

Social Justice



NEWSLETTER

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WINTER/SPRING 2017

Why I Protest... and Still Don't Support a Pipeline

by Heather Kelley, Environmental Justice Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice



Heather Kelley (left) and Edith MacHattie (right)

Climate change is the single greatest threat our species has ever faced, and we caused it. We know the consequences of our inability to act. Climate change is already causing drought, flooding, rising sea levels, more extreme weather events, polar ice melting, global instability, food insecurity, and shortages of fresh water. Ocean acidification—another problem of climate change—also has profound implications, most importantly the destruction of coral reefs (the nurseries of the oceans), the destruction of plankton, and the subsequent collapse of the ocean food chain.

Author and environmental activist Joanna Macy talks about three ways to bring about change:

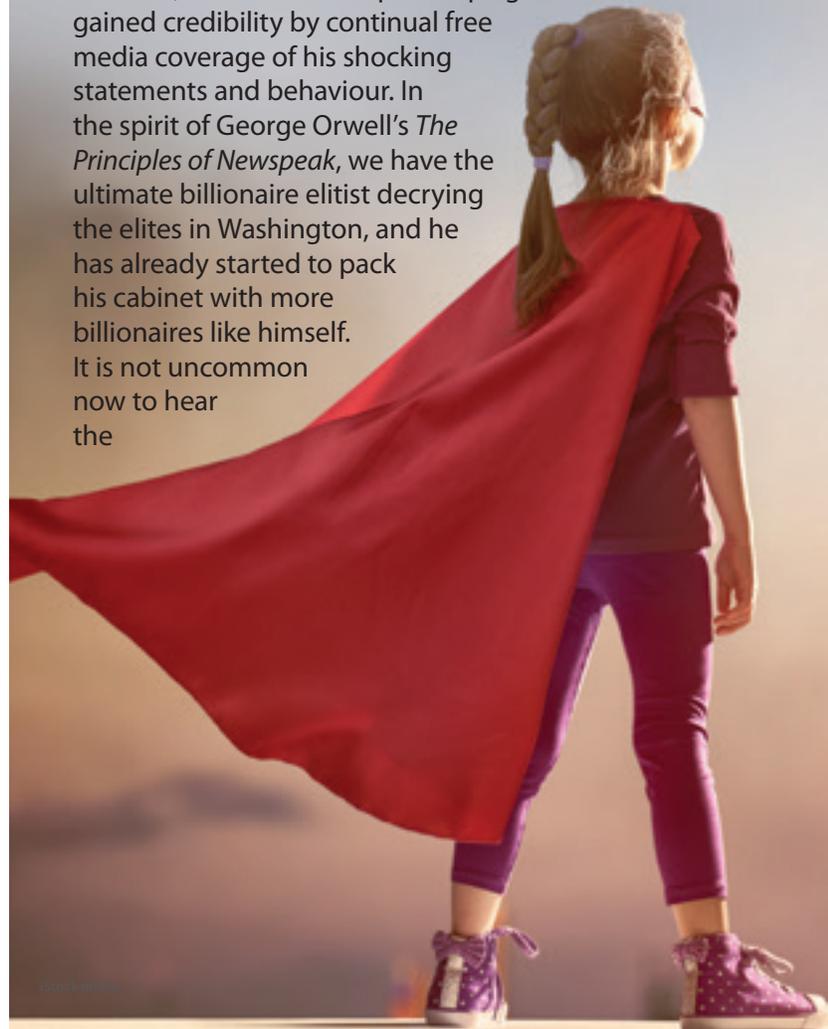
1. **Stopping action:** Participate in protests, marches, sit-ins, and blockades—any action that stops further destruction.
2. **Creating new structures:** People need to be brave, creative, and innovative enough to create structures to replace how we have been doing things. We need folks who can think outside the box and turn ideas into reality.
3. **Changing consciousness:** This means redefining how we relate to each other and the planet. What are our values? What are our cultural stories? How do we want to be? This is probably the most difficult way to make change, since it requires the political and cultural will to move beyond token actions. ➡

Act for justice!

Why all teachers must stand up for social justice

by Carol Arnold, Status of Women Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

For a long time, I nursed this question once put to me: “Why should my dues go to support social justice?” It’s one of those questions that can be confusing. Where do you begin to answer such a question? For teachers who only see the world through a social justice lens—consciously or unconsciously—it seems an impossible question to answer...until Donald Trump. Consider this as the worst-case scenario for the cause of social justice. America’s most powerful political platform is seized by a practitioner of fake news, lies, mind-blowing contradictions, hypocrisy, climate change denial, and worse: a propagator of racism, misogyny, violence, and more. Trump’s campaign gained credibility by continual free media coverage of his shocking statements and behaviour. In the spirit of George Orwell’s *The Principles of Newspeak*, we have the ultimate billionaire elitist decrying the elites in Washington, and he has already started to pack his cabinet with more billionaires like himself. It is not uncommon now to hear the



I protest because:

- I believe we must get on a new path.
- I think it is important to visibly stand up to doubling down on fossil fuel production that is literally killing the planet when we have viable, green alternatives ready to go.
- I believe it is important for educated people in normative jobs such as teaching to go against the norm and stand up for what is right.
- I want my students to know I am walking the walk, not just talking the talk.
- I want my daughter and unborn child to know that I did everything I could for the well-being of their future.
- I wouldn't like myself much if I didn't.
- I have a community of amazing people, friends, and family who are there, including my wife and daughter.
- Too often I feel alone in my beliefs and values, and rallies make me feel like I am part of something greater than myself.
- Making signs for rallies is a wonderful, creative outlet.
- I want my government to know that I disagree with them.
- Now is not the time to play it safe or be polite.
- Canada cannot and will not meet its climate targets if another pipeline is built, or if we continue to develop the tar sands or liquefied natural gas (LNG), regardless of what our politicians say.
- There is value in rocking the boat. Now is the time to be bold, passionate, loud, proud, and unreasonable.
- I care.
- I can.



I also actively work toward the creation of alternative structures and engage in dialogue around the bigger philosophical and spiritual questions surrounding our collective inability to move.

phrase, "We have entered the post-truth era." Like many of you, I couldn't believe that this electoral triumph was possible in an age of information, higher levels of education, human rights achievements, and access to fact-checking at our fingertips. What about all the progress we thought had been made on so many fronts since 9/11 and, more recently, the elections of President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau? What is it that we're missing?

Canadians are not immune to the negative impact of Trump's election. As I sit here composing my thoughts, CBC News reports that Ku Klux Klan flyers are being distributed in Surrey and Richmond. On another program, there was a discussion about how Prime Minister Trudeau shuffled his cabinet to meet the challenges of the incoming Trump administration. What about the fragile progress that has been made with international efforts to tackle climate change? In late November, I attended the National Council for Social Studies' annual conference held in Washington, DC. This event is usually attended on average by 3,500 social studies teachers. It was one of the best places to be weeks after Trump's stunning win. Inspiring words came from keynote speakers that included John Lewis, last remaining civil rights leader who worked closely with Martin Luther King; Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, scholar and author of *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*; and Ralph Nader, iconic champion of civic activism. At these well-attended sessions, questions that were on the minds of teachers came up again and again: How did this happen? As teachers, what do we need to do now? How do we protect our civil and human rights? What will happen to public education? What is the significance of the Standing Rock action, and how should we help?

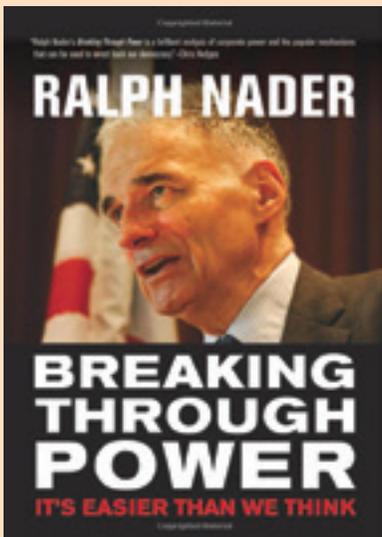
Of all the sessions, Ralph Nader's had the most profound message about the need to embrace social justice in every classroom. His message was directed to American teachers, but although Canadians have fared better than many of our American neighbours, we always know that dangerous trends that emerge in the United States may soon show up on our doorstep. Nader's closing keynote address of the conference was directed to all, not just social studies teachers: "Teach for social justice!" His message focussed on the declining importance of civics education in America—that students leave school with a poor knowledge of their own role as a citizen, their civil and human rights, how these rights were won, and what tools they can use to bring about political change. The

"corporatocracy," he maintained, has been encroaching on public education by influencing and shaping public policy. The result has been that standardized tests have become the measure for student success in a system that places more value on turning out functionaries and technicians than citizens, the "seed corn of our functioning democracy." The role of citizen is the most important achievement of modern democracies—something we should never forget. It is only through the cultivation and constant nurturing of our education system that we create a citizenship that can defend and protect the hard-fought-for rights we enjoy as consumers (consumer protection), workers (labour rights), and human beings (environmental protection and regulations). In all aspects of education, these rights need to be taught, practiced, and defended, and that requires the effort of all teachers. Nader gave many rich examples of how to examine and identify various expressions of justice.

In posing the question, "How do we obtain a just society?" Nader pointed out that countries can be measured on the degree of social justice they have by how much they depend on charities to take care of the least fortunate members of society. Justice work is prevention work. Justice and charity represent opposing realities. The answer to, "How do we obtain a just society?" is citizen action; doing justice work is what will eradicate education deficits, social inequity, poverty, discrimination, and thereby the need for charities.

Nader gave the gathering a wake-up call: "Citizens, how much are you going to put up with? Why do you tolerate this erosion of your quality of life? What has led to this passivity?" In raising this challenge, Nader pointed out that all modern western democracies have socialized medicine and regard healthcare as a right and not a privilege. Many students in western European countries don't know the definition of "student indebtedness." Americans have the lowest minimum wage of all the western democracies. Other countries' citizens enjoy four to seven weeks' annual paid vacation, decent and affordable transit, and better pensions and labour laws. Why are these fundamental benefits in America only fully enjoyed by the rich? When will American citizens stand up and say enough? Should we Canadians be smug that we enjoy many of these benefits, or take heed that there are forces at work here that could erode them? Nader connected his inquiry to the appalling deficit in civic knowledge and education. We have computer literacy, but not civic ➡

literacy. Our children grow up with corporate literacy. This leads to passivity and inability to organize for change. Consider what we mean by freedom—something we believe we have. According to Nader, Roman orator Marcus Tullius Cicero defined freedom correctly as “participation in power.” There is a difference between civic freedom and personal freedom, and we need to understand the difference. Our children deserve to learn about the commons (public lands, airways, research, development, etc.) and they need to learn that free access to higher education, healthcare, and a whole host of benefits are rightfully theirs. Citizens have a right to demand their fair share of the nation’s resources and assets. In a country where the top 1% have more wealth than the bottom half,



citizens must ask some hard questions and then organize to wrest back that which has been stolen from them by the manipulation of corporate law.

