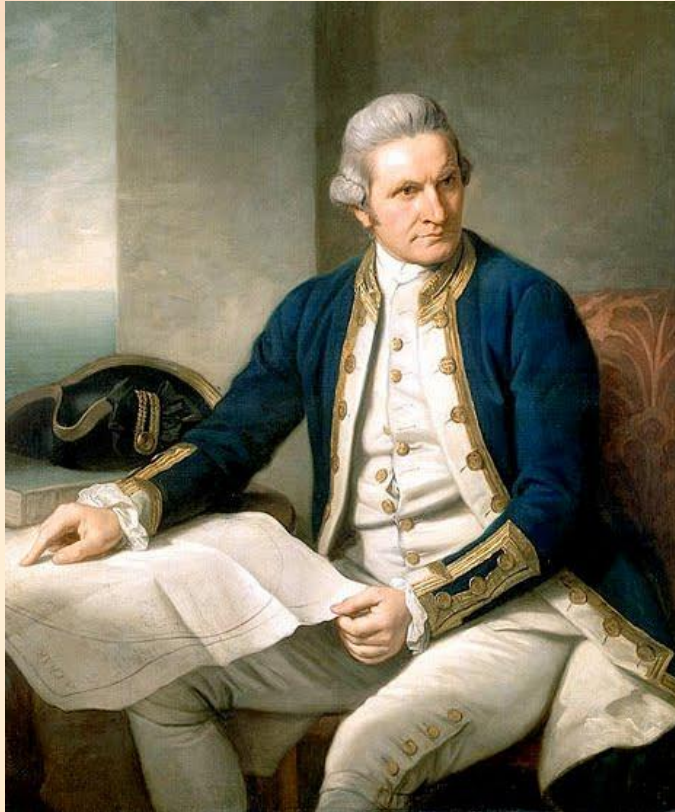


What is Our Aboriginal History in Canada

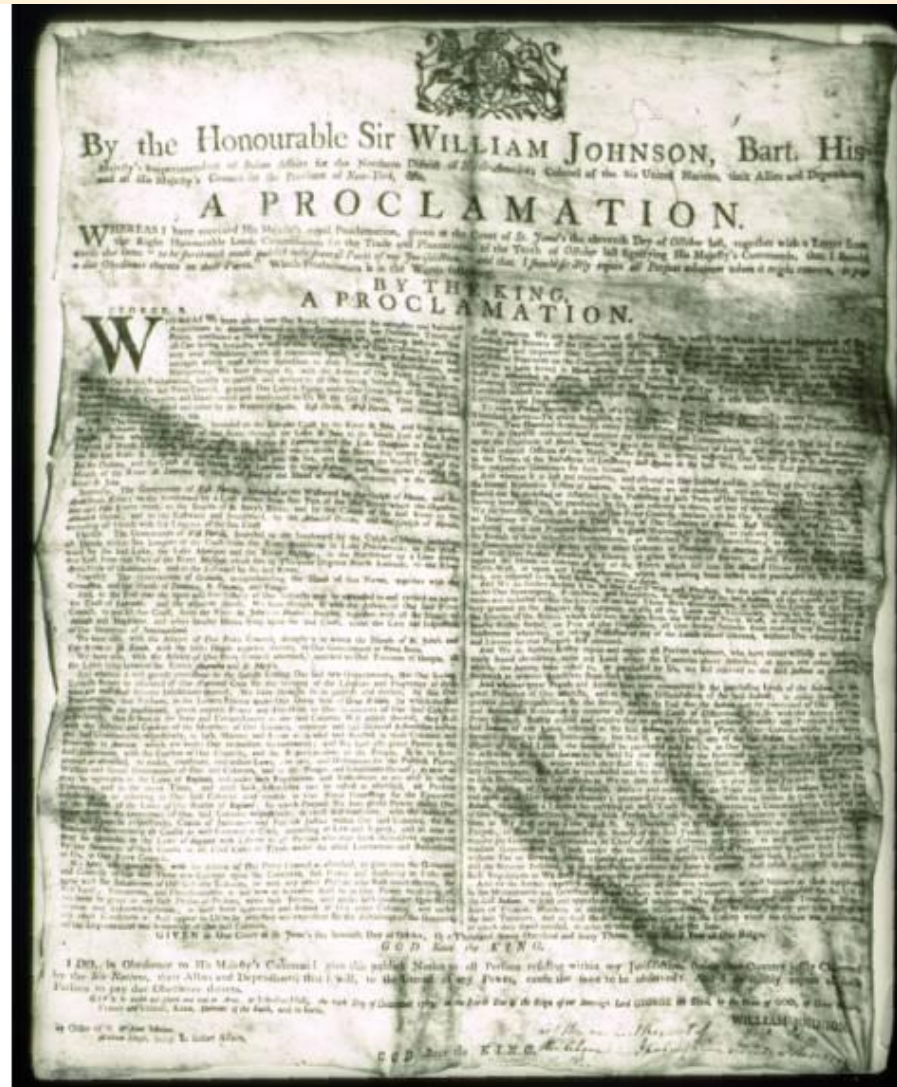
- Colonialism is too neat and tidy of a word to describe what happened here!
- Many Policies & Legislation implemented to 'Assimilate' and 'Integrated' aboriginal people into mainstream society.



