

MAP THE SYSTEM CANADA 2023

Identifying Colonial Influences in Systems



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Agenda

- What is colonialism?
 - Types of colonialism
 - Settler vs. Immigrant
 - Systems perspective
- Preparing for Map the System
- Q and A

What is Colonialism?

“Colonialism is defined as “control by one power over a dependent area or people.” In practice, colonialism is when one country violently invades and takes control of another country, claims the land as its own, and sends people – “settlers” – to live on that land.”

– Osman, 2020

Types of Colonialism

Settler Colonialism

Settlers from a foreign country or state move to and permanently reside on land already inhabited by Indigenous residents with the goal of replacing them with a settler society - usually with political, economic, and/or religious factors being prime motivators.

Examples: Canada, U.S.A, Australia

Exploitation Colonialism

Focuses on the exploitation of natural resources and the local population as cheap labour that benefits the mother nation economically. Includes the imposition of trade and commerce structure that support the movement of goods and resources.

Examples: India and SouthEast Asia where the Indigenous population was used as slave labour to cultivate cash crops such as tea and rubber.

Settler vs. Immigrant

“Settlers are not immigrants. Immigrants are beholden to the Indigenous laws and epistemologies of the lands they migrate to. Settlers become the law, supplanting Indigenous laws and epistemologies”

- Tuck and Yang (2012)

Systems Perspective

Think of colonialism as a structure and not as a static event.

Settler Colonialism is an ongoing structure of power that systematically erases Indigenous peoples from the land (through genocide, assimilation, and other means) and replaces them with settlers from around the world.

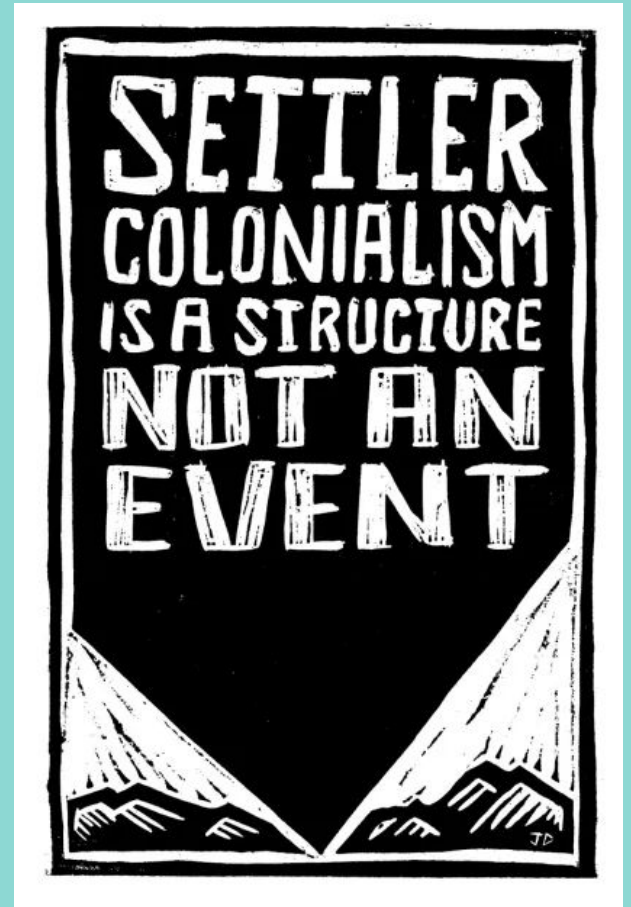
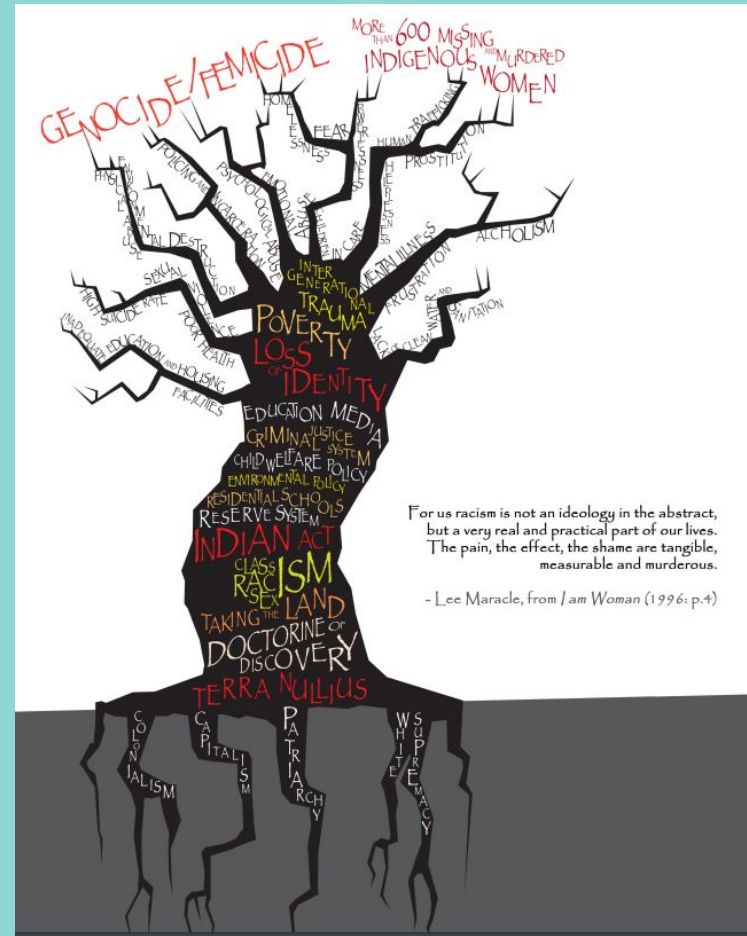