Passivity, cynicism, impulsive choices, and confusion about how to achieve social progress have resulted in President Trump’s election. The need to teach

our youth the tools of citizenship and the principles of justice has never been greater. Taking power is hard now because of the taboos that have been created around questioning the oil industry, corporate power and ownership, and the real sources of the economic downturn. But information is the currency of democracy, and looking at the history of our unsung civic heroes and how change has been achieved is the essential job of all teachers. We must encourage our youth to consider that ambition and greatness should not be about joining the ranks of the rich, but achieving excellence in the service of the people (the hallmark of Nader’s own life). We need to envision the real possibilities and ask the “what if” questions. Albert Einstein, Nader reminded us, famously said, “Imagination precedes knowledge.” If we want to imagine a world of justice for all, then we have to engage our youth in that enterprise.

From the many pages of my conference notes, I have tried to share some of the highlights of Nader’s two-hour presentation and how these relate to the need for social justice and civics education. After his talk, I managed to have a few minutes with him. He shared with me his admiration for what social justice victories we have achieved as Canadians. He said he has often been invited to Canada to speak about his lengthy social activist career. In fact, his public address in Canada was pivotal in breaking through the wall of opposition put up by the automotive industry during his campaign for automobile safety 50 years ago. He also acknowledged the progress for First Nations in Canada. In his talk he celebrated the courage and determination of the Standing Rock activists; Indigenous struggles, he said, are important to all of us. He also mentioned that his very first article ever written for the Harvard Law Review in 1956 was about the treatment of Native Americans. Apparently, there is no area of social justice about which he isn’t informed.

To me, the timing of Ralph Nader’s message is ideal. Teachers in BC are moving through waves of curriculum change. The type of change we are going through is giving us an opportunity to renew our commitment to citizenship education and to include more social justice content. We are also infusing Aboriginal principles of learning in the classroom to help guide us in the profound nature of relationships between teachers, students, parents, and the community. Curriculum change will now allow us to teach questions (inquiry) in more depth with more relevance, and teach civic understanding and how to effect change.

In my copy of *Breaking Through Power*, Ralph Nader signed it with the call, “Act for justice!” I hope that sharing this message will persuade and encourage teachers to defend our Federation’s commitment to social justice. During conversations with other teachers, I was reminded of how many of our American colleagues envy our achievements and our freedom “to participate in power.” Let’s remain vigilant in safeguarding our Federation’s commitment to social justice. Our entire society will benefit from this.

Working with Race and Racialization in our Classrooms

Facilitating dialogue (not debate) and moving people forward together

by Ryan Cho, Antiracism Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

I remember feeling a sense of anticipation last October. Although nothing was certain, it looked like we were about to witness the election of the first female President of the United States. The election campaign brought with it a new (or old?) kind of rhetoric that seemed like it belonged more in the 1940s than 2016. The United States, a country that takes pride in its political and religious freedom, had political candidates openly suggesting that they create a religious registry to track Muslim-Americans simply for being Muslim. Politicians publicly stated they thought the decision to intern Japanese Americans was something to emulate.

It's easier for people to think of racism and racial division as problems of the past, but the election revealed that they are more hidden than gone, even in Canada. Since then, anti-immigrant posters have popped up in Richmond and Toronto,¹ Swastikas and Ku Klux Klan graffiti have appeared in Regina and Ottawa,² anti-Islamic flyer campaigns have been spotted in Edmonton,³ and "Make Canada Great Again" posters have been put up at McGill University.⁴

Racial division is a part of Canada's history and culture. In BC, tension surrounding the impact of foreign investment on Vancouver real estate and the rhetoric around temporary foreign workers are issues that we know well and are constantly trying to navigate.

The demand for teachers to explore the themes of race and racialization in their classrooms seems as relevant as ever. However, many teachers are nervous or feel ill-equipped to work with these themes in their school. It spurred the question in my mind, "How can we as teachers work to facilitate dialogue—not debate—on topics of race and racialization in our classrooms and schools in a way that moves people forward together in our shared values?"

I am a second-generation Asian-Canadian teacher, and I've been trying to answer this question for myself for many years. Through lots of trial and error, I've found a few things that have worked for me.

1. Start by acknowledging that people have different perspectives on these topics, and that their perspectives are shaped by their own identity and experience. The Pew Research Centre has some great interactive graphs and visuals based on polling data that show how much identity and experience forms people's perspectives: www.pewsocialtrends.org/2016/06/27/on-views-of-race-and-inequality-blacks-and-whites-are-worlds-apart/. ➔

Explicit racism and bigotry became normalized during the campaign in a way that I have not seen before in my (relatively young) life, and I was looking forward to the thought of leaving it behind after the election was over. The night of the election turned out differently than I—and many others—expected and hoped.



2. Listen to and treat people's stories and emotional responses as valid, no matter what their perspective is. That does not mean you validate beliefs if they are objectively wrong, but if you acknowledge and validate people's emotions, it gives you a starting place to cultivate empathy and build commonality. Several polls over the last few years suggest that many white people now believe that racism against white people is a bigger problem than racism against non-white people.⁵ Based on available data and research, this belief is objectively false, but the frustration and emotion that many white people feel is real, whether their beliefs are objectively true or not.
3. Try to build from people's shared values. Jonathan Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory suggests that across multiple cultures, people emphasize or don't emphasize several of six values: care/harm, fairness/cheating, liberty/oppression, loyalty/betrayal,

authority/subversion, and sanctity/degradation.⁶ Many liberal-minded people emphasize the first three values. Many conservative-minded people emphasize all of them to a more even degree. That means that we all share the first three values, no matter what our political leaning or affiliations.

These things have worked for me in talking, teaching, and learning about race and racialization over the last few years. At this moment in our history, it is as important as ever for us to work together and move forward as a province, country, and world on these issues. These things have worked for me. What things have worked for you?

Footnotes

- 1 <http://bit.ly/2IRpXBe>, 2 <http://bit.ly/2IR9E7F>,
 3 <http://bit.ly/2kyFTXT>, 4 <http://bit.ly/2IRbIBJ>,
 5 <http://wapo.st/2kqKdNC>, 6 www.moralfoundations.org

Incorporating Antiracist Education into BC's Revised Curriculum

by Nassim Elbardouh, Antiracism Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

"How do I introduce/approach racism without singling out students?"

"What activities can I incorporate in my practice to help my students be more accepting of each other?"

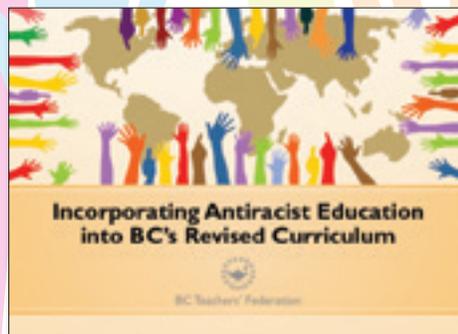
"I'm not a member of a marginalized group. How can I teach about sensitive racial issues?"

These are just some of the questions that I was asked when I facilitated an antiracism workshop this past December. Educators from around the Vancouver School Board (VSB) braved the snowy weather to learn more about how to incorporate antiracist education into BC's new curriculum.

The objectives for this multimedia and interactive workshop are as follows:

- to increase our capacity to talk about racism with our peers and students
- to develop our understanding and recognition of our own privilege
- to explore how to incorporate antiracist education into the new curriculum
- to identify existing BCTF antiracism resources.

Participants are asked to commit to an open-minded and confidential exploration of equity versus equality, intersectionality, privilege, and how contemporary, critical race scholars and educators are approaching the important work of antiracism. These insights are applied to lesson plans that were created using the new curriculum. Participants are given the opportunity to adapt the resources to their own subject areas and grade levels.



While we offer a half-day version of this workshop, you will get the most out of the material if you book the full-day version. Participant handouts include over 50 pages of resources, lesson plans, and materials that you can adapt to suit your individual needs. ➡

Workshops can be booked through Ashley Gurat at 604-871-1857, or 1-800-663-9163 local 1857, or agurat@bctf.ca.

Below is a sneak peek of what you can expect from the workshop and participant handouts. I encourage you to bring this to your staff to begin a conversation about booking this workshop for your next school-based professional development day.

Quote Activity

"Do not shush children or shut down the conversation. Instead, engage in open, honest, frequent, and age-appropriate conversation about race, racial differences, and even racial inequity and racism. Research has shown that such conversations are associated with lower levels of bias in young children."

—Katz & Kofkin

Questions

1. Are you comfortable talking to your students about race, racial differences, racial inequality, and racism? What can you do to address these barriers?
2. What do you currently do in your school or classroom to encourage open, honest, frequent, and age-appropriate conversations about race, racial differences, racial inequality, and racism?
3. What about these quotes resonates with you? Why?

Choose one question to share back with the larger group.

What Donald Trump, and his supporters, taught us

by Gerry Chidiac, distributed by Troy Media

If we're going to build a better world that's not subject to extremism, we need to really listen to the hopes and fears of our neighbours.



Much of the world was shocked when America elected Donald Trump as president. Many reacted with fury. How could a man who spews racist and misogynistic rhetoric be chosen to lead such a powerful country?

Not only did it happen, it happened less than six months after the United Kingdom voted to leave the multi-ethnic European Union, and at a time when anti-immigration political parties are growing in popularity in many other countries.

Has humanity taken a step backward? Are we destined to live in a world of racism, sexism, and isolationism? ➡

Ancient Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu tells us, "The key to growth is the introduction of higher dimensions of consciousness into our awareness."

It's easy to point to the fact that many Trump supporters were white men, and that most women and minorities voted against him. But if we scratch the surface, we see there were other factors at play.

Many Americans are clearly fed up with the political system. Keep in mind that Trump was ridiculed by many long-standing members of the Republican Party. But they still chose him as their candidate, while the Democrats chose a longtime party insider, Hillary Clinton.

The people who voted for Trump and for Brexit in the U.K., and those who support similar viewpoints elsewhere, clearly disagree with the liberal ideology that they have been hearing since the end of the Cold War.

The fact that we are shocked when the votes are counted shows we haven't been listening to their voice of opposition.

Perhaps the problem is that in today's politically correct world, there are too many taboo topics. People avoid expressing their opinions because they're afraid of being labelled racist, sexist, or closed-minded. This can be very dangerous in a democracy.

Fortunately, there's an alternative, and it was taught to me by a group of teenagers.

In my Grade 12 Social Justice class, I encourage students to do research and present a project on a genocide or human rights issue that interests them. One student approached me and said, "I would like to present on abortion as genocide."

I panicked a bit and went to my principal. His response was, "You have to let her do it." I took this to mean that freedom of thought is vital to our educational system. My job was to guide the student in doing credible research and presenting her findings in a way that was understandable.

The result was unbelievable. The students not only listened to the presenter, they replied with thoughtful alternative views. No one judged anyone, and they agreed to disagree. They came away with an understanding of people on the other side of the issue and perhaps an openness to considering their point of view.

If we're going to build a better world that's not subject to extremism, we need to really listen to the hopes and fears of our neighbours. This applies not only to those who hold political office, but to all citizens, especially those of us in positions of influence.

When we really listen to others, we usually find they're more open to our points of view as well. From there, we can work together to build a world that's truly synergistic and democratic, a world where everyone wins.

