

RECONCILIATION TERMINOLOGY: RELATIONSHIPS / CATEGORIES

August 2017

REFERRING TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

GENERAL GUIDELINE: Refer to individuals and communities as they refer to themselves. These are frequently genealogical or clan names or the traditional names for the communities/nations themselves. They may or may not be stated in one's own language. For example: *Mississauga Anishinaabe of Curve Lake First Nation* or *Anishnaabe (Bear Clan) from Kitigan Zibi First Nation*.

Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples – These terms are meant to encompass a wide collective of peoples under one umbrella. In both cases the terms refer to the original inhabitants of a place. In recent years, “Indigenous Peoples” has been favoured over “Aboriginal Peoples”. Such terms are controversial as they stem from European assumptions and legal tradition (e.g., that all Indigenous peoples are to be grouped as an “other”).

*“Indigenous is considered by some to be the most inclusive term of all, since it identifies peoples in similar circumstances without respect to national boundaries or local conventions. However, for some it is a contentious term, since internationally, and in the United Nations context, it often **defines groups primarily in relation to their colonizers.**”* (<http://www.sabar.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/SABAR-Glossary-English-Final.pdf>)

FNMI – Acronym for First Nations, Métis, Inuit

REFERRING TO ONESELF

Non-Indigenous peoples individuals in Canada who wish to engage in reconciliation work may find the following terms useful:

Ally – A non-Indigenous person who endeavours to support efforts to overcome the oppression of Indigenous peoples

What does “ally” mean?

Being an ally means recognizing that oppressions exists and affects people that are not yourself, so as an ally you are trying to align yourself with actions, ideas, and movements that serve to undermine the systems that perpetuate that oppression and strive for liberation.

How do you start the process of becoming an ally?

This is different for everyone and I’m not claiming expertise on anything but my own experience. The key is to start with recognition of your own privileges and benefits as a result of the oppression of others. This doesn’t need to be a self-shaming process; it is a process of recognition of privileges, including racial, class, ablest, gender, and more privileges as they apply. In the context of being an Ally to First Nations people this means also addressing colonial privilege. Be grateful and humbled by those whose knowledge and respect for this land made it possible for Canada to be here, and become knowledgeable of the ways that our government systemically attacked the cultures of First Nations peoples in an attempt to wipe them out. (from <http://redrisingmagazine.ca/faq-on-being-an-indigenous-ally/>)

Indigenist – One who actively prioritizes and promotes that which is Indigenous

Settler – In the Canadian context – any person who is not of Indigenous ancestry living in Canada

Note the definition from Google Dictionary: “a person who settles in an area, typically one with no or few previous inhabitants”

ANISHINAABE (OJIBWE) LANGUAGE

As residents or visitors to Bobcaygeon and the surrounding area, we should become familiar with local Indigenous history, language and culture. A quote from the TRC's Summary Report speaks to this.

*“At the community level, where contact between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples is often minimal or marred by distrust and racism, establishing respectful relationships involves learning to be good neighbours. This means being respectful—listening to, and learning from, each other; building understanding; and taking concrete action to improve relationships. At the Victoria Regional Event, **intergenerational Survivor Victoria Wells said,***

***I'll know that reconciliation is happening in Canadian society when Canadians, wherever they live, are able to say the names of the tribes with which they're neighbours; they're able to pronounce names from the community, or of people that they know, and they're able to say hello, goodbye, in the language of their neighbours.... That will show me manners. That will show me that they've invested in finding out the language of the land [on] which they live ... because the language comes from the land ... the language is very organic to where it comes from and the invitation to you is to learn that and to be enlightened by that and to be informed by [our] ways of thinking and knowing and seeing and understanding. So that, to me, is reconciliation.”** (TRC Summary Report, p. 356)*

Curve Lake First Nation people are the Mississaugas of the great **Anishnaabeg** (uhnish-nahbe) nation. **Anishinaabe** (Ojibwe) is the traditional language. A few useful terms to know in Anishinaabe are:

Aaniin – Greetings/hello

Boozhoo – Greetings/hello

Gigawabamin Menawah – See you again

Miigwech/Miigwetch – Thank-you

HISTORICAL & CURRENT CANADIAN POLICIES & PRACTICES

Assimilation/Integration – The attempt to have Indigenous peoples in Canada forget, lose or otherwise give up their cultural practices, languages and beliefs in favour of adopting the cultural norms of British Settlers.