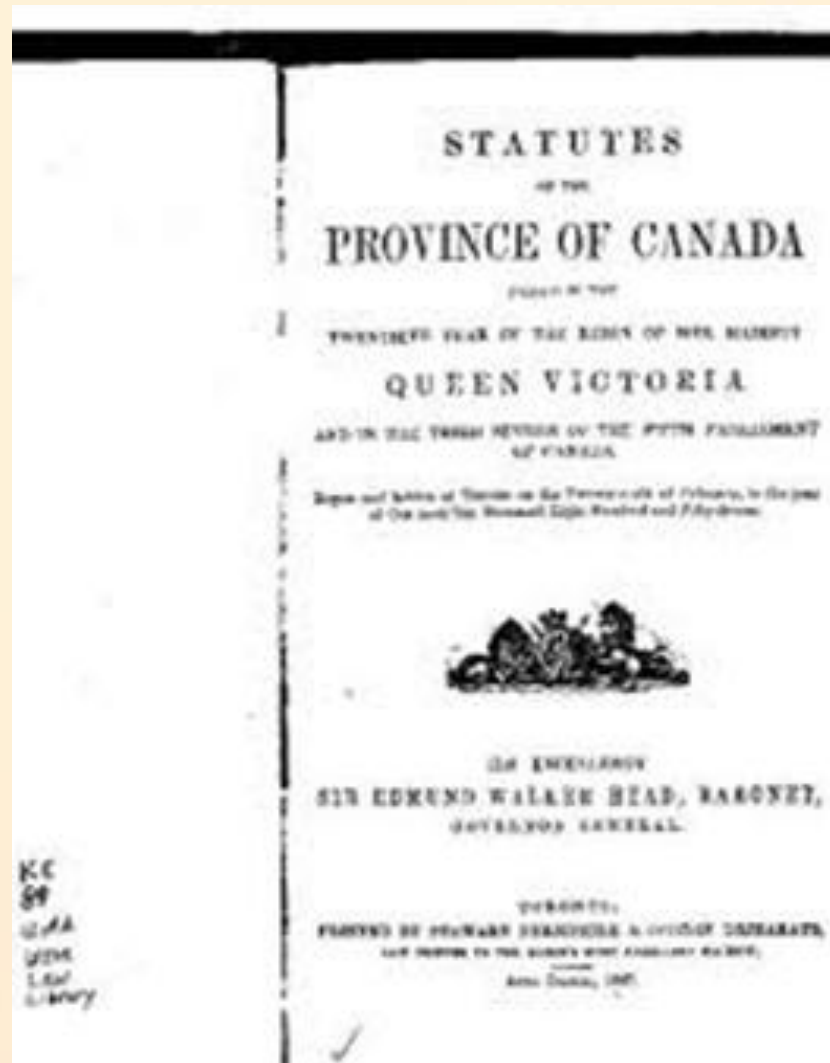
First Contact in BC (Captain Cook – 1778)



Royal Proclamation 1763



Gradual Civilization Act – 1857



Indian Lands Act 1860



- Centralized control over Aboriginal Affairs
- Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs became the authority for all aboriginals and the their lands in the province/Canada
- Continued until 1867 when Nova Scotia & New Brunswick became Dominion of Canada

First Residential School in BC

- St Mary's in Mission 1861



Fathers of Confederation

British North American Act 1867



- “We have been pampering and coaxing the Indians; that we must take a new course, we must vindicate the position of the white man, we must teach the Indians what law is.”

Sir John A MacDonald: Speech before the House of Commons, July 6, 1885

- "The great aim of our legislation has been to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the other inhabitants of the Dominion as speedily as they are fit to change."

John A Macdonald, 1887

1867 Confederation



1867 Conflict of Interest



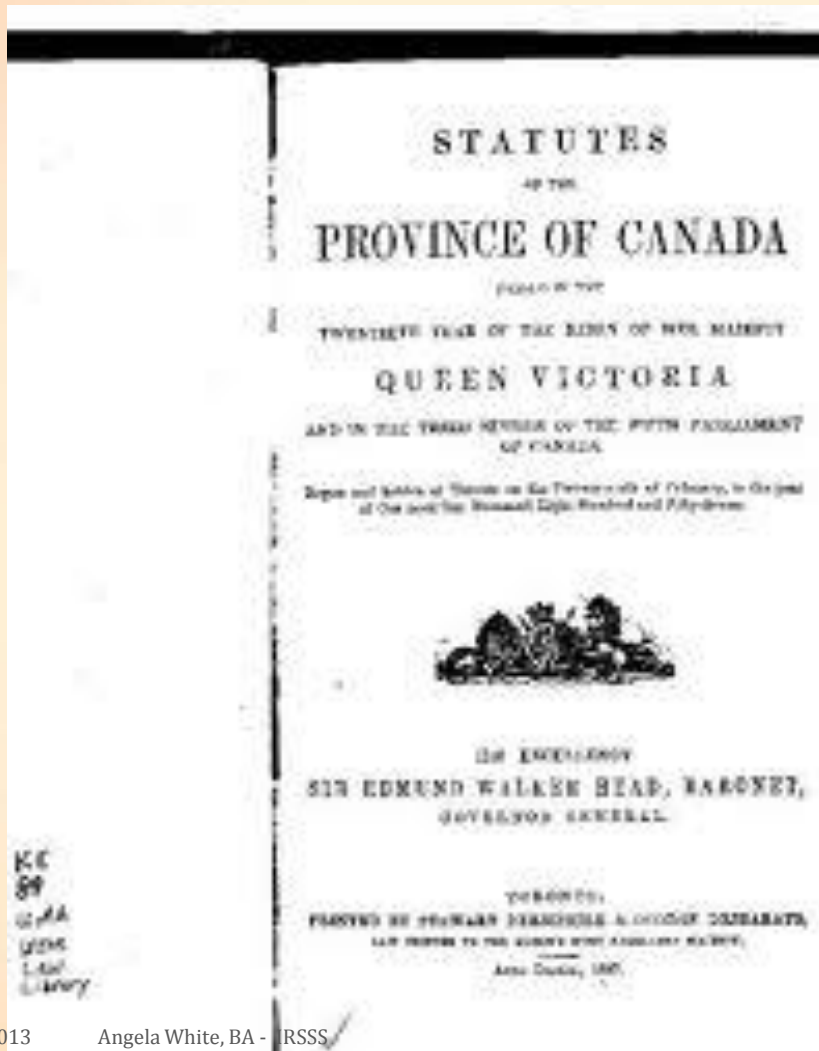
Way Ward Ways.....

- *The problem with the Indians is one of morality and religion. They lack the basic fundamentals of civilised thought and spirit, which explains their child-like nature and behaviour. At our school we strive to turn them into mature Christians who will learn how to behave in the world and surrender their barbaric way of life and their treaty rights which keep them trapped on their land and in a primitive existence. Only then will the Indian problem in our country be solved.*

(Rev. A. E. Caldwell to Indian Agent P. D. Ashbridge, Ahousat, BC, Nov 12, 1938)