The Trump victory is not a disaster for humanity; it's simply a lesson that we needed to learn along the way.



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Racism in Canada Timeline—An updated resource with lesson plans

by the Antiracism Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

The Institutionalized Racism in Canada Timeline is by no means a complete list of the incidents and policies that propagate racism in Canada. It is, however, a resource that teachers can use to integrate lessons on the history of racism, injustice, and oppression in Canada. On the back of the poster, teachers will find a lesson plan that links to the new Social Studies 10 and Social Justice 11–12 curriculum.

While history is often taught as isolated incidents that happened long ago, the purpose of this lesson is to move beyond the idea that historical atrocities only occurred in the past and were largely a result of misguided actions that would never happen again. Instead, teachers and students are challenged to look at historical injustices in light of what is happening in current society. By looking at case studies, students are asked to consider the laws and policies that legally sanctioned racism, identify acts of resistance and resilience, and analyze the significance of knowing (or not knowing) historical and ongoing events of racism in Canada.

Racism in Canada

Speak up Stand proud Stop racism

What can you do?
For lesson plans and resources:
bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=17632

A copy of this timeline and the lesson can be found here: bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/Issues/Antiracism/RacismTimeline.pdf
A PowerPoint presentation to go with the poster can be found here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvqXh83IJgM&feature=plcp

Institutionalized Racism in Canada Timeline
Lesson Plans for Grades 10–12

Curricular Links to the New Curriculum

Grade 10 Social Studies
Big Idea: Public decision-making and societal change are influenced by interactions between individuals, groups, and institutions.
Curricular competencies: Students are expected to be able to use social studies inquiry processes and skills to: investigate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, communicate, and create.
Content: Students are expected to know the following:
• historical, contemporary, and social change in the development of human rights.

Grade 11–12 Social Justice
Big Idea: Social justice issues are interconnected.
• the needs of social justice are diverse and have varying impacts on society
• social justice issues have both individual and systemic effects.
Curricular competencies: Students are expected to be able to do the following:
• use inquiry processes and skills to investigate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, communicate, and create.
• assess and compare significance of social events and developments at particular times and places, and identify what it means about social justice issues.
• identify and explain an action plan to address a particular social justice issue.
Content: Students are expected to know the following:
• past and present social justice in Canada and the world.
• identify and explain the impact of social justice on society.
• roles of government and non-governmental organizations in issues of social justice and equity.

Teacher Notes
Institutionalized Racism in Canada: A Look at Incidents of Institutional Racism in Canadian Society
This is a two-part assignment aimed at helping students learn more about the history of institutionalized racism in Canada.

Part 1: Inquiry, research, and classroom presentation
Students choose one case study to present to groups of three from a list of Canadian government policies that directly or indirectly targeted certain cultural groups. Students may want to consider events or policies that are not on this list. Students will prepare their research by creating a research paper or presentation to be shared with their classmates. The research paper/presentation should include:
• a title and subtitle
• a main question
• a thesis statement
• a clear outline
• a clear introduction
• a clear conclusion
• a clear thesis statement
• a clear outline
• a clear introduction
• a clear conclusion

Part 2: Letter writing and advocacy
There is one BC curriculum, and this resource can be used to help students understand why and how racism in Canada has been institutionalized. As an extension to the first assignment, have your students write a letter to the Minister of Education to explain why it is important for the state that they create an institution to address racism in Canada. The letter will be read to the Minister of Education and will be used to inform the Minister of Education and the public. The letter will be read to the Minister of Education and will be used to inform the Minister of Education and the public.

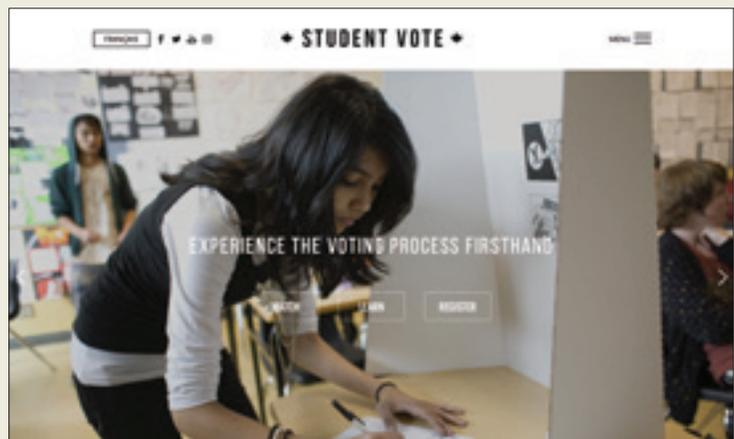
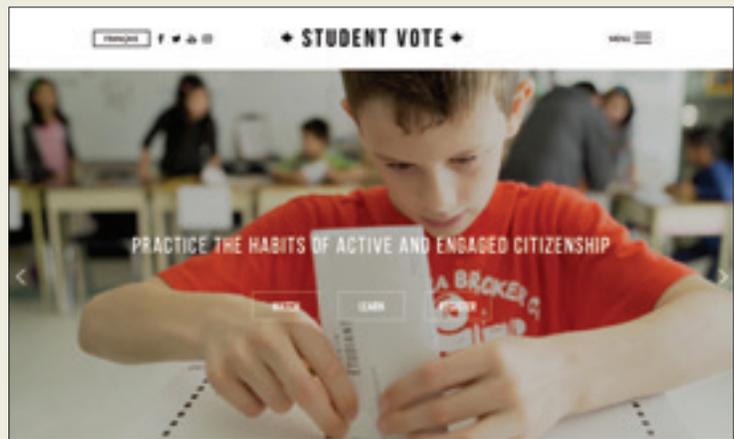
CIVIX

by Carol Arnold, Status of Women Action Group,
Committee for Action on Social Justice

Thanks to CIVIX, our entire school population was able to cast their votes in two past elections, one provincial and one federal. We are now registered to vote in the May 9, 2017 BC provincial election. Leading up to each of these elections, we received lesson plans, links to educational videos, Vote Compass information, and a variety of student involvement opportunities, such as joining the Student Ambassador Network. For the 2015 federal election, I was able to sign up as a teacher for the Democracy Bootcamp held at the Wosk Centre in downtown Vancouver. This was designed to help teachers “improve [our] ability to use the Student Vote program in [our schools] and connect...with other teachers throughout BC that use Student Vote during elections.” But the culminating event of election day was not the end of the program. CIVIX also conducted an election follow up program called Student Budget Consultation that came with another set of lesson plans, videos, and PowerPoint presentations to teach “Budget Basics, Key Issues, and Party Perspectives.” So, there is as much or as little for teachers to choose from once they register for the election packages.

When the final package arrived, which included election booths, ballots, elector sheets, etc., there was already an air of excitement. At Gulf Islands Secondary, we had 80% of the students cast ballots. We joined 6,760 schools across Canada, involving 922,000 students (almost one million students!), and representing 338 electoral districts. Results were displayed as part of a “national summary, [with] provincial/territorial summaries, results by riding, [and] and individual school results.” The overall Student Vote results were reported and reviewed by CBC’s Peter Mansbridge after the election outcome was known. What a sense of empowerment felt by the participating students! In thanking the many efforts of teachers, schools, and students, we were acknowledged for our inspiring work “of building the next generation of voters.” And I might add, thanks to CIVIX, we educated the next generation of *informed* voters in the process.

Registration is now open for schools that want to conduct Student Vote for the spring provincial election. The program is expensive, but free for us, as it is supported

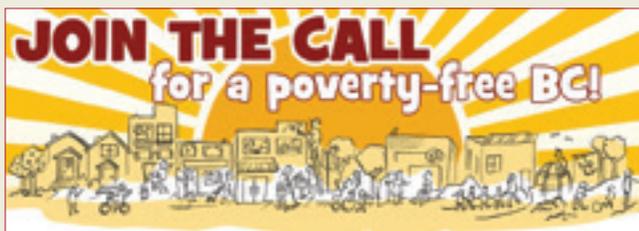


by financial and in-kind support from Elections Canada. The program that comes with registration is yet to roll out, however, once you register you will receive alerts, materials, and updates. As educators, we must seize every opportunity to instill the importance of citizen engagement in the electoral process, as well as build democratic skills-capacity between elections. No matter whom we elect, nor how happy we are with election outcomes, we can never afford to become complacent about our role as citizens. The Student Vote program is available in both English and French. To enrol your school, visit www.studentvote.ca.

This Provincial Election, Let's Advocate for a Poverty Reduction Plan

by Barb Ryeburn, Assistant Director of Social Justice, BCTF

As we head into the next provincial election, British Columbians have the dubious honour of belonging to the only Canadian province that does not have a poverty reduction plan. This would not be an issue if we lived in a poverty-free province. Unfortunately, this is not the case.



Despite the fact that we are one of the nation's wealthiest provinces, BC has the second-highest poverty rate in the country, at 13.2%. One out of every five children in our province is living in poverty. The statistics are even more alarming for marginalized groups. One-half of children living in single-parent families, one-third of Aboriginal children living in Vancouver, and one-half of Aboriginal children living on reserves experience poverty. Children of recent immigrants, refugees, people with disabilities and mental illness, and LGBTQ people also experience disproportionately high poverty rates.

The current provincial government has stated they are addressing the issue by creating employment, supporting the myth that all people living in poverty are on social assistance. In reality, the majority of children living in poverty have working parents. Precarious, part-time work and a minimum wage of \$10.85 per hour means that many working parents are living well below the poverty line. One effect of this is the 33% increase in the number of people relying on food banks since 2008. For those people unable to work or find employment, the monthly welfare payments have not increased from \$610 per month in seven years.

Acts of charity, including donating to food banks, may help meet an immediate need, but are not a solution to poverty in our province. Upstream action, which addresses the underlying factors contributing to poverty, is needed. This involves ensuring that every British Columbian receives an income allowing them to meet their basic needs, and has access to services allowing them to thrive.

What can teachers do?

The provincial elections provide an opportunity for us to raise awareness of the devastating effects of poverty on our students and their families and to advocate for systemic change. Teachers can take these and other actions to help ensure that poverty becomes an election issue.

- Learn the facts about poverty. The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition website,¹ First Call's Child Poverty Report Card,² and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' document *Long Overdue: Why BC Needs a Poverty Reduction Plan*³ provide information to help support teachers in advocating for an end to poverty. The BCTF Antipoverty Action Group web page⁴ includes research and infographics highlighting the effects of poverty in our classrooms.
- Organize or participate in a local all-candidates meeting and ask each candidate whether their party will commit to implementing a poverty reduction policy with legislated goals and timelines. This plan consists of the following seven pillars:
 1. **Wages:** Increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour and index it to inflation, and encourage employers to adopt a living wage.
 2. **Welfare:** Significantly increase welfare and disability rates and index them to inflation.
 3. **Housing:** Immediately start building over 2,000 new units of social housing per year.
 4. **Childcare:** Adopt a \$10 a day childcare plan.
 5. **Health:** Expand home support, residential care services, and other essential health services.
 6. **Education:** Adequately fund schools and make post-secondary education and training more accessible.
 7. **Marginalized people:** Focus on the structural barriers faced by each group.
- Talk to your family members, friends, colleagues, parents, and students to encourage them to become involved.