“In 1953, J. E. Andrews, the principal of the Presbyterian school in Kenora, Ontario, wrote that “we must face realistically the fact that the only hope for the Canadian Indian is eventual assimilation into the white race.”” (TRC Summary Report, p. 5)

Colonialism -- The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another nation/place, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically

Cultural Appropriation -- The adoption of certain elements from another culture without the consent of people who belong to that culture

Doctrine of Discovery – The Doctrine of Discovery provided a framework for Christian explorers, in the name of their sovereign, to lay claim to territories uninhabited by Christians. If the lands were vacant, then they could be defined as “discovered” and sovereignty claimed.

Relevant quotes about the Doctrine of Discovery from the TRC Summary Report:

“Far from being ancient history with no relevance for reconciliation today, the Doctrine of Discovery underlies the legal basis on which British Crown officials claimed sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and justified the extinguishment of their inherent rights to their territories, lands and resources.” (TRC Summary Report p. 245)

*“Most non-Aboriginal Canadians are aware of the fact that Indigenous peoples commonly regard land rights as culturally and religiously significant. Fewer non-natives, I suspect, would consider their own connection with property in the same light, and **fewer still would regard the legal foundation of all land rights in Canada as conspicuously theological.** In fact, however, it is. The relationship between law and land in Canada can be traced to a set of fifteenth-century theological assumptions that have found their way into Canadian law.... The Doctrine of Discovery was the legal means by which Europeans claimed rights of sovereignty, property, and trade in regions they allegedly discovered during the age of expansion. These claims were made without consultation or engagement of any sort with the resident populations in these territories – the people to whom, by any sensible account, the land actually belonged. The Doctrine of Discovery has been a critical component of historical relationships between Europeans, their descendants, and Indigenous peoples, and it underlies their legal relationships to this day, having smoothly and relatively uncritically transitioned from Roman Catholic to international law.”* (Historian Jennifer Reid, TRC Summary Report, pp. 245-246)

The Indian Act (1876+) – The Indian Act was created and enacted without consultation with Indigenous Peoples. Through the Indian Act, the Canadian government changed its nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations peoples to an assumed position of power with First Nations peoples now being formally viewed as wards of the government. The Indian Act imposed many restrictions of First Nations peoples including restrictions on status, freedom of movement, land ownership, the right to engage in traditional practices, access to legal support, etc.

Residential Schools/Indian Residential Schools (1831-1996) – Boarding schools for Indigenous children in Canada financed by the Canadian government with the express aim of assimilating Indigenous children into white settler society.

Canada separated children from their parents, sending them to residential schools. This was done not to educate them, but primarily to break their link to their culture and identity. In justifying the government’s residential school policy, Canada’s first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, told the House of Commons in 1883:

“When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly pressed on myself, as the head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.” (TRC Summary Report, p. 2)

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991-96) – Arising from the “Oka Crisis” of 1990, the commission was meant to “help restore justice to the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in Canada, and to propose practical solutions to stubborn problems,” according to its final report – a **4,000-page document** containing recommendations for dealing with a breadth of issues, including self-governance, treaties, health, housing, the north, economic development and education. The TRC of Canada was one of its many recommendations.

Royal Proclamation of 1763 – This crown document laid down the basis for how the settler/colonial administration would interact with First Nations peoples, guaranteeing certain rights and protections for First Nations peoples and established the process by which the government could acquire their lands through treaty-making.

“The Proclamation uncomfortably straddled the contradictory aspirations of the Crown and First Nations when its wording recognized Aboriginal rights to land by outlining a policy that was designed to extinguish these rights.... The different objectives that First Nations and the Crown had in the formulation of the principles surrounding the Proclamation is the reason for the different visions embedded within its text. Britain was attempting to secure territory and jurisdiction through the Proclamation, while the First Nations were concerned with preserving their lands and sovereignty.” (TRC Summary Report, p. 250)

Sixties Scoop – This refers to the large-scale removal or “scooping” of Indigenous children from their homes, communities and families of birth through the 1960s, and their subsequent adoption into predominantly non-Indigenous, middle-class families across the United States and Canada. This experience left many adoptees with a lost

sense of cultural identity. The physical and emotional separation from their birth families continues to affect adult adoptees and Indigenous communities to this day.