Gradual Enfranchisement of Indians

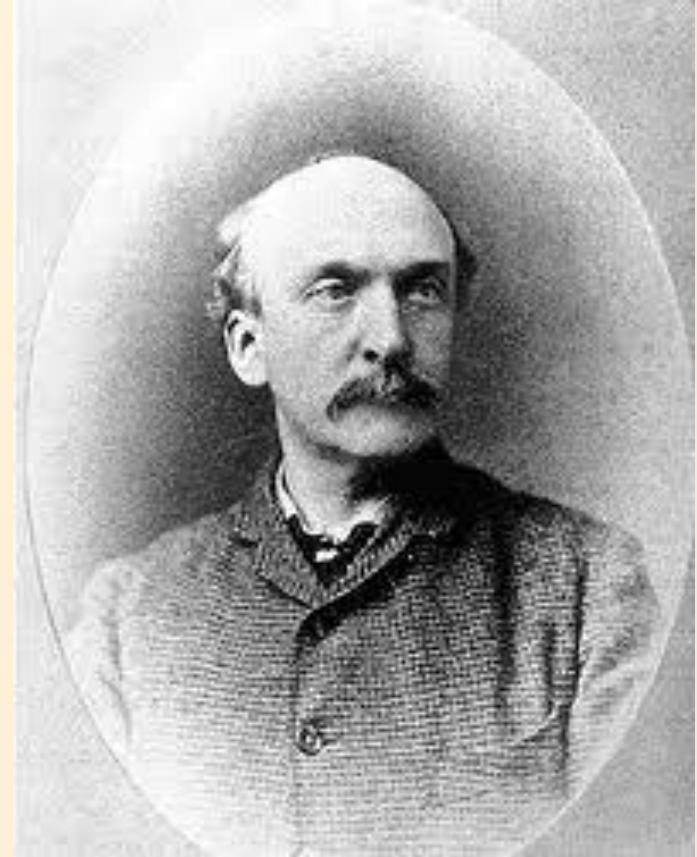
1869



- Introduce the notion of self-government
- Introduction of democracy
- Excluded aboriginal women
- Paternalistic laws to protect aboriginals from themselves
- Women lost “status” if married a non-aboriginal
- Children from this marriage lost identity as aboriginal

"Civilizing" the Indian population 1879

- The Nicholas Flood Davin Report
- most effective means of "civilizing" the Indian population
- The first IRS's were established in the 1840s



"Indian culture" was a contradiction in terms, Indians were uncivilized, and the aim of education must be to destroy the Indian" Davin 1879

Report on Industrial Schools For Indians and Half-Breeds" (March 14, 1879).

What is the Indian Act

Federal Government of Canada

Canada

Indian Act was established
in 1876

There are 633 Bands/First
Nations in Canada

Indian Act

Law
that governs
Indians

Indians

Indians

Indians

Indians

Indians

Philosophy of INDIAN ACT

- clearly expressed by the Canadian Department of the Interior in its 1876 annual report:

“Our Indian legislation generally rests on the principle, that the aborigines are to be **kept in a condition of tutelage and treated as wards or children of the State**. ...the true interests of the aborigines and of the State alike require that **every effort** should be made to **aid the Red man** in **lifting himself** out of his condition of tutelage and dependence, and that is clearly our wisdom and our duty, through education and every other means, to **prepare him for a higher civilization** by encouraging him to assume the privileges and responsibilities **of full citizenship**.”

(Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996)

Aggressive Assimilation Policy 1879

- Policy to forcibly remove children



Dr. Bryce – Report 1907

MORTALITY RATE of INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

30 – 60%

A letter to the Medical Director of Indian Affairs noted in 1953 that “children ... are not being fed properly to the extent that they are garbaging around in the barns for food that should only be fed to the Barn occupants.”

353988

Table showing Mortality in Pupils of 3 Indian Schools established 1894-1908:

SHINGWAGAN BORN - (Ontario) 1894-1908

Total pupils	288.
Dead	25.
Discharged, Sick	25.
- probably sick	18.
Nothing recorded	30.
Expelled, Discharged or Run Away	18.
Honourably Discharged	64.

SARON SCHOOL - (Alberta) (1894-1908)

Boys entering School 1894 - 1900	10.
Dead	8.
*(All died in School or soon after leaving).	
Boys entering School 1900-1908	13.
Dead	8.
*(All died in School or soon after leaving)	
Thus the mortality of the total admissions amongst boys during seven years was 50%.	
Girls entering School 1894-1900	19.
Died	5.
Girls entering School 1901-1908	3.
None died.	
Thus the percentage of deaths amongst the girls during the first seven years was 26.3%. Of the three who have entered since 1900 none have died.	
Total pupils in August, 1908,	15.
Mortality Rate	26%

Quote Regarding Illness & Death:

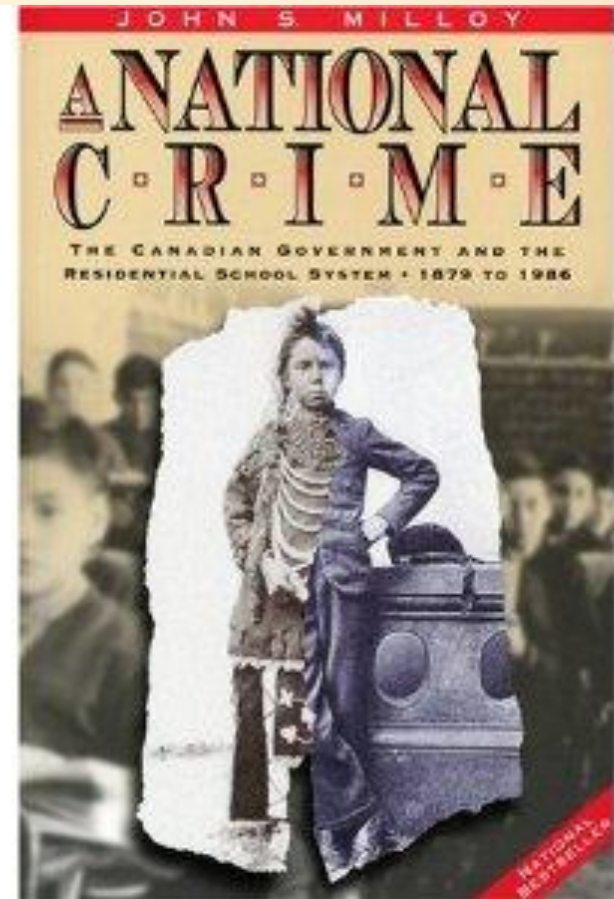
- “It is readily acknowledged that Indian children lose their natural resistance to illness by habituating so closely in the residential schools, and that they die at a much higher rate than in their villages. But this alone does not justify a change in the policy of this Department, which is geared towards a final solution of our Indian Problem.”

Excerpt of letter from Duncan Campbell Scott in 1918 to British Columbia Indian Agent General-Major D. MacKay

Dr. Bryce – INAC Medical Examiner

“Indian Children were being systematically and deliberately killed in Residential school.

