

July 2, 2021

## **Extreme Trigger Warning: Residential Schools, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Colonialism, Genocide, Trauma, Unmarked Graves**

We respectfully acknowledge that Simon Fraser University (SFU) and Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) are currently situated on the Unceded Traditional Territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-Waututh), kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem) and q̓ícá'y (Katzie) Nations. These nations have been here since time immemorial and have continued to stand against the genocide and the forced assimilation that continues to harm Indigenous Community Members.

So-called Canada's national holiday is July 1, known as "Canada Day." This was created through the [British North American Act](#) on July 1, 1867 - which is now known as the [Constitution Act](#) where the three separate colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick were united into a single Dominion within the British Empire called "Canada". A year later, "Governor-General Lord Monck signed a proclamation that requested all Her Majesty's subjects across Canada to celebrate July 1." In 1879, July 1st was marked as the anniversary of Confederation also known as "[Dominion Day](#)". Then on October 27, 1982 "Dominion Day" was changed to "Canada Day."

Further, the colonial states' national anthem, "O Canada" went through a [series of revisions](#) between various people including composers, a judge, and a poet. None of these, however, were in consultation with Indigenous People(s). And it is a continuous practice within many institutions like in opening up graduation ceremonies, sporting games, and general events.

Moreover, we need to intentionally realize that "Canada Day" and further colonial celebrations and practices were imposed by British settlers and colonizers on already established Indigenous Territories.

Although this is a place of refuge for many due to imperialism, capitalism, economic distinctions and so on within other regions (and here of course)—as so-called Canadians, it is our duty to honour the Territories that we study, work, and live on while also acknowledging that we also are settlers.

We acknowledge how triggering and difficult it is to hear the ongoing news of unmarked graves found on Indian Residential School grounds across the colonial state. We want to acknowledge these numbers will continue to grow and this will continue to trigger and harm Indigenous communities. We are in solidarity with all Indigenous communities across Turtle Island who are currently being impacted.

Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, Manitoba

Tk'emlups te te Secwepemc, British Columbia

Cowessess First Nation, Saskatchewan

Muscowequan First Nation, Saskatchewan

Ktunaxa Nation, British Columbia

We continue to acknowledge that there are Indigenous communities advocating for this work to be done so they can bring their relatives home. These are not isolated incidents and have had, and currently are having, detrimental impacts to Indigenous People(s). Right now we have to centre Indigenous voices and work towards ensuring proper support and calls to action are amplified. As a student society that is progressive and centers advocacy, we need to take proactive action to amplify the voices of Indigenous community members and support in ways that can help address the harms that have occurred. It is our collective responsibility to support and not repeat history.

We also want to highlight the labour and activism that Indigenous Community Members have been doing for years at this institution named after a colonizer. There are so many alumni, graduate students, staff, faculty, Elders, and students who continue to not only complete their studies and work; but also participate in various working groups and committees that ensures that Indigenous People(s) deserve to be at the forefront of these spaces and consultation processes. Some include the First Nations Student Association, Indigenous Student Centre, Office for Aboriginal Peoples, Aboriginal Steering Committee, and more.

We encourage folks to reflect and reconsider if they chose to participate in celebrating "Canada Day." We hope you took the day to read educational resources that helped you understand this country's dark history, to listen to the voices of residential school survivors who spoke on the radio, news outlets, and rallies, to follow Indigenous People(s) online who spoke up about these issues,

help celebrate and amplify Indigenous joy and excellence, and having your own conversations about #CancelCanadaDay within your network of friends and family.

#### Actions to Take Now:

1. Educate yourself on past histories and current events and news relating to Indigenous People(s), especially written, told, and shared by Indigenous People(s) themselves
2. Continue to wear orange instead of red and white on "Canada Day"
3. Attend a rally held by [Idle No More](#)
4. Know whose lands you are settled on by visiting: <https://native-land.ca/> and share this in your places of school and work
5. Take [Indigenous Studies courses](#) at SFU
6. Amplify and support the voices of Indigenous People(s) you attend class with and work with always
7. Follow Indigenous voices and creators on social media:
  - [Dakota Bear](#)
  - [Autumn Peltier](#)
  - Smogelgem ([Insta](#), [Twitter](#))
  - [Gidimt'en Checkpoint](#)
  - [Decolonize Myself](#)
  - [Decolonize This Place](#)
  - Look at [@nusutalks](#) page for more resources
  - James Jones [@notoriouscree](#)
  - Michelle Chubb [@indigenous\\_baddie](#)
  - Shina Novalinga [@shinanova](#)
  - Fawn Wood [@fawn.wood](#)
8. Follow and support locally Indigenous-owned businesses:

#### Local Indigenous Owned Bookstores:

- Massy Books
- Iron Dog Books

#### Wellness:

- Skwalwen Botanicals
- Sisters Sage

- Cheekbone Beauty

Food:

- Salmon n' Bannock
- Mr Bannock
- Spirit Bear Coffee Company

9. Listen and/or read from Indigenous People(s)

Podcasts:

- Well For Culture / Insta: @wellforculture
- Coffee With My Ma
- The Red Nation Podcast
- Unreserved
- Metis In Space
- Red Man Laughing
- All My Relations

Indigenous Literature:

- Johnny Appleseed by Joshua Whitehead Oji-Cree, Peguis
- Why Indigenous Literatures Matter by Daniel Heath Justice, Cherokee Nation
- Monkey Beach by Eden Robinson, Haisla & Heiltsuk First Nations
- Son of a Trickster Trilogy by Eden Robinson, Haisla & Heiltsuk First Nations
- Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer, Potawatomi Nation
- A Digital Bundle by Jennifer Wemigwans, Anishinaabekwe
- The Red New Deal by The Red Nation
- Indigenomics by Carol Anne Hilton, Nuu chah nulth, Hesquiaht
- Sanaaq, Mitiarjuk Nappaaluk, Inuit
- The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline, Metis
- The Fourth World an Indian Reality by George Manuel, Shuswap