Treaties – A ratified agreement between nations or self-determining peoples or entities.

Treaty of Niagara (1764) – In 1764 more than 2000 Indigenous leaders came together in Niagara to make treaty with the crown. Collectively they ratified the crown's Royal Proclamation of 1763 as a means of political engagement between nations as equals.

"The Treaty negotiations, like earlier trade and peace and friendship Treaties, were conducted in accordance with Indigenous law and diplomatic protocol." (TRC Summary Report, p. 250)

Terra Nullius – Literally -- "lands belonging to no one". In the Canadian colonial context this refers to the idea that North American lands were uninhabited when European explorers and settlers arrived. A subsequent element of this concept is the opinion that in order to be considered "inhabited" the lands had to be worked peoples in a manner akin to European agricultural traditions and recognizable to European settlers (i.e., traditional Indigenous use of lands were generally overlooked or otherwise invalidated).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2008-2015) – The mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was to research and report on "the history, purpose, operation and supervision" of Canada's residential schools.

SETTLER WORLDVIEWS (PARADIGMS)

Whether we are aware of it or not, we all have worldviews or frameworks through which we interpret the world. This is a simplistic description of *paradigms* but it suffices for its purpose here. The relevance to reconciliation is that Settlers (or European ancestry in particular) have long made certain assumptions about the primacy of their world view.

Eurocentric – Refers to focusing on European culture or history to the exclusion of a wider view of the world; implicitly regarding European culture as preeminent – the pinnacle of cultural “development” and other worldviews as either non-existent, simplistic or inferior.

Eurocentric worldviews tend to assume the following:

Hegemony – the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group over others in society; the power exerted by an assumed norm which is inevitably the desired norm of a dominant group; *Cultural hegemony* refers to how the state and ruling class in capitalist societies use cultural institutions such as schools, legal entities including laws, courts, police and prisons, etc. to maintain power

Othering – the process of identifying all that is not like oneself as an “other” or “not like me/us”

Universalism – The assumption by people of western thought traditions (usually associated with deriving from ancient Greek philosophical and modern scientific thought) that the western worldview and its associated culture is the driver of history and progress and the pinnacle of cultural development; the assumption that western thought and ways are the ideal to which other cultures do or should aspire and that given its rational and scientific manner of analysing the world, it is able to objectively describe and explain the “other” (but the reverse, that the “other” could explain western paradigms with equal validity, is not true); the assumption that western thought alone is able to be objective and therefore perceive and identify “truth”.

Cognitive Imperialism – The imposition of one way of knowing (including language) to the exclusion of all others. In Canadian schools this has meant the imposition of Eurocentric worldviews, curriculum and lenses in our education system and the exclusion of Indigenous knowledge and paradigms.

Privilege – a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people

Problematizing the other – The habit or process of assuming that an “issue” or “problem” is rooted in the culture or reality of an assumed “other” rather than being rooted in one’s own perspective or cultural practices/assumptions.

BEWARE OF MISCONCEPTIONS & DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Misconceptions

The Vanishing or Dead Indian –The assumption that Indigenous peoples are either doomed to extinction physically or through the loss of culture or that they have already “died off”. This is linked to a range of settler perceptions of Indigenous peoples including sadness for the inevitability of the loss of Indigenous ways (see “real” native/Indian).

“Real” Native/Indian – The perception that Indigenous peoples and their culture are static and should be preserved as per European perceptions of them (e.g., living off the land, wearing traditional attire) as opposed to dynamic like any other people/culture. This perception locks Indigenous people into settler expectations and stereotypes.

Settler Defense Mechanisms

Excerpts from my (Sherry Telford) M. Ed. thesis proposal:

“Refuse-to-Know” mechanisms – When it comes to learning about Indigenous experiences in Canada, Settlers often filter what is heard through a distinct cultural or psychological lens (Dion, 2009; Nagy, 2012; Regan, 2006). Dion describes the disconnect that occurs at the “intersection of speaking and hearing across difference” – in this case, the difference between Indigenous reality and history in Canada and Settler expectations – and the “Refuse to Know” mechanisms that we, Settlers, use to preserve our self/cultural concept (p. 56). These “Refuse to Know Mechanisms” are:

- CHALLENGING THE RELEVANCE OF THE NARRATIVE/HISTORY TO ONE’S LIFE TODAY
- LOCKING THE EVENTS IN THE PAST AND FEELING/DECLARING THAT THEY HAVE NO CONNECTION TO THE PRESENT
- DEHUMANIZING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES – may be conscious but can be done unconsciously as well
- CLAIMING THAT “THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO SO I DON’T HAVE TO LISTEN, LEARN, ACCEPT THIS HISTORY
- DECLARING THAT THE HISTORY IS TOO HARD TO LISTEN TO (AND IT IS HARD) AND SO REMOVING ONESELF FROM THE LEARNING PROCESS (Dion, 2009, p. 56)

Phases of Perpetrator Recognition of Role – Dion (2016) declares that not only must we be aware of these emotions and reactions, we must work through them, we must interrogate our “discomfort” and we must reflect on the “significance of not knowing” and whose interests are served by this ignorance (p. 470).

In order to move past these obstacles to understanding and reconciliation, Settlers must acknowledge our role in these difficult colonial realities (Dion, 2009; McKinley, 2014; Regan, 2006). Regan (2006) proposes that Settlers need to explicitly contend with Stanley Cohen’s, “Phases of Perpetrator Recognition of Role”. These phases, as described by Regan (2006, p. 177) are:

- i) SELF-KNOWLEDGE – The critical reflection that comes from facing truths
- ii) MORAL WITNESS – The bystander actively witnesses either unjust acts or victim testimonies
- iii) WHISTLE-BLOWING – Wherein one reveals the “Open Secret”
- iv) LIVING OUTSIDE THE LIE – Saying what one really thinks according to one’s conscience – the refusal and inability to return to former passivity and complacency.

Teaching strategies are emerging to guide Settlers and educators toward meaningful reconciliation learning, teaching and action. Iseke-Barnes (2008) describes how Settlers are able to confront Canada’s colonial reality through activities that require them to recognize and then interrogate their internalized knowledge about oppression – knowledge gained from an awareness of our colonial Canadian oppression of Indigenous peoples. Regan (2006) and Smith (2006) speak to the power of language and place-name pedagogies to unsettle Settler complicity. O’Donnell and Perley (2016) propose activities that require Settlers to juxtapose

their conflicting desires (e.g., for continued land ownership on Indigenous lands versus a desire for just and equal relations with Indigenous peoples in Canada). Tuck (2009) advocates a shift from *damage-centred research* to *desire-based inquiry* – a transformative reframing of the aims of research. As research in this field continues, undoubtedly more pedagogies and strategies will emerge.

Moves to Innocence (or how to avoid facing the reality of one's privilege) –

In “Decolonization is not a Metaphor”, Tuck and Yang (2012) describe common strategies that Settlers undertake to reconcile Settler guilt and complicity *while finding means to maintain our comfortable Settler existence*. They call these strategies “moves to innocence”. These moves to innocence include:

- *CLAIMS TO NATIVE ANCESTRY OR ADOPTION* (which absolves us of guilt and any corresponding need to act or change);
- *COLONIAL EQUIVOCATION* (homogenizing all forms of colonial oppression resulting in the absorption and potential loss of the Indigenous colonial experience);
- *CONSCIENTIZATION* (decolonizing one's mind -- becoming critically conscious without specifically honouring Indigenous rights or territories);
- *AT RISK-ING / ASTERISK-ING INDIGENOUS peoples* (identifying Indigenous peoples as simply “at risk” or including them only minimally in public policy considerations);
- *RE-OCCUPATION OF LANDS* (with the aim of “fair” wealth redistribution for *all* – without regard for the fact that these are Indigenous lands).

REFERENCES

- Dion, S. D. (2009). *Braiding histories: Learning from Aboriginal peoples' experiences and perspectives*. UBC Press.
- Dion, S. D. (2016). Mediating the Space Between: Voices of Indigenous Youth and Voices of Educators in Service of Reconciliation. *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie*, 53(4), 468-473.
- Iseke-Barnes, J. M. (2008). Pedagogies for decolonizing. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 31(1), 123.
- Nagy, R. (2012). Truth, reconciliation and settler denial: specifying the Canada–South Africa analogy. *Human Rights Review*, 13(3), 349-367.
- O'Donnell, S. & Perley D. (2016). Toward a sociology of the reconciliation of conflicting desires. *Canadian Review of Sociology* 53(4), 474-481.
- Regan, P. (2006). *Unsettling the settler within: Indian residential schools, truth telling, and reconciliation in Canada*. UBC Press.
- Smith, L. T. (2006). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. Zed books.
<http://www.nzlii.org/nz/journals/NZYbkNZJur/1997/7.html>
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1).