Dr Bryce



National Crime

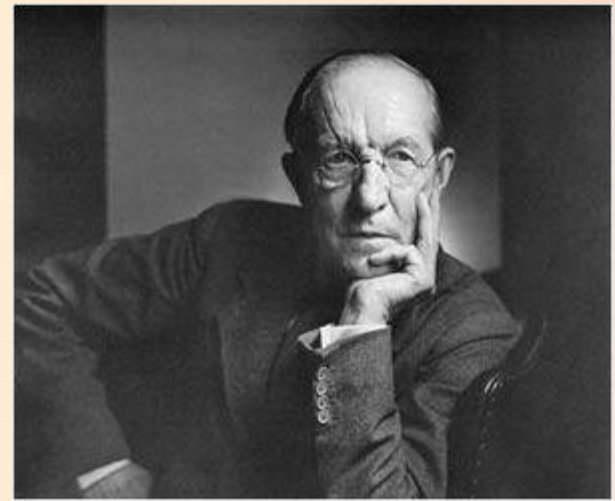
- Children were forcibly taken from homes by RCMP
- 90 to 100% Suffered Severe physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
- Missing Children
- Lack of or Rotten Food
- Forced Sterilization
(Sterilization Act 1933 to 1979)
- Used for Experiments
- Exposed intentionally to TB



Canadian Assimilation Policy

- I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department, that is the whole object of this Bill.

Dr. Duncan Campbell Scott – 1920
Department of Indian Affairs
1913 - 1932



1920 Duncan Campbell Scott made Attendance Mandatory to Indian Residential School

All Children ages 7 - 15

How children were transported



**Compulsory attendance to
residential schools ended in 1948**

Imagine.....

Imagine being taken from your parents at the age of five. Being given a number instead of a name. Being punished for speaking the only language you know. Being cut off from your family.

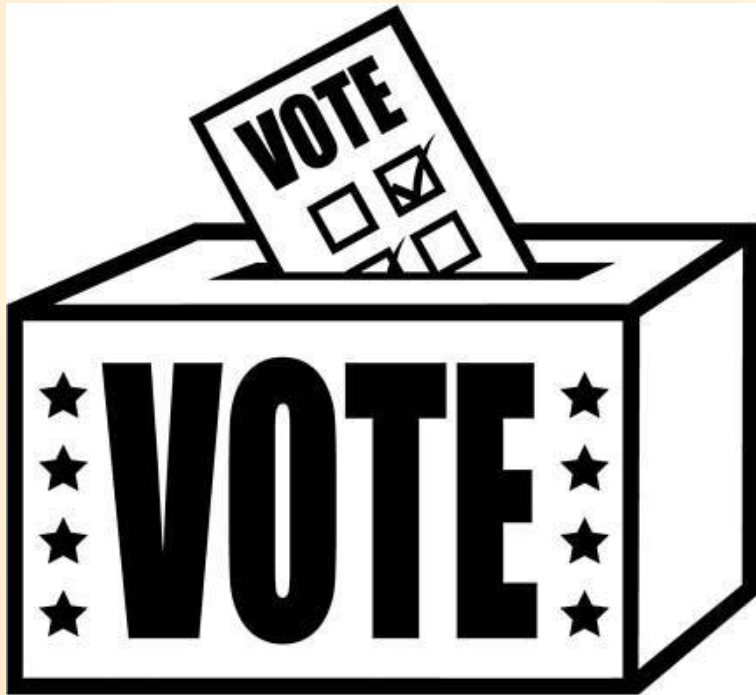
Imagine being a parent, and being threatened with jail if you didn't give up your children. Imagine being cut off from your children for ten years.

What would it do to your family?



Right to Vote

1949 – Right to Vote in BC



1960 – Right to vote in Federal Elections



NO STRINGS ATTACHED

Genocide Convention

- 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
- The Convention defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
 - a. Killing members of the group;
 - b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
 - c. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
 - d. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
 - e. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Cultural Genocide

- Cultural genocide is the systematic destruction of traditions, values, language, and other elements which make one group of people distinct from other groups.



Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874.

Library and Archives Canada / NL-022474

What if....

- The Holocaust never stopped for the Crown's victims.....
- There was no glorious vindication, no validation, no justice
- The status quo was going to remain "This is the way it is going to be"
- those that resisted were crushed/isolated
- The Crown's vision and principles of these same people were accepted whole heartedly by its own citizens and those judgements were carried forward without question
- WHAT IF.....



Then you would have.....

- Canada's policy with regards to the treatment of the Aboriginal population since contact; including the Indian Residential School experience.



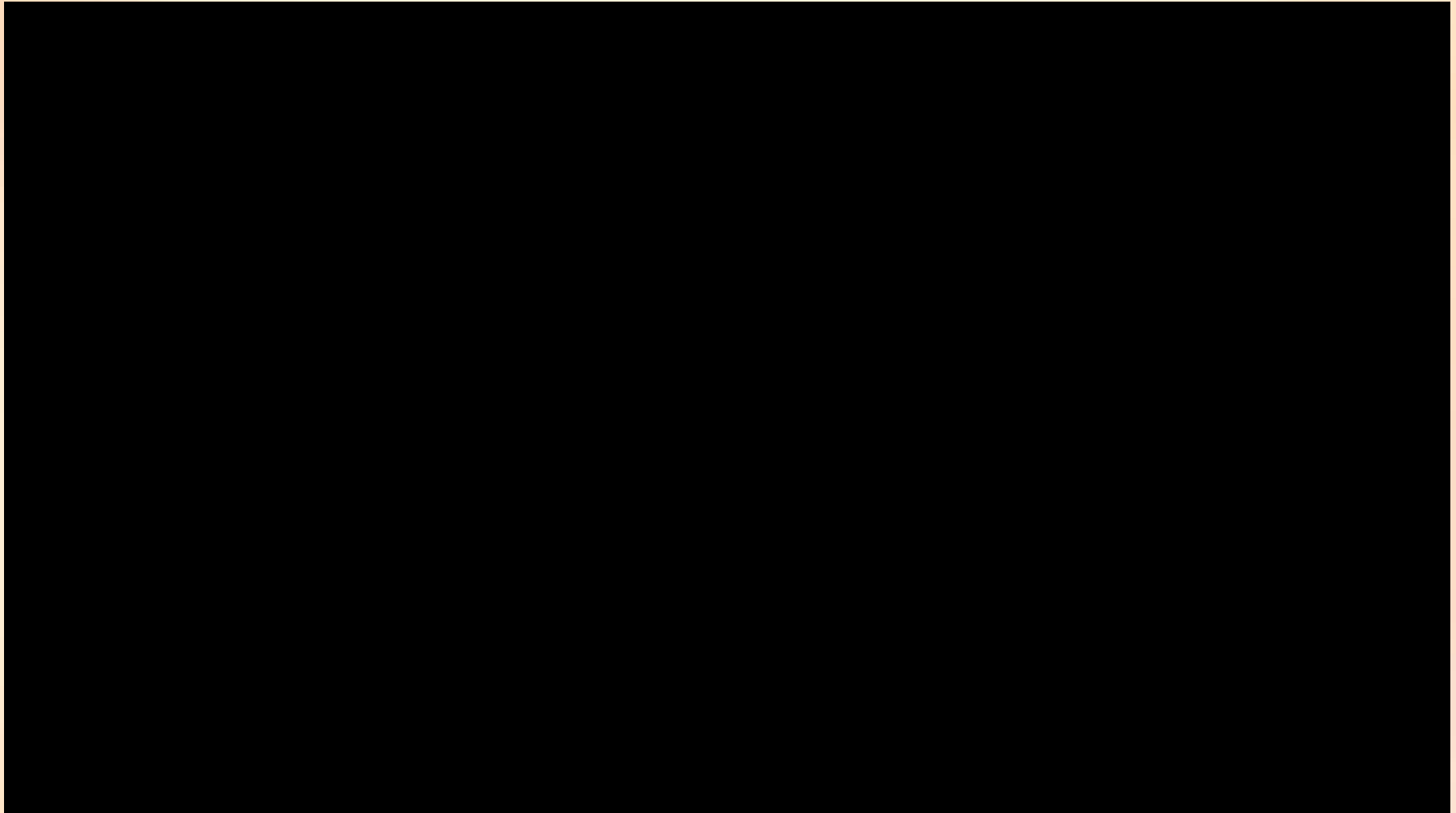
265-52 St. Mary's school - Sisters' & Girls' Home

