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The Centre for Dialogue is grateful for the assistance of its Executive Advisory Committee in planning this dialogue: Robert Daum, Steering Committee, Centre for Dialogue; Larry Grant, Musqueam Elder; and Diana Juricevic, JD, MA, Human Rights. We are also grateful to a range of community advisors that helped to provide feedback on the event concept and materials. All final outputs and decisions are the sole responsibility of SFU’s Centre for Dialogue.

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About Simon Fraser University’s Centre For Dialogue

Simon Fraser University’s Centre for Dialogue uses dialogue to generate non-partisan and constructive communication around difficult topics. We partner with government, business, and community groups to explore critical issues that impact the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of our communities.


The 2014 Blaney Award honoured recipient Chief Robert Joseph’s tireless work to renew relationships among Canada’s Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, built on a foundation of openness, dignity, understanding and hope. Chief Joseph is a Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation, Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada and the Indian Residential School Survivors Society, Member of the National Assembly of First Nations Elder Council, and Special Advisor to both Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Indian Residential School Resolutions Canada, among other distinctions.

As Co-Chair of British Columbia’s September 2013 National Truth and Reconciliation event and Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada, Chief Joseph led a historic effort to unite Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Events included a 70,000-person Walk for Reconciliation that brought Canada’s many cultures to walk a path together in a shared commitment to reconciliation.

About the Jack P. Blaney Award for Dialogue

The Jack P. Blaney Award for Dialogue is presented to an individual who has demonstrated, internationally, excellence in the use of dialogue to further the understanding of complex and profound public issues. Past recipients include Charter for Compassion founder Karen Armstrong, MacArthur “Genius” choreographer Liz Lerman, former United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights Mary Robinson and environmentalist Maurice Strong.
PURPOSE

This discussion guide was developed in support of the *Reconciling Injustices in a Pluralistic Canada* community dialogue and provides an ongoing reference about Canada’s response to historical and contemporary injustices. The guide introduces the intentions of reconciliation, explains why the topic of reconciling injustice is important to Canada, presents six selected case studies and outlines key concepts and questions for further discussion.

The views in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Simon Fraser University’s Centre for Dialogue or its advisors. They are provided to stimulate discussion and learning, and are not meant to be complete accounts of these challenging events in Canadian history. The discussion guide is published in the Creative Commons (CC BY-ND). It may be reproduced and distributed in its entire form so long as its contents are not modified and credit is attributed to Simon Fraser University’s Centre for Dialogue. Any works referring to this material should cite:


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INTRODUCTION

Reconciling Injustices in a Pluralistic Canada was a full-day dialogue taking place on January 23, 2014. The event drew upon the knowledge and experiences of affected communities to identify shared principles and approaches that can support the reconciliation of injustices in Canadian society.

Included in the dialogue were community leaders involved in the reconciliation of specific injustices, government officials, decision-makers from major institutions and members of the public. Participants worked together to define potential meanings for reconciliation, share approaches that might be of interest to affected communities and collectively identify solutions for common challenges that occur during reconciliation efforts.

The intended outcomes of the event were to support participants in their ongoing work on reconciliation initiatives, to increase public awareness of our shared Canadian history, and to create a body of knowledge for stakeholders to consider when working towards reconciliation.

Readers interested in the principles developed by participants at the Reconciling Injustices dialogue can find these in the Dialogue Report at: sfu.ca/dialogue/reconciling-injustices.

MARK L. WINSTON
ACADEMIC DIRECTOR AND FELLOW
SFU CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE
In November 2012, Chief Robert Joseph and Reconciliation Canada convened a group of Elders from Aboriginal and various ancient histories to explore the concept of reconciliation as it relates to Residential Schools and other injustices. The resulting Elders’ Statement provides a starting point for discussions about how Canadian society responds to injustice:

Our purpose is to speak some truths about the trauma of Indian Residential Schools and other atrocities that have been imposed upon humans around the world. As Canadians, we share a responsibility to look after each other and acknowledge the pain and suffering that our diverse societies have endured — a pain that has been handed down to the next generations. We need to right those wrongs, heal together, and create a new future that honours the unique gifts of our children and grandchildren.

How do we do this? Through sharing our personal stories, legends and traditional teachings, we found that we are interconnected through the same mind and spirit. Our traditional teachings speak to acts such as holding one another up, walking together, balance, healing, and unity. Our stories show how these teachings can heal their pain and restore dignity. We discovered that in all of our cultural traditions there are teachings about reconciliation, forgiveness, unity, healing and balance.

FULL STATEMENT: RECONCILIATIONCANADA.CA/EXPLORE/ELDERS-STATEMENT/
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Former Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau famously refused to apologize for past injustices, claiming that a nation can only strive to be just within its own time. In the decades that followed, the Government of Canada has departed from Trudeau’s position several times, starting with its precedent-setting 1988 redress settlement for the Internment of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War. Additional apologies followed years later with the 2006 apology for the Chinese Head Tax, the 2008 apology for Residential Schools and the 2008 apology for the turning away of the Komagata Maru.

The last four decades have included significant changes to how Canadians view the concept of pluralism. A commitment to equality is now embedded in Canada’s constitution through the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and Canadians have developed, with varying degrees of success, a growing body of experience in formally addressing past injustices. These experiences, both positive and negative, can act as useful reference points to inform how Canadians respond to injustice in the future.