Through these and other actions, teachers can make a difference for our students and families living in poverty, with the ultimate goal of a poverty-free BC.

Footnotes: 1 www.bcpovertyreduction.ca, 2 www.still1in5.ca/report-card 3 www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/long-overdue, 4 bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6308

The Elusive Quest for Childcare in BC

by Kristin Quigley, Status of Women Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice; TTOC working for Vancouver Island North SD #85, Port Hardy

The BC Liberal Party has yet to improve the lives of families with young children since Premier Christy Clark took power. During her first few years as premier, she championed a “families first” agenda. Still today, she maintains that her government is proactive about meeting the diverse needs of families with respect to employment, housing, education, and healthcare. Arguably, families with young children continue to face as many challenges now, if not more.

Childcare is one of the most expensive challenges confronting families in BC. Most people agree that efforts must be made to ensure that children are presented with opportunities to flourish and develop their full potential. Parents often experience frustration and disappointment attempting to find appropriate care for their kids. For many families with young children, safe, reliable, affordable, regulated childcare is difficult, if not impossible, to access. Communities in both rural and urban environments struggle to offer childcare services that adequately meet the needs of their populations. Unstable childcare can impede parents’ ability to commit to definite work schedules, and may force families to change long-term goals or even put their future on hold.

Despite some past promises around childcare, most federal and provincial governments manage to evade any serious commitment to implement a comprehensive childcare system.

Two notable exceptions are in the provinces of Quebec and Prince Edward Island. Furthermore, “Canada is routinely...ranked among the wealthiest countries in the industrialized world and the weakest in public support for families with

vulnerable young citizens is nothing less than shameful.

Our province is fortunate to have a strong action group known as the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC). This non-profit agency has spent decades fighting for better childcare services and researching ways to implement an affordable, universal childcare program that would be flexible enough to meet the various needs of families with young children in our

province. By 2010, the CCCABC and Early Learning Educators had developed a comprehensive Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Child Care and Learning. The estimated cost a family would pay per child was just \$10 a day.



young children. As a result, child poverty is high, access to quality, affordable childcare services is low, and many of Canada’s youngest children are cared for in unregulated settings” (Coalition of Childcare Advocates of BC, November 2012). According to one United Nations report, “Canada can address these needs while developing, funding, and implementing a plan to advance universal rights in early childhood, such as childcare. In fact, as a global leader, Canada should be held accountable for no less” (October 2012). The lack of action taken by Canadian governments to provide care for many of our most

Now is an opportune time to highlight the urgent need for affordable childcare as we approach the provincial election on May 9, 2017. Many families in our province are so busy just trying to get by. Having access to affordable childcare delivered by trained caregivers would address one of the many challenges facing young families in BC. Whoever forms the next government in BC needs to seriously consider implementing a province-wide system for quality childcare, such as the proposed \$10 a day childcare plan, demonstrating that families really are considered first.

Working Women's Victories Shine in Oral History Project

by Janet Nicol, Vancouver secondary teacher

When Sharon Yandle describes her leadership role in a Vancouver strike at the Windermere Care Facility in 1981, a video camera is rolling. "I had the chance at this time to put into action the way I thought a strike should be run," she says. "You don't always have this opportunity when you are a staffer, but this was my territory and I was responsible as the negotiator and strike co-ordinator."

Yandle's account is now preserved on videotape and is among the many interviews with labour activists conducted by volunteers of the Oral History Project. The ongoing collection, headed by Bailey Garden, is sponsored by the British Columbia Labour Heritage Centre. Layered into these oral histories is the province's rich social history. Yandle's personal history, for instance, reveals she is a third-generation Vancouverite, born into an "East Van" working-class home. Like many baby boomers, her time as a student at Simon Fraser University in the 1960s influenced her world view.

Yandle's labour activism came almost a decade later in 1974 when she was hired as a union organizer for the Hospital Employees Union (HEU). By that time, the HEU had achieved a master contract agreement which covered support staff at 63 BC hospitals, most female and a high percentage visible minorities. By 1971, acute care hospital workers were also organized, but staff at long-term care facilities—such as the Windermere Care Facility—were not.

"We had 85 women and a couple of men," Yandle says about the Windermere Care Facility. "The owner of

this organization was a big corporation, and they were paying these pitiful wages. So we did go on strike."

Yandle says her approach during the 1981 strike was to be "perfectly candid" with union members, and to hold regular meetings once a week. "The place filled up with scabs immediately as one would expect."



Oral History Project



The BCLHC aims to preserve and expand the knowledge of the important role of workers in the history of British Columbia. To further our goals, we are interviewing people around the province to document their experiences of work and participation in the labour movement.

The Oral History Project has two main focuses:

1. Conducting, collecting, and ultimately creating a general directory of oral history interviews focused on the histories of working people and their unions in British Columbia.
2. Providing an Oral History Workshop to union members, along with an accompanying Oral History Guide (available to the public online).

The Oral History Project will begin conducting interviews with working people involved in the history of British Columbia in March, 2016. The Project has a short list of individuals which it is currently pursuing interviews with. Suggestions to the Project for potential future interview subjects are welcomed.

"We told them the good news and we told them the bad news," she also says of her leadership approach with members.

"These women were almost all immigrant workforce with very limited English. They were amazing stalwarts. In the course of the three to four months [of the strike], we didn't lose one person. They would get whatever work they could while they were on the picket line."

"We still had pretty good labour laws in terms of secondary picketing," Yandle also remembers. "[The employer] could easily fill the jobs of our own members, but they needed nurses. They started to bring nurses from other hospitals, or nurses would voluntarily [cross the picket line]. So we put up picket lines in front of the hospitals because we could do that, and because they were an ally of the employer."

Yandle credits members of the BC Nurses' Union and their leader Ray Haines for giving crucial support. "It suddenly occurred to the other hospitals: they didn't give a damn about this corporation, but they didn't want a picket line in front of their hospitals." ➔



“So it totally dried up the supply of nurses,” Yandle says. “We had said that any nurse who works here and crosses the picket line would not be able to work at another hospital. So, no nurses would go [to Windermere Care Facility]. They started flying them in from out of town. They put the nurses up at the Plaza 500 hotel. We told the Plaza 500, ‘If you are going to put these people up at this hotel, I want you to know you have lost our business as a union.’ We also said, ‘We are going to tell our friends’—that is, the other unions. That was the end of it. The nurses couldn’t go to the hotel.”

“It was one thing after another,” Yandle says with a smile.

Also a prolific writer, Yandle has left a rich paper trail describing her union experiences. “The women I helped organize worked at minimum-wage jobs at private hospitals and care homes,” she wrote in the May 2004 issue of the Vancouver Downtown Eastside Carnegie Newsletter. “I visited them and their kids in trailer parks and basement suites. And if I arrived in the last week of the month, I saw soup on the stove—and only soup. I met their kids home alone who let me in to wait for their mother’s shift to end. During that hour or so, I was their caregiver. And when Mom came home, sometimes the dollar she gave to sign up with the union was her last dollar until payday.”

“Now these women have double the minimum wage.”

Sharon left the HEU staff in 1986 and performed freelance contract work for the BC Teachers’ Federation and other unions. She has also taught labour relations and collective bargaining courses at the University of Victoria, retiring in 2000.

As for the Windermere strike, Yandle concludes her story for the camera by relaying the fate of eight of the original workers who had crossed the picket line. After a deal was reached in the strikers’ favour, the union put in a claim to the labour board to retrieve the eight strike-breakers’ wages earned during the strike. The labour board complied, compelling them to turn over these wages to the union in exchange for a much smaller amount of strike pay.

“We did end up with a huge victory,” Yandle says.

For more information, suggestions for interviewees, or to volunteer for the Oral History Project, go to: www.labourheritagecentre.ca/projects/oral-history-project/.

Teaching Informed Consent in the Classroom

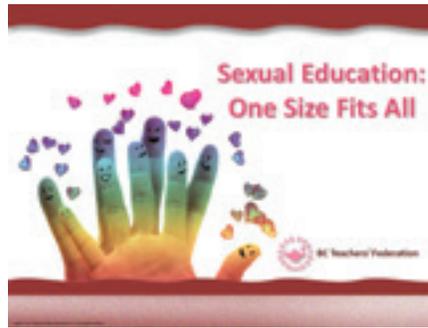
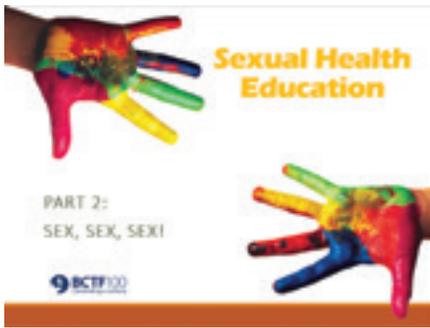
by Laura Lafortune, Status of Women Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

A 2015 study by the Canadian Women’s Foundation found that while almost all Canadians agree that sexual activity between partners should be consensual, two-thirds of Canadians admit to not really knowing what consent is, and one-third of Canadians don’t identify the need for ongoing consent during sexual activity at all. The study also revealed that when technology is involved, consent is even more difficult for young Canadians to understand. One in five people aged 18 to 34 believes that if a woman sends a man an explicit photo through text or email, this always means she is

inviting him to engage in offline sexual activity.

Confusion around consent can have dire consequences for children and youth. According to Statistics Canada, there were approximately 14,000 child and youth victims of sexual offences in Canada in 2012. This number is staggering, especially because it does not include the countless offences that went unreported. When children and youth do not understand informed consent, they may struggle to see certain behaviours as crimes, or be unsure as to whether they should report

them. Approximately 90% of all sexual offences committed against children and youth were committed by an individual known to the victim (e.g., an acquaintance, a family member, or an intimate partner) and one-third of sexual offences against children or youth were committed by another youth (Cotter and Beaupré, 2014). If children and youth are both victims and perpetrators of sexual violence, and if this violence is happening between acquaintances, we need to clarify our message about consensual sexual activity. ➡



You can also browse the sexual education resources available at www.teachbc.bctf.ca and bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=21406.

References

Cotter, Adam, and Pascale Beaupré. Police-reported Sexual Offences against Children and Youth in Canada, 2012. Rep. Statistics Canada, 28 May 2014. Web. 7 Jan. 2017.

“Only 1 in 3 Canadians Know What Sexual Consent Means.” Canadian Women’s Foundation. Canadian Women’s Foundation, 5 May 2015. Web. 07 Jan. 2017. <http://canadianwomen.org/press-consent>.

What better opportunity do we have to teach young people about informed consent than in the classroom as we teach them about healthy bodies, minds, and relationships? Curricular competencies in British Columbia’s revised curriculum for physical education include describing and applying strategies for promoting a safe and caring environment, developing and maintaining healthy relationships, and avoiding potentially unsafe, abusive, or exploitative situations. While these strategies should include taking personal safety precautions, they should also include clearly understanding informed consent.