Last School to close in Canada

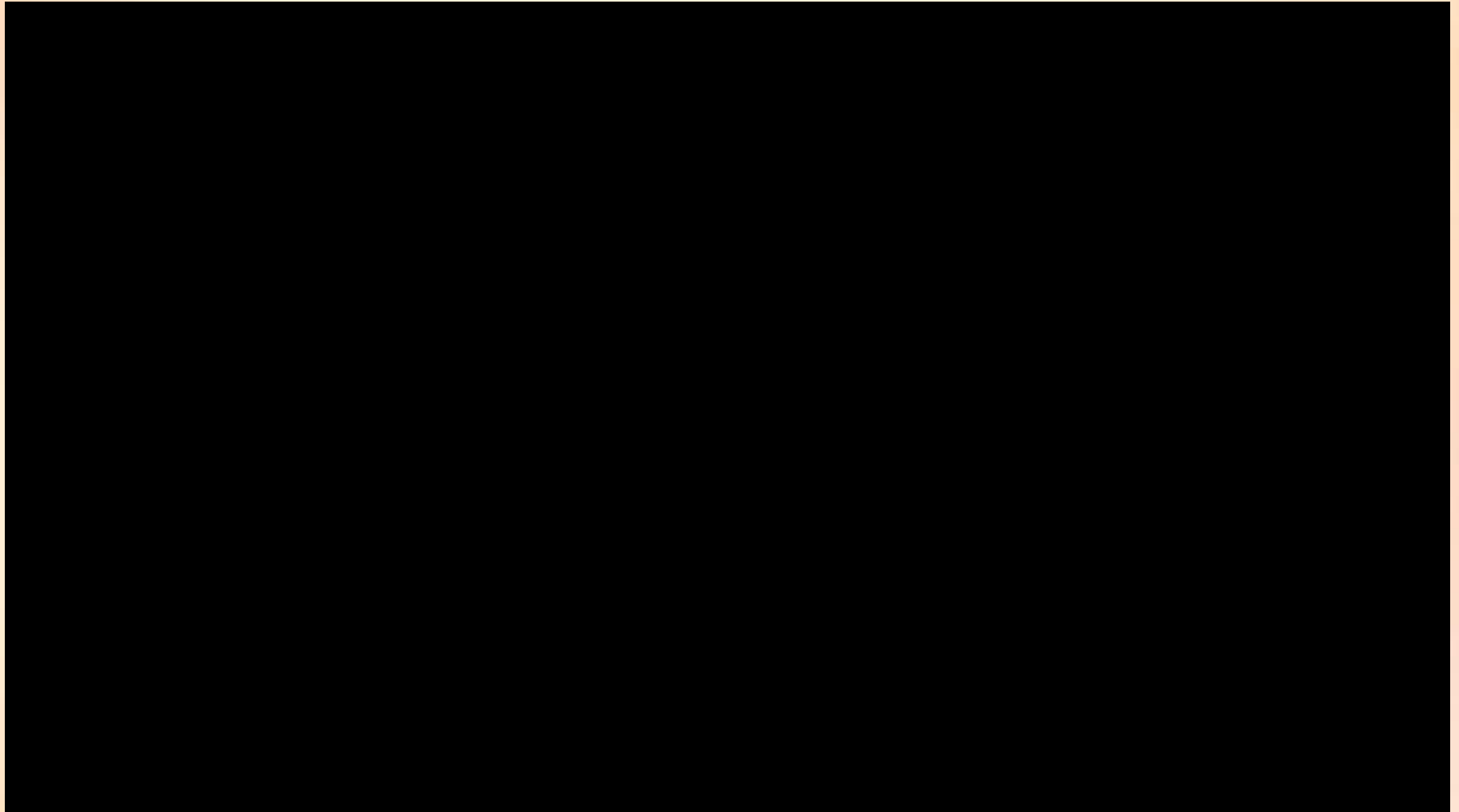
- Gordon's Indian Residential School
Saskatchewan, 1996



Why can't you just get over it?



What was the Difference between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Boarding Schools?



Apologies

- 1986 - United Church
- 1991 - RC Oblates of Mary Immaculate
- 1993 - Anglican Church
- 1994 - Presbyterian Church
- 2008 - Prime Minister Stephen Harper provides statement of apology on behalf of Canada



Sorry

What is Intergenerational Impacts?

- “When someone experiences or witnesses a traumatic experience and that experience is not dealt with – those effects are passed on to the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Aboriginal people who attended the residential school system.”