MOVING FORWARD

Decolonization – The process of undoing the oppression and imposed norms of colonial powers and the intentional valuing and restoration of Indigenous worldviews, traditions, languages and cultures as well as the inclusion and arguably the prioritization of Indigenous perspectives of history.

In-Relation – This is an Indigenous understanding that we are all *in-relation* and that relationship is of primary significance and value. This is in contrast to western thought's emphasis on logic and objectivity.

MMIW Inquiry – This Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada. It is important to recognize the ongoing effects of colonialism and racism in Canada. We have to ask ourselves how it is that thousands of Indigenous girls and women have been murdered or gone missing ... and still do.

Reconciliation – There is certainly not one agreed upon definition or process for engaging in reconciliation in Canada. However, here are some useful quotes from the TRC Summary Report:

“To the Commission, reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.” (TRC Summary Report p. 6)

“The Commission defines reconciliation as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. ... It is important that all Canadians understand how traditional First Nations, Inuit, and Metis approaches to resolving conflict, repairing harm, and restoring relationships can inform the reconciliation process.” (p. 16)

“reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth.” (p. 18)

“A reconciliation framework is one in which Canada's political and legal system, educational and religious institutions, the corporate sector and civic society function in ways that are consistent with the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. ... Together, Canadians must do more than just talk

about reconciliation; we must learn how to practise reconciliation in our everyday lives – within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of workshop, schools, and workplaces. To do so constructively, Canadians must remain committed to the ongoing work of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships.” (p. 20)

“Reconciliation must become a way of life. It will take many years to repair damaged trust and relationships in Aboriginal communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada’s national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change.... Reconciliation begins with each and every one of us.” (p. 238)

Restitution – The return of something lost or stolen to its rightful owner or the agreed upon (between those who took or found and those from who something was taken or lost) and fair recompense in place of its actual return.

Rewriting/Re-Righting History & Relations – Best to quote Linda Tuhiwai Smith, the Maori academic and author who states in Decolonizing Methodologies, *“Critiquing their status as Other, indigenous peoples have in recent decades aimed to rewrite and rereight their position in history, understanding they have been excluded, under-represented, and/or misrepresented in various historical accounts. In self-determined and restorative efforts, indigenous peoples are telling and recording their own versions of their stories with their own ways of naming and knowing.”*

Self-Determination/Autonomy – The right of a people, in this case Indigenous peoples, to create, implement, manage and steer their own practices, policies, norms, institutions, etc.. This includes but is not limited to accords, relationships and treaties, education, legal processes, health care, etc..

TRC Calls to Action – Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission has outlined 94 *Calls to Action* for Canadians and their government to respond to. This is one way to move our good intentions into actions.

Two-Eyed Vision, Trans-Systemic Education, ... – Collective proposals for weaving Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews and paradigms to the benefit of all.