Teaching informed consent during sex education goes beyond repeating the “no means no” motto. It includes teaching how to ask for consent and what consent looks like. It includes teaching the difference between a non-response and “yes.” It includes teaching that consent cannot be given by someone if they are unconscious or incapacitated, and teaching that consent is revocable. In short, teaching informed consent means teaching that “only an enthusiastic yes means yes.”

Consent can even be taught in the classroom when we aren’t discussing sexual health. Allowing students to choose whether their photos are posted on a classroom blog teaches them that sharing

images should be consensual. Taking students seriously when they complain of a classmate pinching, tickling, chasing, or “playfully” hitting them teaches them that non-consensual touching is unacceptable. Offering students alternatives to activities that involve touching, such as dancing or contact sports, teaches them that they can choose what happens to their bodies.

By teaching our students to value enthusiastic consent, we can help them identify and escape abuse, and—just as importantly—help them to avoid committing abusive acts themselves.

For more information on teaching informed consent in the classroom, consider booking the BCTF’s workshops Sexual Education: Part 1: One Size Fits All, and Part 2: Sex, Sex, Sex.



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Safe is Not Enough: Sexual orientation and gender identity education and leadership

by Steve Mulligan, Teacher Education For All Co-ordinator, Faculty of Education, UBC; and Lizzie Gross, Project Lead at ARC Foundation

Recent changes to both BC and federal legislation, as well as a new directive from the BC Ministry of Education, mean that the legal and professional landscape regarding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in schools has evolved.

In January of 2016, the all-party Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth released its final report on child and youth mental health in BC. This report identified sexual- and gender-minority youth as particularly vulnerable and stated that “school districts should be required to support sexual- and gender-minority youth in schools through general and targeted programs to address child and youth mental health issues.”

“Schools are supposed to be about supporting kids, all kids, and giving them a safe environment.”

—Tru Wilson, a Grade 8 trans student

In July of 2016, Bill 27: Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2016 was passed to include “gender identity or expression” among the protected grounds covered by the British Columbia Human Rights Code. The BC Ministry of Education followed in September with its own directive asking that explicit references to sexual orientation and gender identity be added to the policies that school districts and independent schools are required to have in place. Furthermore, the Ministry has produced a SOGI policy guide that includes ten key components of best practice for supporting diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions.

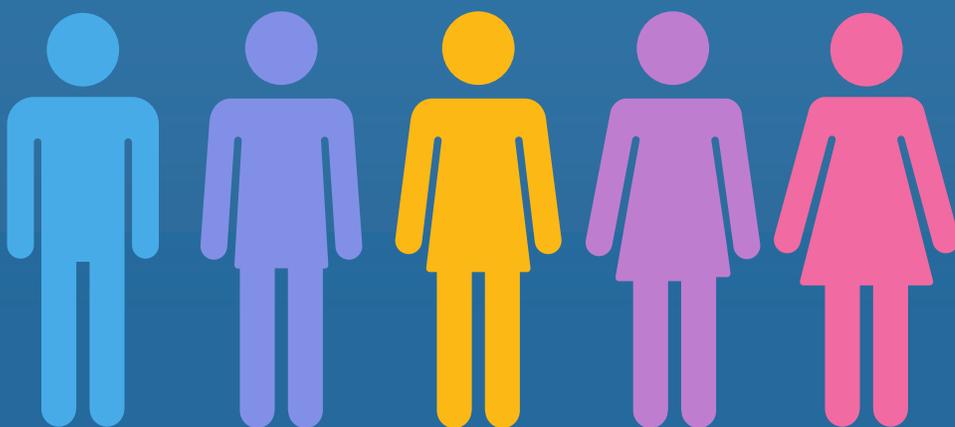
Of course, many teachers and administrators across the province have been working for years to build the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to support sexual- and gender-minority students and families. Unfortunately, Egale Canada’s recent climate survey reports that 64% of sexual- and gender-minority students across our province still feel unsafe at school.

In the words of Tru Wilson, a Grade 8 trans student, “Schools are supposed to be about supporting kids, all kids, and giving them a safe environment. Schools need to know how to help kids like me. They need to have the tools and the knowledge about what it means to be

LGBTQ. You can help them. You won’t believe the impact it has on kids like me, just to feel accepted. To feel loved.”

While several school districts have part-time teachers or administrators dedicated to SOGI-inclusive education, many districts still have no policy, no plan, and no one leading this critical education and support for students.

A pilot project funded by ARC Foundation, the SOGI School District Pilot, is supporting nine BC school districts to move forward. The district SOGI model includes a central District SOGI Co-ordinator with a SOGI School Lead volunteer in each school. All nine participating districts have experienced success in recruiting passionate and committed educators into the SOGI School Lead role across their districts.



Kamloops-Thompson is one of the school districts participating in the pilot. Nichelle Penny, District SOGI Co-ordinator in Kamloops-Thompson, recently summarized her feelings of success: “The warm responses from teachers to help start up this SOGI project across our district has been overwhelming. Teachers have already been including SOGI

materials in their classrooms, and they welcome the opportunity to share their lesson plans with other teachers, other schools; they welcome the opportunity to create a community to support our students rather than one person at a time. In turn, by creating this community, our students have more opportunity to be successful—both in and out of the classroom—because they feel safe and acknowledged.”

In October of 2016, the ARC Foundation worked together with the Ministry of Education, BCTF, UBC Faculty of Education, and Out in Schools to deliver the SOGI Education Leadership Summit, which hosted 140 teachers, administrators, counsellors, and teacher-librarians from the nine participating school districts in the pilot. One participant reported that, “The most beneficial part of the SOGI Education Leadership Summit was being reminded of the importance of this work and knowing that I don’t have to be an expert to affect change.”

At the same time, the SOGI 123 campaign was launched to demonstrate that LGBTQ-inclusive education is as simple as SOGI 123. The new website www.sogieducation.org shares proven SOGI-inclusive tools and resources in three key areas:

- SOGI 1: Policies and Procedures—The key components of effective SOGI-inclusive policies and procedures
- SOGI 2: Inclusive Environments—Practices and behaviours that lead to SOGI-inclusive learning environments
- SOGI 3: Curriculum Resources—SOGI-inclusive lesson plans that align with the current K–12 curriculum.

SOGI 123 is a collaboration of the BC Ministry of Education, BC Teachers’ Federation, UBC Faculty of Education, Out in Schools, ARC Foundation, nine school districts across BC, and local, national, and international LGBTQ community organizations.

You can visit www.sogieducation.org today to find proven SOGI-inclusive tools and resources for educators, including the Ministry of Education’s SOGI Policy Guide



and a series of K–12, age-appropriate entry points with links to lesson plans on TeachBC.

The ARC Foundation School Districts SOGI Pilot has provided a support network of peers, onboarding and training tools, an online district-wide toolkit, and additional funding to support districts to reach their pilot goals. The tools and resources will be available to all school districts in 2017–18 to support those who wish to implement the model. In the meantime, a starter kit and onboarding support is available now to districts who would like to find out how the district SOGI model could work for them during the rest of the 2016–17 year.

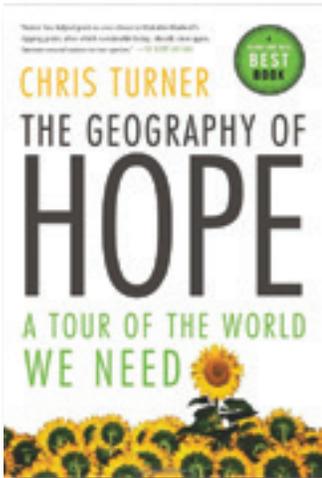
With this unprecedented momentum behind SOGI-inclusive education in our province, now is the time to ask your local and your district leadership how you can get on board and take action towards creating school environments where all students feel not only safe, but embraced and empowered.

Visit www.sogieducation.org today and share SOGI 123 with your colleagues.

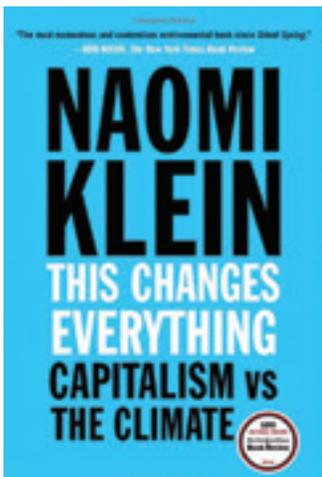
For further information about the School Districts SOGI Pilot, please contact Susan Ruzic, sruzic@bctf.ca or 604-871-1850.

We Need Science and Hope to Make Real Change

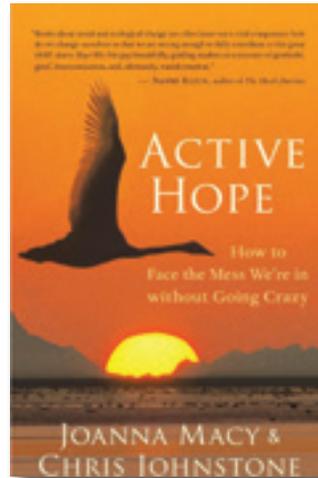
by Heather Kelley, Environmental Justice Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice



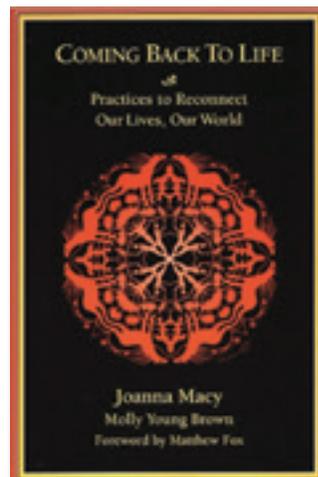
I am going to be honest with you; sometimes being a climate activist can be difficult. There are moments when I wish I could ignore the harsh realities of a world altered by human-caused climate change. Sitting with the knowledge of what we are doing to this planet and all life upon it is hard. I have been involved in activism around this issue for the past 18 years—all of my teenage and adult life. The urgency in this work, however, has only recently hit home for me. You see, I have a young daughter and another baby on the way, and I am no longer just fighting for some abstract future; it is the world that they, and all of our students, will inherit from us. The opportunities, living conditions, and quality of life that they will have is being decided right now by our actions and inactions, both at an individual level and in government systems and policy.



I would be lying if I said I wasn't scared for them. I am. Will there be enough clean water? Will it still be a public resource? Will they have food security? Will they have the same opportunities as I did? Will there be peace or fighting over an ever-decreasing number of resources? Will their home (the Lower Mainland) be covered in water because of rising seas? More frivolously, will they get to swim in a healthy coral reef or climb on glaciers? Both of these



experiences bring me great joy and taught me so much when I was younger. It seems like we are living in a bad science fiction movie. As an educator, how could I not talk about the most profound issue that will impact my students' lives? How could I not give them the knowledge and information to best equip them to thrive in the future we are giving them?



I believe it is irresponsible of us to continue to pretend that this isn't happening. As teachers, we need to acknowledge the challenges ahead, but we must also talk about the good. Human beings have an amazing capacity to rally together and get things done. We have many examples of groups of people working tirelessly to make change, and eventually that change

occurs. We must be that change, and we must enable our students to be that change. Now is the time to be bold. We have the opportunity to create a future that we are proud of, but we need to actively participate in its creation. We can't keep doing things as we always have; we know where that has gotten us. We must look for new, innovative, creative, unique, and collective solutions and ways to be in the world. We must be equipped with hope and knowledge. Here are a few great books where I found both.