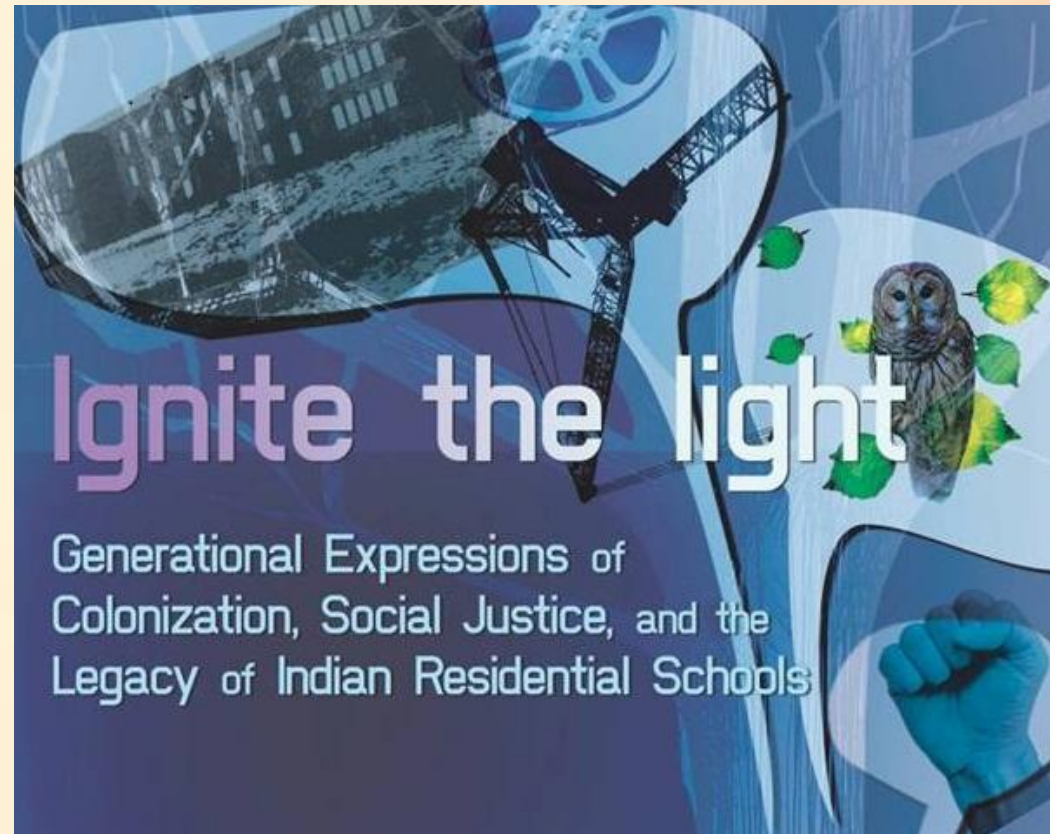


Impacts

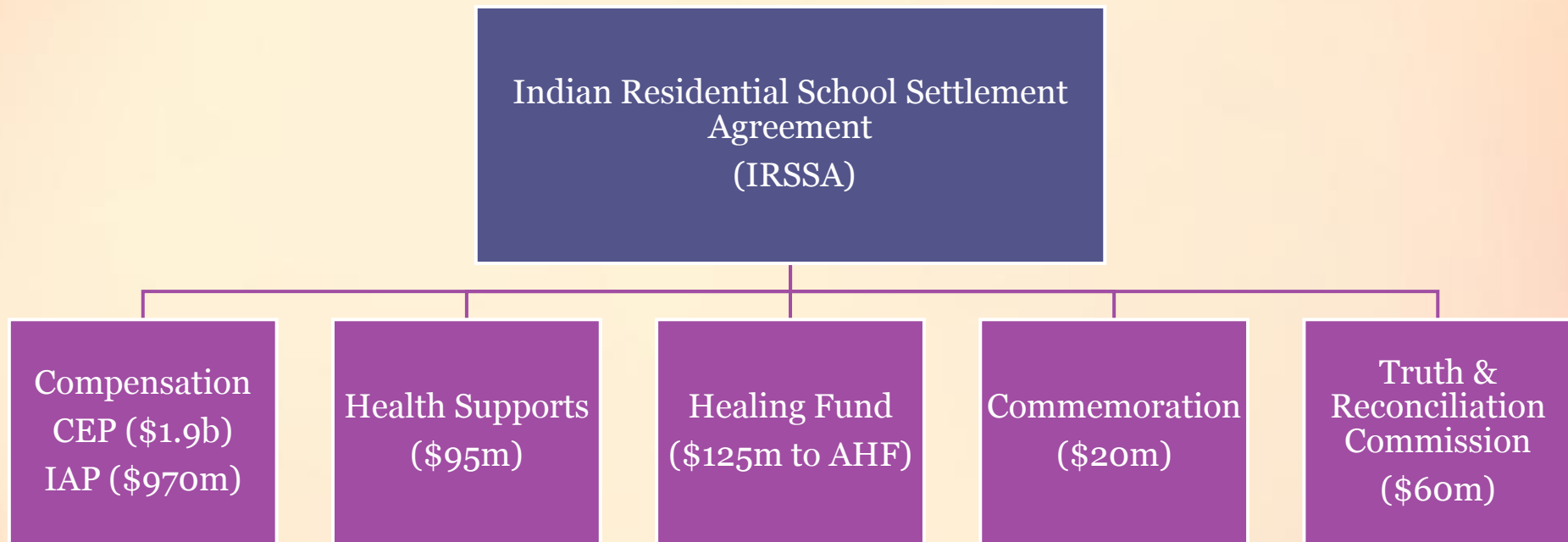
- Misuse of Alcohol and Drugs
- FASD and NAS
- Normalized Violence
- No Self-worth
- Dysfunctional families and relationships
- Parenting skills
- Suicide
- Teen pregnancy
- Depression
- Anger
- Passive Aggressive behaviour
- Poverty
- Spiritual Confusion
- Internalized Inferiority
- Toxic Communication
- Co-dependancy
- Disconnection to natural world
- Feel like you have no voice
- Eating disorders
- Sleeping disorders
- Fear
- Sexual abuse
- Education
- Conflict
- Internal Health

Change.....Is A Choice!