Image by: Jared Davidson

Colonialism Doesn't Stand Alone

“The dictates of patriarchy demand that beneath the Native male comes the Native female. The dictates of racism are that Native men are beneath white women and Native females are not fit to be referred to as women.”

– Lee Maracle



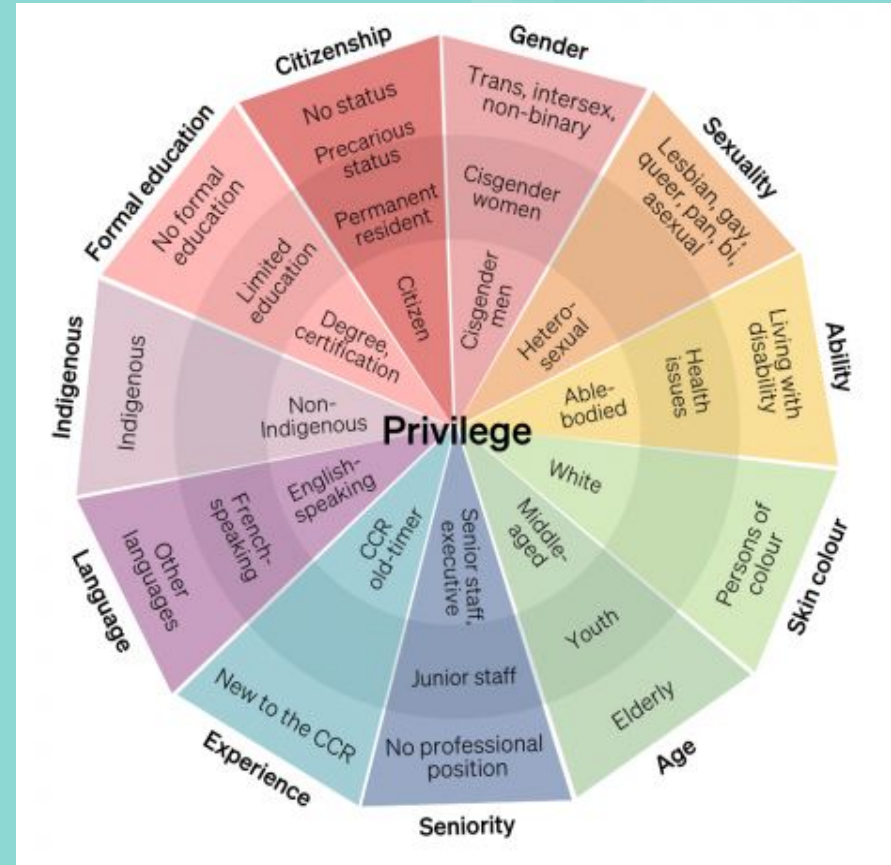
Preparing for Map the System



Situate Yourself In the Challenge

Ask, Why? It's always important to deeply question why we choose a particular topic. Does this research advance you or the community most impacted?

Acknowledge Your Social Location: Acknowledge your privilege and how that might impact your perception of the challenge. How do you benefit (or not) from the the current structure?

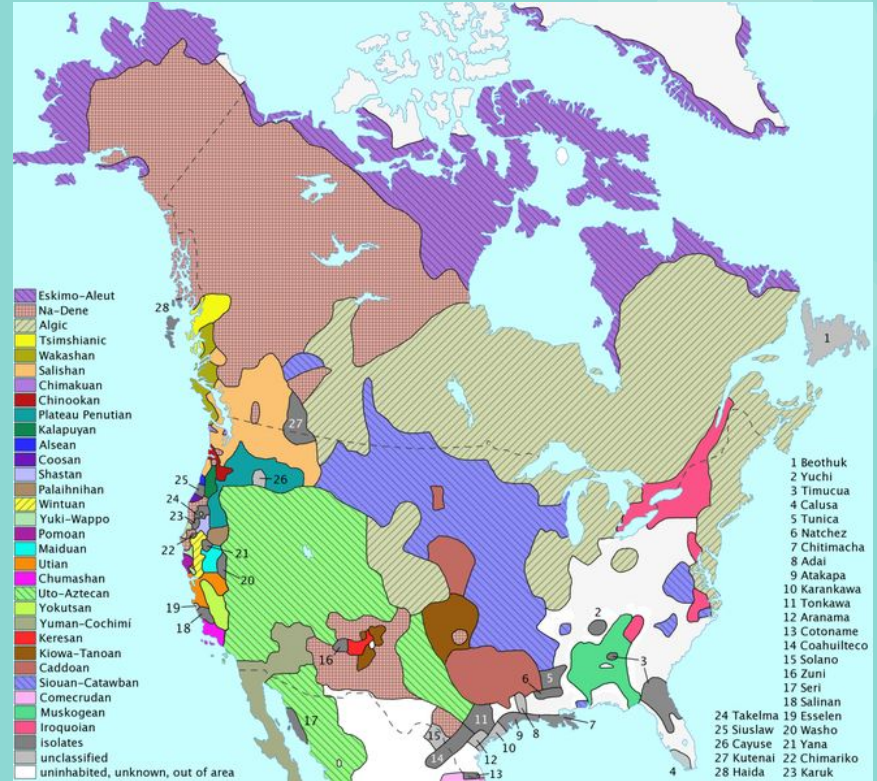


Indigenous History

Indigenous Peoples Existed Pre-Contact:

Indigenous societies had/have various structures and systems in place that derive from their own epistemologies and relations to territory.

Is the challenge you're looking at pre or post contact? Acknowledge what was in place pre-contact.



Root in People and Place

“It is also important to understand that we are operating and existing on Indigenous lands no matter where we are moving. With that comes a responsibility to honor and center the people’s knowledges from those lands. Otherwise, we are participating in settler colonial modes of existence and domination.”

- Luhui Whitebear

Context is Key

While there may be similar patterns of violence, ecocide and/or genocide, how it is experienced and understood through an Indigenous worldview will differ.

Avoid Pan-Indigenizing

Indigenous peoples are and continue to be diverse peoples, each with their own language, governance structures, creation stories, history and systems.