1. *The Geography of Hope* by Chris Turner
2. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism and the climate* by Naomi Klein
3. *Keeping Our Cool: Canada in a warming world* by Andrew Weaver
4. *Active Hope: How to face the mess we're in and not go crazy* and *Coming Back to Life* by Joanna Macy.

The Cost of Renewable Energy

by Julie Johnston, Environmental Justice Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

Remember when the United States cloistered hundreds of scientists and tens of thousands of other workers in a secret desert location, threw \$2 billion at them, and ended up with two atomic bombs in just over two years? The Manhattan Project tragically proved what one nation could do when it set its mind to something.

Earlier, from 1903–1914, the United States spent \$375 million to build the Panama Canal, stopping at nothing to complete it.

After World War II, the Allies (especially the United States) spent \$13 billion (equivalent to \$120 billion today) on the Marshall Plan to rebuild Germany and several other western European countries from the rubble. They succeeded in four years. The post-war occupation and rebuilding of Japan over seven years, led by General Douglas MacArthur, was funded by the Allies to the tune of \$2.2 billion (\$18 billion today).

In my lifetime, the Apollo Project managed to put a person on the moon in less than a decade, at a cost of \$25.4 billion (\$150 billion today).

Right now, the whole world needs to achieve a rapid transformation to zero-carbon renewable energy—but some say it's too costly. We can rest our case.

Fossil fuel combustion kills five million people each year, and that's before counting its effects on the climate. How can we, as a society, say we "can't afford" to make the switch to non-burning renewable energy? It's never a "cost" to build a new coal plant. No one screams

about the financial "cost" of building new oil and gas pipelines. So where did people get the impression that building renewable energy infrastructure is too costly? Renewable energy is not a cost; it's an investment.

What if we made the fossil fuel industries internalize the environmental and public health costs of their products? Or what if we simply removed the trillions of dollars of direct and indirect subsidies (e.g., tax breaks, externalization of the health and environmental costs of fossil fuel burning, etc.) that governments give to fossil fuel corporations every year (\$46 billion annually in Canada alone, according to the International Monetary Fund, \$1.4 billion of that in direct "pre-tax" subsidies). And what if we switched those subsidies over to the renewable energy technologies, the ones that are supposed to "stand on their own two feet" to be considered viable.

Here's a conundrum: right now, we're having to build renewable energy infrastructure with high-density, carbon-intensive fossil fuel energy. What if we approved a Marshall/Manhattan/Apollo/Gaia plan to get zero-carbon, high-density fusion energy online?

It's going to cost money to safeguard the future, but it's going to cost much, much more if we don't act and invest now. Even if nations have to borrow money today to develop new energy infrastructure, it's a safe bet this is an investment that future generations will be happy and grateful to pay off tomorrow.

Reference
www.thetyee.ca/Opinion/2016/02/01/IMF-Fossil-Fuel-Subsidies/



Connecting with Our Place: Sardis Park

by Donna Boucher, Chilliwack elementary teacher

“A sense of place is knowing the stories of the land where you live and feeling a part of those stories.”
—Daniel A. Kriesberg

Our Grade 3 class has been getting out of the classroom and into our local community and environment. This year we have focused on connecting with “our place,” Sardis Park. It’s only five minutes from our school, and we visit it as often as possible. We have connected with it by exploring it, mapping it, observing its biodiversity, identifying its species, measuring it, watching as weather and nature transform it, drawing and painting it, writing stories about it, and taking care of it.

We started our journey by mapping the park, then researched the history of its early settlers and First Peoples, discovering how they survived and lived off the land. We learned more about their culture from a local Sto:lo community member who shared oral history, stories, and artifacts from the past. Our next step was to research the history of Sardis Park, which was formed as a swimming pool in the late 1950s. Our search of the local museum archives found some disturbing facts: five drownings, the intentional killing of a swan, and a winter kill of ducks that resulted from over-feeding on a contaminated farmer’s field. The news we gathered was a mix of sad and happy, but it did give us insight to the real history of our place. We have shared our inquiries with the rest of our school community, which has resulted in the sharing of other personal connections.



Our favourite parts of connecting with Sardis Park are the walks and nature observations which are hands-on experiential learning. With our journals and field guides, we gather our buckets and picker-uppers as we set off for our place. We have been able to see how it changes over the seasons, as well as how weather can transform it. We learned to identify bird species as we prepared for the Great Backyard Bird Count, sighting 14 species and 105 birds during our walk. We utilized local community members to help identify our tree species and improve our art skills. We used different artistic mediums—sketching, watercolour painting, clay, and elements of nature—as we created a variety of works of art. Local artist John LeFlock showed us how to improve our drawing skills, and we applied his tips when drawing local birds we had researched. We made nature art for others to see as we moved around the park. Even though we were dismayed that the park was ravaged by wind storms, we were able to salvage some of the wood branches that were to be mulched and use them for

nature crafts. We then sold them as a fundraiser for Gifts of Hope, raising over \$400 for families in developing countries to get livestock, seeds, and clean water.

We have also used Sardis Park for learning opportunities outside of social studies, science, and art. We explored math concepts (patterns, counting, measuring), writing (journals and stories of Sardis Park), and social responsibility (cleaning up the park). All Grade 3 nature detectives are also members of the Skyhawk Green Team and choose where they want to help out (recycling, garbage busters, fund raising), but we are all energy detectives. We compete in the Canadian Geographic Classroom Energy Diet Challenge and learn how to save energy at home and at school as we complete the 25 challenges.

We know our contributions can make a difference to our environment, our community, and the global community, as evidenced by the numerous projects we have been involved with. By using a place-based model, we have developed an appreciation of our surroundings and become participants in our community. These connections to the local community and environment help us to understand our identity and our place in the world.



Going Outside: A pedagogical narration

by Donna Boucher and Natasha Burgess, Environmental Educators PSA (EPPSA); and Janine Fraser, BC Primary Teachers' Association (BCPTA)

“A pedagogical narration is the recording of the ordinary moments of children’s play. It is a tool that allows us to reflect on the theories and strategies that children develop, the way social relationships are explored, and the constant process of learning or ‘making meaning’ that children undertake” (Atkinson, page 3).

It is a way to make learning visible. It is a way to help teachers be more reflective in their work. It is a way to honour and better understand a child. It is a way for a teacher to communicate this understanding to children and their families. It is a story that allows one to see inside a child’s imagination and thinking, so what better place to spark that imagination and thinking than the wonderful world outside. We have posted a narration focused on a Grade 1 student on TeachBC. The link can be found here: teachbcdb.bctf.ca/permalink/resource980. This child was observed during their play outdoors in the rich winter landscape near West Boundary Elementary School, and we have reflected on other “ordinary moments” outdoors with children. We have listed the following eight steps of pedagogical narrative with full details on TeachBC.

The eight steps of pedagogical narration

1. Focus on one child during an ordinary moment and be curious about what they are doing.
2. Make an observation of an ordinary moment.
3. Record and describe an ordinary moment.
4. Reflect and interpret an ordinary moment.
5. Share your description with your colleagues, children, and families.
6. Incorporate the comments of others into your interpretation.
7. Link the pedagogical narration to the revised BC curriculum.
8. Incorporate your learning into the planning cycle at your worksite.

Meatless Monday Goes to School

by Emily Pickett, Program Co-ordinator for the Vancouver Humane Society



Encouraging children and young people to eat more fruits and vegetables has long been considered a worthy cause. The health benefits of plant-based foods are well established scientifically, and just about everyone knows that eating more of them is a good thing.

What is less well known is that replacing animal-based foods with plant-based ones can have a positive impact on the environment and on animal welfare. Meat consumption is a major factor in climate change. The United Nations estimates that the global meat industry is responsible for 14.5% of greenhouse gas emissions—more than all forms of transport combined. Meat production has also been connected to nearly every other environmental problem the planet is facing, including air and water pollution, water scarcity, land and ocean degradation, and species loss.

The spread of the Western diet and the global demand for cheap meat has also fostered the growth of intensive livestock production, better known as factory farming. Every year, over 700 million animals are raised and killed for food in Canada. Nearly all of them are confined to unnatural and cruel factory farms.

That's why animal welfare groups like the Vancouver Humane Society (VHS) have decided to encourage reducing meat consumption and to promote a plant-based diet. Lower demand for meat means less need for factory farms and slaughterhouses.

One of VHS's key initiatives is its Meatless Monday program, which

it has introduced or supported in four secondary schools and four post-secondary institutions in Vancouver. Although the Meatless Monday concept has been around for years and exists in more than 30 countries, VHS's program is the first of its kind in Canada and is customized for each school that decides to adopt it. The general idea is simple: One day a week, the school offers and promotes plant-based menu options in its food facility.

Central to the program is a positive, upbeat approach that adds choices to school food facility menus without taking any away—truly an all carrot, no stick message.

VHS works with key stakeholders—including teachers, administrators, and food service providers—but begins by engaging with students, usually through groups such as student councils and environmental or animal welfare clubs. The interest and active participation of students is essential. After all, they are the “customers,” and they are unlikely to support a top-down approach that pushes food choices without their involvement.

That involvement is fostered by providing students with tool kits that include a step-by-step guide to introducing Meatless Monday to

the school. The guide covers everything from how to engage with the school's



food service manager to supporting and evaluating a program once it's up and running.

VHS also offers free promotional resources to each participating school, including brochures, posters, and table-top tent cards explaining the Meatless Monday concept and encouraging students to give plant-based eating a try. VHS also uses social media and conventional news media to celebrate and draw attention to the success of the program. Students have been thrilled to see their initiatives featured in Vancouver's press.

While there is certainly enthusiasm for Meatless Monday in participating schools, it's not just about celebrating success. The

students VHS has worked with really do care about the environment, animal welfare, and their health. They have lots of questions and are eager to learn. Moreover, they want to know what they can do.

Initiatives like Meatless Monday also give students opportunities to gain experience in problem-solving, leadership, and collaboration—valuable skills that can be applied to any endeavour, including leading other social justice campaigns.

Teachers have a vital role to play in helping students understand the issues involved, with all their complexities and varying viewpoints. When students have a solid grounding in the changes that are shaping their world, they can be motivated to address those changes. Teachers sponsoring school clubs that address environmental, health, or animal welfare issues can be catalysts to help students to take action and genuinely make a difference. That has certainly been the case with the Meatless Monday program.

VHS is planning to expand Meatless Monday into more schools and post-secondary institutions, as well as into hospitals and businesses. The program is growing quickly because people see that it's a win-win-win concept: good for the animals, good for the environment, and good for you.

To learn more about VHS's Meatless Monday program (www.meatlessmonday.ca) or to request a presentation for your school, class, or club about Meatless Monday or meat reduction in general, contact the society's Program Coordinator, Emily Pickett at emily@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca.



David Thompson Secondary Green Team tabling in cafeteria on Meatless Monday.

Sustainable Development Goals

by Melissa Shaw, Peace and Global Education Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice

“There can be no plan B, because there is no planet B.”

—Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

This is the logic driving the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals in a grand plan to transform the world by 2030.

Both global and local in scope, this package of 17 goals looks to achieve three extraordinary things in the next 15 years: end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and fix climate change.

The goals are the product of a massive deliberative process spearheaded by the UN and its 193 Member States, as well as global civil society.

“These are huge, massively aspirational goals,” admits Dan Harris of the BC Council for International Co-operation, who met with the Committee for Action on Social Justice’s Peace and Global Education Action Group in the fall. “They really stretch us to do what we need to do to have a planet and population that are healthy.”



As teachers of what he hopes will be the generation that actually does transform the world for the better, Dan believes BCTF members can play a very important role in achieving these goals. Meanwhile, the UN’s targets and their supporting materials—including what it hails as “The World’s Largest Lesson Plan”—make excellent teaching tools, directly addressing many aspects of the BC curriculum.

At the elementary level, the Sustainable Development Goals make a great framework for both science and social studies units. For example, the big ideas over-



arching Social Studies 6 include, “complex global problems require international co-operation to make difficult choices for the future,” and, “systems of government vary in their respect for human rights and freedoms.” Social Studies 11 and Social Justice 12 will also find the framework especially useful. Ultimately, the concepts enshrined in the UN’s targets make useful guideposts and sources of information for teachers of all grades in all communities.

For the next few months, Dan and his colleagues at the BC Council for International Co-operation will be turning their focus to BC 2030, a non-partisan political campaign that points to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals as an opportunity for British Columbia to show leadership on global issues. They hope to put the challenges posed by the UN’s goals squarely in the middle of public discourse in the leadup to our spring election. Look for them at upcoming conferences and events, where they are eager to build alliances with teachers.

To find out more about the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals and access the their tailor-made lesson plans, visit www.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org.



Global Goals panda twins inspect a flag raised at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in China.

Voices into Action Aligns with the Revised BC Curriculum

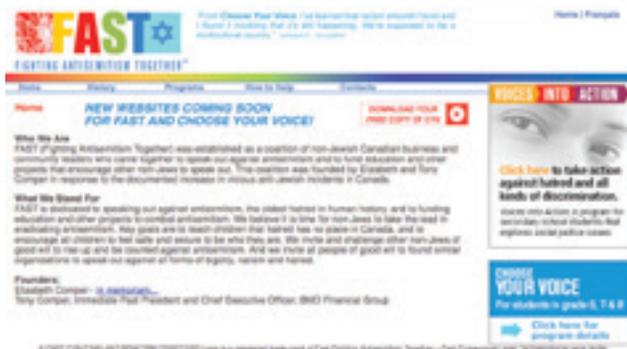
by Jodi Derkson, BC Director of Educational Programs, FAST

The world is changing—and we have to change too. Technology and innovation are reshaping society—and the future...

—The new BC curriculum

VOICES INTO ACTION

Non-profit Fighting Antisemitism Together (FAST) couldn't agree more, so an easily accessible online resource was created to teach young people to speak out and take action. Voices into Action (VIA)—a bilingual, ERAC-approved,¹ online, humanities resource is a new initiative at FAST, which aligns quite nicely with the revised BC curriculum. VIA is cost-free, and was created to help shape society by fighting xenophobia, racism, and antisemitism. We invite humanities educators to enhance their lessons with this comprehensive resource.



Focused on inspiring more socially conscious citizenry, the online resource (www.voicesintoaction.ca, www.parlezetagissez.ca) offers primary resources, short documentaries, and thought-provoking lessons on discrimination and human rights' abuses throughout history. The understanding is that by learning about the worst in humanity, students will become empowered to speak out and take action against all forms of discrimination and intolerance.

The new curriculum's strong commitment to First Nations is impressive with its encouragement to include the voice of Aboriginal people in all aspects of the education system. The chapter on the Aboriginal experience can help teachers in many subject areas with its compelling stories, facts, images, videos, and

lessons. To get students to really think about what First Nations went through, they are asked to respond to articles like "Hungry Canadian Aboriginal children were used in government experiments during 1940s, researcher says."² Students are asked to imagine how scientists at the time justified their actions—most definitely a complex question worth debating. These kinds of lessons fulfill the curriculum's suggestion to address "disparities in power which alter the balance of relationships between individuals and between societies."³ VIA's intense look at Canada's current treatment of First Nations speaks to that.

VIA offers students many opportunities to "link the past to the present through historical graphs designed to help students construct meaning, making connections between the abstract nature of data and the people and events that lay behind it."⁴ It's taken a step further by coupling these graphs with thought-provoking questions to spark critical thinking on these important topics. Social studies students can then determine "what factors led to particular decisions, actions, and events,"⁵ and also "assess their short- and long-term consequences."⁶ Preparing lessons takes quite a bit of research, and our team at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) created VIA to assist educators with substantial factual information, as well as personal stories.

In the "Examining the Holocaust" chapter of VIA is the story of Evie Abeles:

Her name was Evie and she was Jewish. In the Czechoslovakia of 1939, there was no place for little girls with corn silk hair and hand-painted dolls' dishes, if they happened to be Jewish. Evie is dead. Branded by the insignia on her little dress, she was rounded up, along with her parents, and taken to Auschwitz, where she died. Evie was my first cousin, but I never knew her. She died before I was born. I don't know exactly when she died, or how. But I do know where she died. And why. ➔

True stories like Evie's can be used in the revised language arts curriculum, giving students "an opportunity to express a personal response to a personal story."⁷ By reading the stories in VIA, students may be moved to express themselves with more compassion and insight. An example of a writing prompt is, "No one knows where Evie's body or ashes are buried. Given what you know about her, write a poem or an obituary celebrating her short life and commemorating her death." Putting ourselves

dialogue can be fueled with weighty questions such as, "How can a period of collective mourning help Rwandan youth remember the past, especially considering that many of them were born after the genocide?"

There is great value in inspiring young people to envision what a particular event in history felt like, and so the imagination is captured in all of VIA's units. In the chapter on The Komagata Maru (as well, as those on Japanese internment camps, Chinese Head tax, etc.) shameful moments in Canadian history are presented:



S.S. "Komagata Maru" July 1914



S.S. "Komogata Maru" July 1914

Japanese and Sikh men aboard the Komagata Maru

Imagine the ship docked in the Vancouver Harbour in the warm summer months of June and July, [1914]. 376 [Indian] passengers were ready to disembark; ready to begin a new life in Canada only to be told their entry was denied. They would not be able to leave the ship: no food, no water, and no communication with the outside world. Their hopes and dreams of working in Canada, beginning a new life, sending for their loved ones were lost.



S.S. "Komogata Maru" July 1914

Sikh men with an immigration official during the Komagata Maru incident

in another's shoes educates us by increasing our perspective on pivotal events throughout history.

Change is possible when we can develop our understanding of "past or present people, places, issues, and events, and [compare] the values, worldviews, and beliefs of human cultures and societies in different times and places."⁸ For example, in the chapter on the Rwandan genocide, critical thinking and exciting

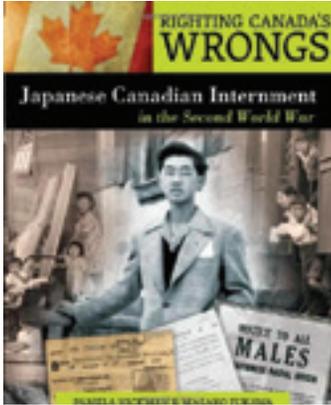
At FAST we believe that young people need to learn about the darkest moments in human history so that the future will be brighter. Because VIA's lessons fit well into so many curriculum subject areas, every student can be exposed to its human rights' topics. Through role-play, quizzes, discussions, videos, news analysis, artistic exercises, case studies, and in-person interviews, VIA aims to offer educators a large variety to choose from. The hope is that by teaching lessons like the ones in this resource, students will be more cognizant of their biases and the manner in which they treat one another. Clearly, the new BC curriculum shares this mission with FAST—a great step for education and for building a more inclusive Canada.

Footnotes

- 1 Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium
- 2 www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013/07/16/hungry_aboriginal_kids_used_unwittingly_in_nutrition_experiments_researcher_says.html
- 3-8 The new BC curriculum

Righting Canada's Wrongs: Japanese Canadian Internment in the Second World War

by Sara McGarry, Antiracism Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice



Righting Canada's Wrongs: Japanese Canadian Internment in the Second World War is one of five books in a series published by Lorimer on legally sanctioned injustices and discrimination in Canada. Each book highlights a different event that violated the rights of a

specific group in Canada, which the government then apologized for several decades later.

Authors Pamela Hickman and Masako Fukawa have created a beautifully laid out text that includes photos, artwork, timelines, excerpts from primary sources, political cartoons, and other historical documents in a scrapbook format. A historical summary is presented in a well-sourced timeline that begins with Manzo Nagano, the first documented Japanese immigrant to Canada in 1877, and ends with the success of the redress movement that led to the government apology in 1988.

Internment is chronicled using first-hand accounts of Japanese Canadians who wrote about their time at the camps. Many of these writers were children and teens, and their journal entries offer a youth perspective. Young internee June Fujiyama describes her horror of first being sent to the livestock stables at Hastings Park in Vancouver, where many Japanese Canadians were imprisoned before being sent to camps in the BC interior: "What a shock to arrive and find the park surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence and guarded by soldiers who were dressed in khaki and carrying guns. I was incredulous. 'Those guns are for us?'"

What I like most about this textbook is that it situates the historical "event" of the Japanese internment as occurring within a long period of institutionalized racism set against Japanese immigration and Canadians of Japanese descent. Policies that denied the vote to all citizens of "Asian" origin, determined immigration quotas, and restricted Japanese Canadians' access

to fishing licenses, validated and perpetuated anti-Japanese discrimination and harassment during the late 19th century and for the first half of the 20th century. The text makes it clear that WWII's Japanese internment was not merely an isolated reaction to the war and a time of fear, but emerged within a period of institutional racism and systemic targeting of groups who were not considered "European." This is an important analysis for our students to have as they consider the ways in which certain groups of people are targeted today.

Teachers in British Columbia who are able to visit historical sites of the internment of Japanese Canadians could use this text to enrich a field study within their communities. There are permanent historical acknowledgments of internment situated across BC, including Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in New Denver, the Greenwood Museum in Greenwood, the Northern Pacific Cannery in Prince Rupert, The Langhan in Kaslo, and a series of commemorative plaques at Hastings Park in Vancouver.

There are lesson plans for both elementary and secondary students, as well as a field study guide for the Hastings Park site. These resources can be found on the TeachBC website.

In addition to the study of historical issues of racism and discrimination in Canada, Hickman and Fukawa's (2011) resource can be used to engage students in current social justice issues. The textbook points out that the internment was a political decision that did not represent the views of all non-Japanese Canadians and that some wartime Members of Parliament opposed it. Many people knew then that it was wrong and did not need hindsight to realize that what the government was doing was unjust. Today there are many political activists who question public policies, and teachers can use this text to analyze government decisions. We must ask whether there are current government policies that we will one day look back on and say, "How can we right this wrong?"