- Youth are the future
- Breaking the cycle
- Understanding
- Forgiveness
- Respect
- A Chance
- Large numbers going to School
- Fastest growing entrepreneurs
- Cultural Reclamation / Pride!
- Guilt / Shame



Settlement Agreement 2005

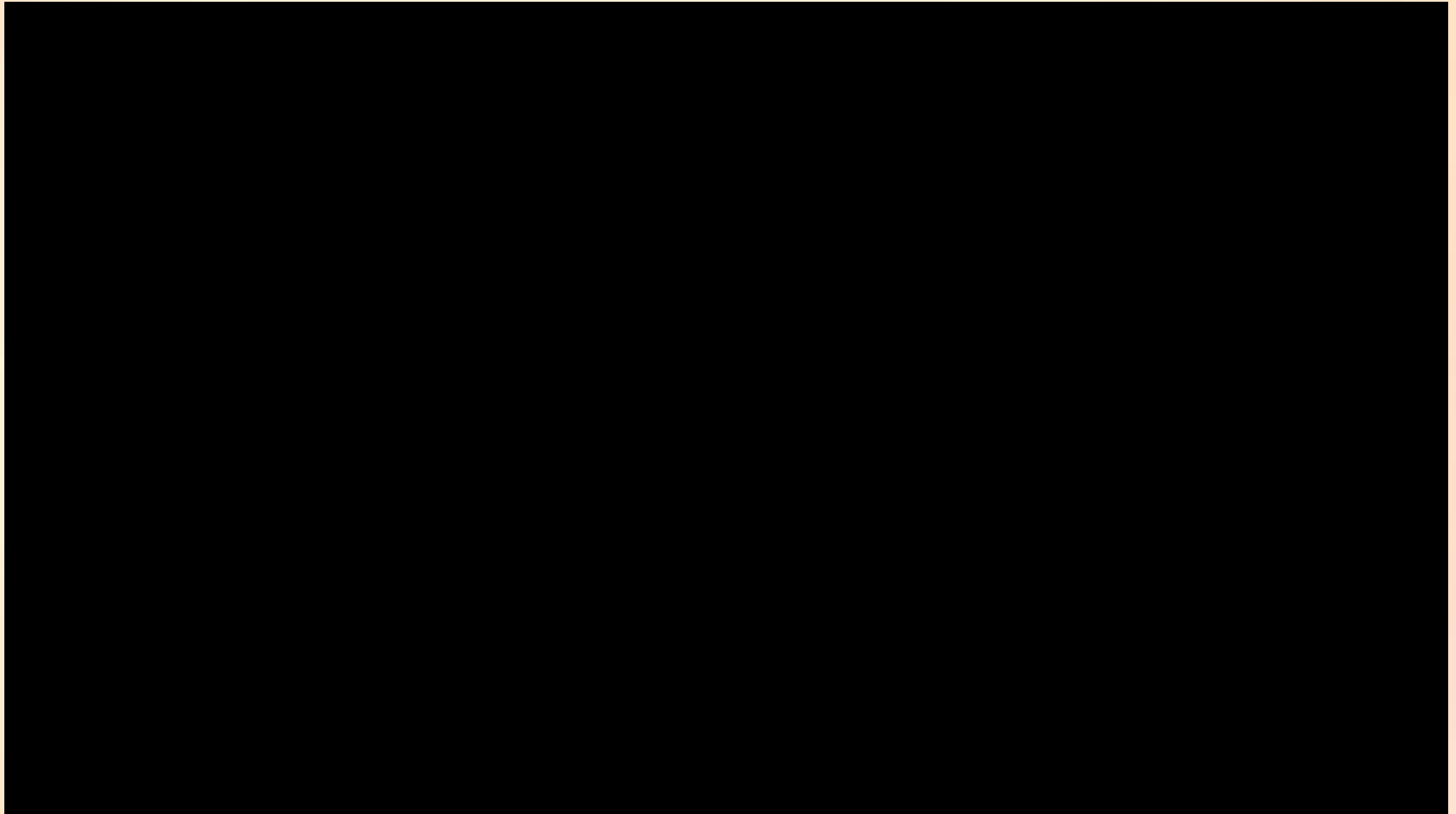


133 Approved IRS Schools

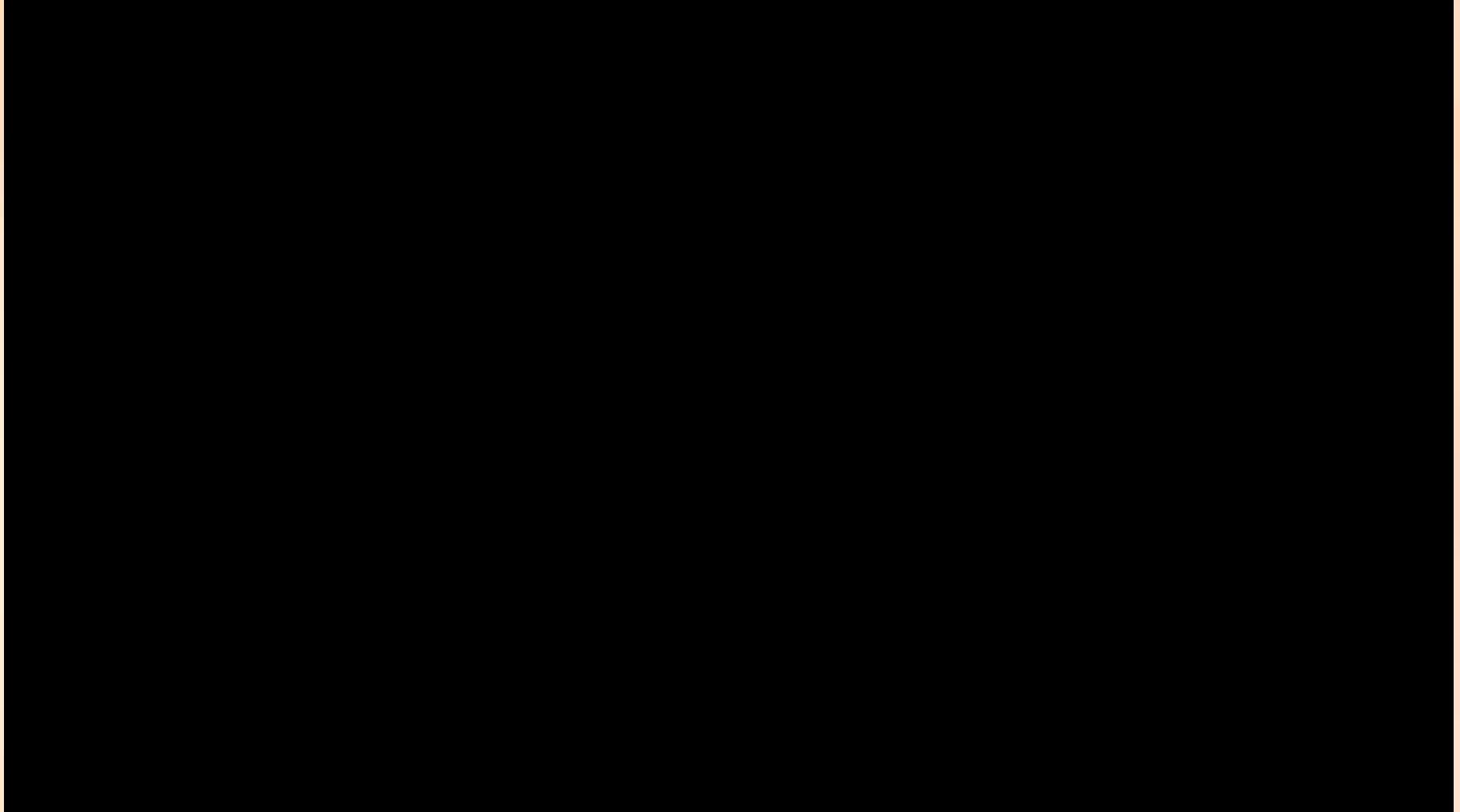


Why Should Reconciliation Matter?

It matters to everyone: We are all impacted by colonialism, these policies and even residential school.



IT Matters....



TRC BC Events 2013

- **Lighting the Flame of Reconciliation**

September 16, 2013 6pm to 8pm

Ambleside Park End of 13th Street, North Vancouver, BC



- **All Nations Canoe Regatta**

September 17, 2013 Noon to 2pm

False Creek, Vancouver BC



- **Walk for Reconciliation (4km)**

September 22, 2013 8:30am to 1:30pm

Downtown Vancouver BC



Truth Sharing – Sept 18 – 21, 2013
Educational Day – Sept 19, 2013



BRITISH COLUMBIA RECONCILIATION WEEK SEPTEMBER 16-22, 2013

TRC BC NATIONAL EVENT
PACIFIC NATIONAL EXHIBITION **SEPTEMBER 18-21**
ALL NATIONS CANOE GATHERING **SEPTEMBER 17**
WALK FOR RECONCILIATION **SEPTEMBER 22**
"A NEW WAY FORWARD" CEREMONY **SEPTEMBER 22**



IT'S ABOUT HONESTY* – A National Journey for Healing and Reconciliation

For more than 120 years, thousands of Aboriginal Children in British Columbia were sent to Indian Residential Schools funded by the federal government and run by churches. They were taken from their families and communities to be stripped of language, cultural identity and traditions.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) is holding its BC National Event in Vancouver from September 18 to 21. Come and share your truth about the schools and their legacy. Witness and celebrate the resilience of Aboriginal cultures!