Excerpt from: 21 things you may not know about the Indian Act

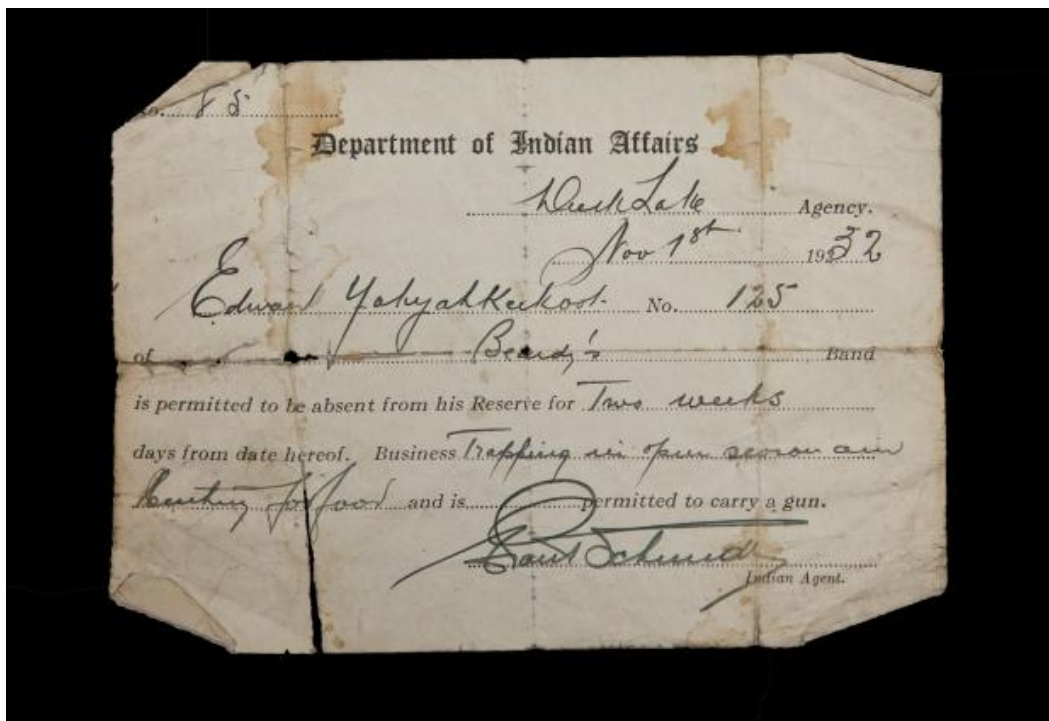
CBC April 13, 2016

(source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/21-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-indian-act-1.3533613>)

Here are 21 restrictions imposed at some point by the Indian Act in its 140 years of existence.

The Indian Act:

1. Denied [women status](#)
2. Introduced [residential schools](#)
3. Created [reserves](#)
4. [Renamed](#) individuals with European names
5. [Restricted First Nations from leaving reserve without permission](#) from Indian agent



A two week pass for Edward Yahyahkeekoot from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. This is one of the few remaining passes found in a Canadian archive, and is proof of the pass system, implemented in 1885. The policy controlled the movement of First Nation people off reserves. (Tamarack Productions)

6. Enforced enfranchisement of any First Nation admitted to university
7. Could expropriate portions of reserves for roads, railways and other public works, as well as move an entire reserve away from a municipality if it was deemed expedient
8. Could lease out uncultivated reserve lands to non-First Nations if the new leaseholder would use it for farming or pasture
9. Forbade First Nations from forming political organizations
10. Prohibited anyone, First Nation or non-First Nation, from soliciting funds for First Nation legal claims without special license from the Superintendent General. (this 1927 amendment granted the government control over the ability of First Nations to pursue land claims)
11. Prohibited the sale of alcohol to First Nations
12. Prohibited sale of ammunition to First Nations
13. Prohibited pool hall owners from allowing First Nations entrance
14. Imposed the "[band council](#)" system
15. Forbade First Nations from speaking their native language
16. Forbade First Nations from practicing their traditional religion
17. Forbade western First Nations from appearing in any public dance, show, exhibition, stampede or pageant wearing traditional regalia
18. Declared [potlatch](#) and other cultural ceremonies illegal
19. Denied First Nations the [right to vote](#)
20. Created [permit system](#) to control First Nations ability to sell products from farms
21. Created under the British rule for the purpose of subjugating one race — Aboriginal Peoples

Major amendments were made to the Act in 1951 and 1985. In the 1951 amendments, the banning of dances and ceremonies, and the pursuit of claims against the government were removed. In the 1985, Bill C-31 was introduced.

Additional notes: Bill C-31 was purportedly meant to restore “Indian status” to women who had lost it through previous Indian Act policies. However, the process has proven to be very challenging due to documentation demands, bureaucratic delays and excessive expense for would-be applicants.

Bill C-3, introduced in March 2010, was supposed to be the remedy but actually continued the discrimination because the status reinstated is of inferior status. Grandchildren born before September 4, 1951 who trace their Aboriginal heritage through their maternal parentage are still denied status while those who trace their heritage through their paternal counterparts are not.

These Bills do little to change the relationship of the *Indian Act* and women's status. (from <https://www.ictinc.ca/indian-act-and-womens-status-discrimination-via-bill-c-31-bill-c-3>)