Grades 10–12: teachbcdb.bctf.ca/permalink/resource902
Grades 5–6: teachbcdb.bctf.ca/permalink/resource901

Rehabilitation and Healing for Former Child Soldiers

by Ava Vanderstarren, Innocence Lost Foundation

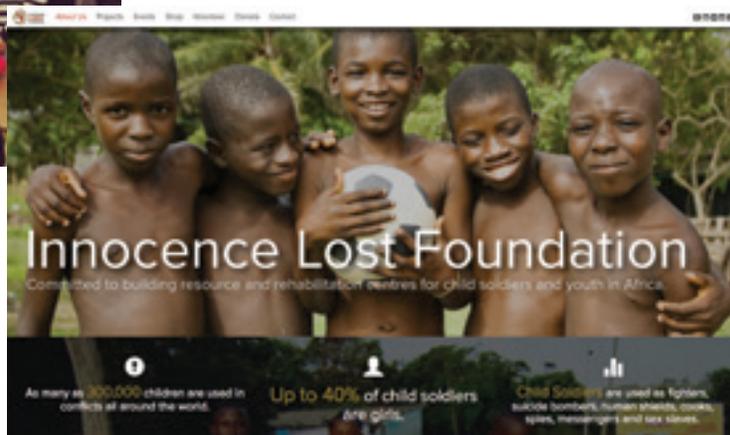
Innocence Lost Foundation is a registered Canadian charity for child soldier rehabilitation. Its mission is to build centres that provide education, skills training, and therapy programs for former child soldiers. Over the past two years, the charity's founders



have been speaking at schools around BC to educate youth and share their story. Fazineh Keita was a child soldier in the Sierra Leone civil war from the 1990s to the early 2000s, and was fortunate to immigrate to Canada in 2007. He found much of his healing through art therapy at film school, which included acting, writing, music, and body work programs. His partner Ava Vanderstarren is BC-born; they met while attending the same film school. Ava became "Miss British Columbia" in 2013, in a pageant based on self-esteem building and charity work. The idea for starting Innocence Lost Foundation emerged during that year, inspired by Fazineh's story and Ava's pageant platform.

Currently, Fazineh, Ava, their board members, and volunteers are fundraising to build their first project in Sierra Leone to give back

to Fazineh's home community. Their project will develop a 3.5-acre piece of land into a community centre for former child soldiers. The site includes a water well, solar panels for electricity, a medical clinic, a library, classrooms, and studio spaces. Activity programs will welcome former child soldiers who missed out on education during the war. "We want to provide opportunities for former child soldiers to further themselves and



their communities," says Ava. A big focus is on skills training programs, and art and sport therapy. "When someone discovers that a passion can provide income for themselves and their families, it can bring purpose, fulfillment, and healing."

Looking for a Guest Speaker?

Fazineh and Ava are available to speak at schools around BC to involve local youth in the process of leading positive change. Their inspiring presentation includes stories of Fazineh's past as a former child soldier in his country's civil war. Included is a PowerPoint presentation and talk about their goals and plans for the foundation and projects to bring healing to former child soldiers and war-

affected youth. Fazineh discusses the civil wars that took place in West Africa, and the history, geography, and culture of Sierra Leone. Together they share how they started the charity. Innocence Lost Foundation believes that with the help of educational institutes in Canada, the foundation will be able to accomplish great things for former child soldiers.

The founders of Innocence Lost Foundation encourage students to get involved, and have developed a talent show called Self Xpress for students and schools to put on as a fundraising tool. The show is student-driven and allows participants to express themselves through art, while sharing the themes of social justice, child soldiers, and art therapy with their school and community.

To book Innocence Lost Foundation to present at your school's next assembly, or to receive a copy of the Self Xpress Talent Show manual, please email info@innocencelostfoundation.com. To learn more and see project plans, please visit www.innocencelostfoundation.com.





BLACK FRIDAY

Why Less is More

by Heather Kelley, Surrey teacher and member of the Environmental Justice Action Group, Committee for Action on Social Justice



We have a problem: Collectively, we are gluttons. It could be argued that our primary identity is defined by what we have, buy, or own,

not by what we do, say, feel, or contribute. We are obsessed with material goods, urged on by events like Boxing Day or Black Friday. It is said that most goods are thrown away within six months of purchasing them. If everyone on the planet used as much as we do in North America, we would need between four and seven planets (depending on the source). Never mind that most of what we buy is produced by exploiting the natural world (pollution, greenhouse gases, clear-cutting trees) or people (modern slavery, unsafe working conditions, child labour). We ignore the externalized cost of what we buy, and we ignore the finite nature of our planet. We need to think about why we are collectively participating in this system. This way of life doesn't make us happier or improve the quality of our lives. The good news is that we can change this behavior and become role models for our students in the process.

Twelve Steps Toward Solutions

- **Recognize the difference between want and need.**
- **Change behavior:** Buy and use things with intention.
- Start or participate in collective ownership: Use tool libraries, car shares, and co-operatives.
- **Practice media literacy:** Develop an analysis of advertising and planned or perceived obsolescence. Turn off the TV more often.
- **Buy ethically:** Make sure companies aren't abusing people or the planet. Know what the actual cost of something is and be prepared to pay it.
- **Use your library:** Read for free!
- **BYO:** Bring your own water bottle, coffee cup, cloth bag, cutlery, etc.
- **Refuse:** Don't take things if you won't use them, even if they are free.
- **Reduce:** Buy less, and use what you buy.
- **Reuse:** Stop buying single-use items, and reuse what you have. Fix something if it is broken instead of buying a new one.
- **Repurpose:** Get creative!
- **Recycle:** Recycling is important, but doesn't change behavior; it simply alleviates guilt about buying stuff and gives us permission to buy more. Recycle as a last resort.

Made in BC Environmental Film Fest

by Heather Kelley, Environmental Justice Action Group,
Committee for Action on Social Justice

Climate change and environmental justice are finally starting to be on everyone's radar. Here are a few of the amazing local perspectives on climate change and environmentalism that have been made in or by folks from BC.



Revolution

This is one of my favourite films to show in my secondary school classroom. Revolution is a fantastic film that combines amazingly beautiful undersea film footage with scientific knowledge. It follows Rob Stewart, a marine biologist, as

he tries to figure out what is going wrong with his beloved oceans. Rob is from Vancouver and has a very Canadian perspective. The film makes connections between government policy, globalism, the tar sands, capitalism, and environmental action, and shows how individual people can make a huge difference. The website has lots of information and a teacher guide. Visit www.therevolutionmovie.com.



The Good Life—The Green Life

This was part of the Climate Justice Project that the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)

completed. It follows a few "normal" folks from around the Lower Mainland as they talk about how they live a good, green life. Great resources are available through the Climate Justice Project. Visit www.goodlifegreenlife.ca.



Fractured Land

This is my new favourite film. With local content and issues, it is completely relevant to every person living in BC.

It connects and explores liquid natural gas extraction, Aboriginal land rights, reconciliation, and climate change all through the lens of Caleb Behn, an Indigenous lawyer from northeast BC who is navigating these difficult intersections. Great resources are available on TeachBC. Watch the trailer here: www.fracturedland.com.

These last two are not local, but they are fantastic and worth watching.



The Clean Bin Project and Just Eat It: A food waste story

Both of these films are amazing. The Clean Bin Project follows Jen and Grant as they attempt to live with zero waste. Then in Just Eat It, we see if they can live on only food waste. Both explore

consumerism, our throw-away culture, and alternatives to these ways of life. Learn more about these films by visiting www.cleanbinmovie.com and www.foodwastemovie.com.



The Story of Stuff

This film is an oldie, but a goodie. It is still so pertinent, as we can't seriously address climate change without discussing and changing our collective consumerism.

Visit www.storyofstuff.org.



Before the Flood

This is a fantastic introductory film. It is a great place to learn about the basics of climate change, its causes, and what people are doing—or not doing—to mitigate its effects. Also, Leonardo DiCaprio is very charming and likeable in it. Watch the film here: www.beforetheflood.com.



2016–17 Committee for Action on Social Justice (CASJ)

- advises the BCTF on social justice issues
- reviews and promotes social justice workshops
- liaises with community groups and NGOs
- develops policy on emerging issues
- reviews and develops materials for classroom teachers
- develops and supports networks of social justice contacts in the following action group areas: Antiracism, Antipoverty, Status of Women, LGBTQ, Peace and Global Education, Environmental Justice
- co-ordinates the work of the six action groups.

Antiracism Action Group

Maryam Adrangi
Ryan Cho
Nassim Elbardouh
Sara McGarry

Workshops

- Bafa Bafa Rafa Rafa
- Incorporating Antiracist Education into BC's Revised Curriculum
- Antidiscrimination Response Training.

Status of Women Action Group

Carol Arnold
Laura Lafortune
Kristin Quigley
Sonja van der Putten

Workshops

- Assertive Communication
- Stamping Out Cyberbullying
- Youth Relationships in a Sexualized World.

Antipoverty Action Group

Leon D'Souza
Annie Ohana
Sue Spalding

Workshops

- Poverty as a Classroom Issue
- You Can Make a Difference to People Living in Poverty.

Environmental Justice Action Group

Sue Ghattas
Julie Johnston
Heather Kelley
Connie Moody

Workshops

- Teaching Green: Integrating Environmental Justice Issues across the Curriculum (five modules available: Climate Justice, Food Security, Sustainable Resource Use, Sustainable Transportation, Water Rights).

Peace and Global Education Action Group

Katherine O'Connor
Shanee Prasad
Deidre Torrence

Workshops

- Bringing Global Education into Your Classroom
- Creating Cultures of Peace
- Strategies for Discussing Controversial Issues

LGBTQ Action Group

Heather McDonald
Lizzie Midyette
Sean Moores
Nichelle Penney

Workshops

- Creating a Gender-Inclusive School Culture
- Reach Out, Speak Out on Homophobia and Transphobia
- Sexual Health Education Part One: One Size Fits All?
- Sexual Health Education Part Two: Sex, Sex, Sex!



Important SJ dates to celebrate

- April 12** International Day of Pink
- April 22** Earth Day
- May 12** World Fair Trade Day
- June 20** World Refugee Day
- June 21** National Aboriginal Day

Please note: The BCTF is not responsible for the content or links found on any external website. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author.



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Copy editing: Lynda Tierney
Design: Jennifer Sowerby

This newsletter is available online at
bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6352
Winter/Spring 2017, PS117-0021 

Watch your language!

Hah! That's so gay. lolllol 😊

I can't believe you just said that!!!

Why? What's wrong with it?

It's homophobic -- that's what. Gay is OKAY! 😊

That sweater is sooo welfare!

Hey my family had to go on welfare after my mom got hurt at work.

Sorry man, didn't mean anything bad by it.

Your mom is so psycho!

That's a mean thing to say. I don't like it.

Can't you take a joke?

That was unkind. Being hurtful to people is not funny to me.

You're overreacting and oversensitive!!

Maybe... All the same, I feel uncomfortable when you make comments like that. Let's talk about something else instead.

Hey baby what's up? 12:45 ✓

You know I'm not a baby, right? 12:47

No harm intended 12:47 ✓

Then respect me like an equal. 12:48