Reconciliation Canada is hosting activities before and after the TRC's BC National Event. Reconciliation is an opportunity for all Canadians to renew relationships, based on a shared understanding of our histories and our cultures and walk a path together for a shared tomorrow. Show your commitment to help realize this future today by supporting Reconciliation Canada, and registering for the Walk for Reconciliation, being held in Vancouver, September 22, 2013.

**Take part in the
TRC BC National Event
September 18-21:**

- Statement Gathering
- Traditional Ceremonies
- Survivor Gatherings
- Education Day
- Witnessing Survivor Statements
- Cultural Performances
- Films, and more

**Be a part of the National Journey
for Healing and Reconciliation!**

All gatherings are open to the public. Admission is free.

*Each TRC National Event is dedicated to one of the Seven Sacred Teachings.

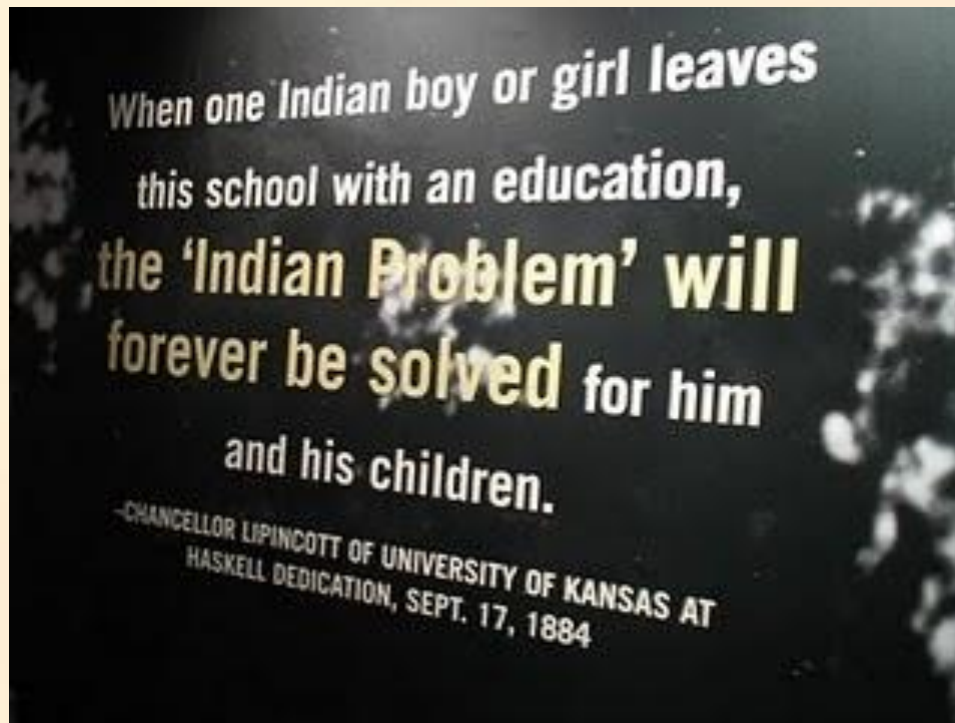


Source: TRC and students of Esquimalt Living Memorial History Museum. Photo credit: Sarah de Canada Archives / iStockphoto.com

For details, visit **trc.ca** and **reconciliationcanada.ca**

We ask the questions again!

- What was the Indian Problem?
- Why was it a problem?
- Who's problem was it?



Past, Present, FUTURE

- No control of the past!!!!
- Today.....NOW, we can impact our FUTURE
- Future, depends on how we build our foundation today!



**This is OUR History as
Canadians.....**

**Not just an aboriginal
one!**



Huy'ch'qa



Resilience

The Courage to Come Back

Huy'ch'qa

Indian Residential School Survivors Society

413 West Esplanade

North Vancouver, BC V7M 1A6

Tel: 604-985-4464

**Angela White,
Workshop Coordinator
IRSSS**