Terminology Matters

“..in academia, terminology can be used to exclude and disempower groups. Obviously, this is damaging to indigenous people who struggle to maintain their sovereign powers.”

- Luana Ross

Use Appropriate terms and language:

What is the language being used in community? Don't use phrases like Land Back, decolonization, indigenization and/or sovereignty without understanding what it means to Indigenous peoples.

Don't Sugarcoat It: Use language that accurately describes the events and experiences of those most impacted. Practice this truth by questioning the origins and impact of your words. Don't shy away from terms like; genocide and white supremacy.

Research Practices

“From the vantage point of the colonized, the term 'research' is inextricably linked to White European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, 'research,' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary.”

- Linda Tuhiwai Smith

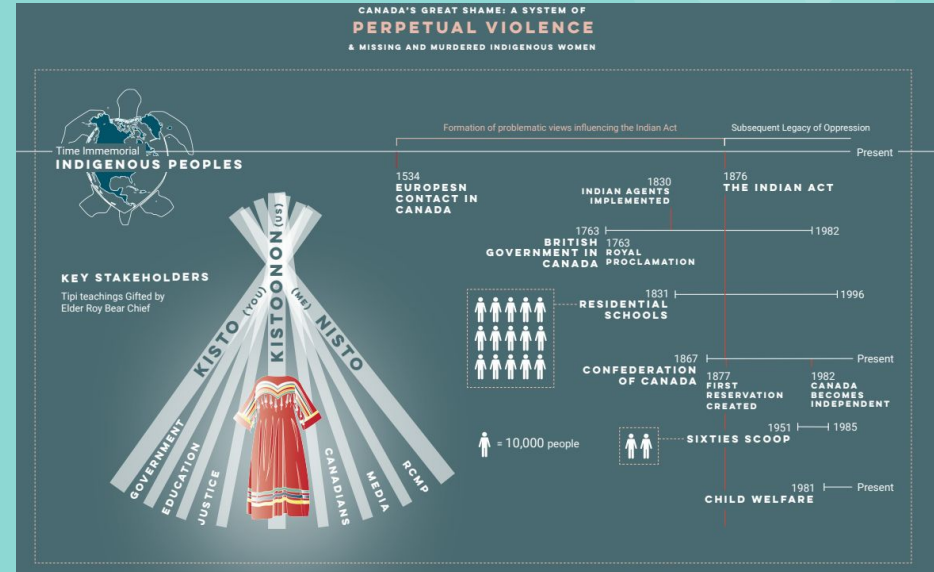
Be Critical: Look at what the research isn't telling you. Whose voices are missing? What is the lens and context in which the research is created?

Center marginalized voices, stories and perspectives: Ethical research practices are key here! Speak with or seek out stories of most impacted by the challenge at hand.

Fill in the Gaps

History Matters: Colonialism is a structure, not an event. Look at how the challenge has been experienced over time. True and accurate history is important when looking at colonialism and its continual impacts. What are the policies that allow for the continual extraction of land and/or labour from Indigenous peoples?

What has been removed? Look at what has been violently, quietly or strategically removed through colonization. What used to exist, that has been destroyed?



Thank and Acknowledge Indigenous & Marginalized Peoples

Community Action & Acts of Resistance:

Acknowledge community and grassroots action against colonial forces. These may not seem like 'conventional' approaches in systems change, but they are valuable and often serve deeper purposes such as asserting sovereignty or freedom.

Give Thanks and Recognition Where it's Due:

Indigenous and marginalized communities have withstood various forms of genocide and violence, while also contributing to the greater society, environment and global knowledge. Avoid patronizing Indigenous contributions.

“No matter how dominant a worldview is, there are always other ways of interpreting the world. Different ways of interpreting the world are manifest through different cultures, which are often in opposition to one another. One of the problems with colonialism is that it tries to maintain a singular social order by means of force and law, suppressing the diversity of human worldviews.”

- Dr. Leroy Little Bear, Kainai Nation

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