Now nearing its 150th anniversary, Canada will continue to confront past mistakes and will almost certainly make new ones. From the continued social and material harm experienced by Aboriginal peoples due to Residential Schools and other colonial legacies, to the ongoing discrimination experienced by many Canadian communities, there are current and pressing situations where a principled approach to reconciliation could provide great value to Canadian society. The development of such principles will require a sustained conversation among communities affected by injustice, government, major institutions and the public at-large. The Reconciling Injustices in a Pluralistic Canada Discussion Guide and Dialogue Report are intended to contribute to this larger conversation.

Canadians have a growing body of experience in formally addressing past injustices.

Redress for past injustice is one possible form of reconciliation, as is the concept of ensuring justice for present and future generations. This latter concept is well-illustrated in the 1970s, when Canadian Minister of Immigration Ron Atkey specifically decided to admit refugees from the Vietnamese War because he did not wish to repeat the injustices of his historical counterpart, Frederick Blair, who was instrumental in blocking Jewish refugees from entering Canada to escape the Holocaust.
This section provides short case studies for six injustices that have occurred in Canadian society: Indian Residential Schools, the Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act, the Japanese Canadian Internment, the social and legal exclusion of LGBTQ Canadians, the Komagata Maru Incident, and the refusal of Jewish refugees from the Holocaust.

Each case study recounts the unique circumstances of the injustice in question, explores steps taken to work toward reconciliation, and outlines major unresolved issues. In most cases, the incidents discussed in these case studies are symptomatic of a wider form of discrimination experienced by the affected community.

The injustices used for these case studies were selected to help contextualize the Reconciling Injustices in a Pluralistic Canada dialogue, but are by no means a comprehensive list of all injustices that have occurred in Canadian society. We hope that the shared values and learnings collectively generated through this dialogue will be helpful for a wide range of injustices. At the same time, we recognize that there is no equivalency among many of the injustices discussed.

While shared principles can and should inform Canada’s efforts, every injustice has its own unique circumstances requiring unique approaches toward reconciliation.
The Indian Residential School system removed Aboriginal children from their families and isolated them from their cultures and languages with the goal to “kill the Indian in the child.” The Government of Canada enforced this human rights violation based on the belief that Aboriginal cultures were inferior, and Aboriginal peoples should be assimilated into the dominant culture. The Residential School system is only one injustice among many that have occurred to Aboriginal peoples through the colonization of Canada, but stands out for its severity and long-lasting effects.

Beginning in the 1870’s and until 1996, Canada had over 130 Residential Schools, built and operated as a joint initiative between the Federal Government and various religious organizations. An estimated 150,000 First Nations, Metis and Inuit children were removed, often forcefully, from their families and placed in Residential Schools across the country.

Many children experienced emotional, physical and sexual abuse while attending Residential School. In 1909, an official government report by Dr. Peter Bryce documented a mortality rate of 30–60% between 1894 and 1908 for students who attended Residential School for five years or more. There are an estimated 80,000 Residential School survivors living today, many of whom continue to experience personal and social impacts as well as intergenerational trauma for their children and grandchildren.

By 1994, the United Church of Canada, Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Anglican Church and Presbyterian Church had formally apologized to the Aboriginal peoples of Canada for their roles operating Residential Schools. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI provided an expression of regret on behalf of the Catholic Church. With the support of the Assembly of First Nations and Inuit organizations, many Survivors eventually initiated legal action against the Government of Canada and associated churches. In 2006, the government announced the approval of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the largest class-action settlement in Canadian history. This agreement included financial compensation.

The Agreement also formally established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) with a mandate to document the truth of what happened in the Residential School system and to provide healing for survivors and families. In 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered the first ever Statement of Apology to former students of Residential Schools. The TRC has since held national events across Canada and has documented the personal testimony of thousands of Residential School survivors.
Many Aboriginal organizations have worked in parallel with the TRC to create healing in their communities and renew relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

One such example is Reconciliation Canada and its Ambassador Chief Robert Joseph, a Gwawaenuk Elder. Reconciliation Canada's accomplishments include hosting a series of Reconciliation Dialogue Workshops held across various communities in British Columbia, organizing a 70,000-person Walk for Reconciliation in September 2013, and partnering with the City of Vancouver to create a Year of Reconciliation that may serve as a model for other Canadian municipalities.

Despite efforts towards reconciliation, many Aboriginal communities across Canada continue to experience the intergenerational impacts of Residential Schools, including high dropout rates, increased substance abuse, and high suicide rates. Upon his visit to Canada in fall 2013, James Anaya, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights, stated that Canada faces a crisis with regard to Indigenous people. Many Aboriginal groups also challenge the sincerity of the Government of Canada's intentions due to ongoing disagreements over treaty rights, Aboriginal title, and the Indian Act. Addressing these political conflicts and providing opportunities for learning and relationship building between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples remain two major outstanding issues in addressing the legacy of Residential Schools.
Significant Chinese immigration to Canada began in 1858 in response to the gold rush in British Columbia (BC), increasing dramatically in 1881 with the extension of the Canadian Pacific Railway into BC. When the railway was completed in 1885, BC coincidentally experienced an economic recession and high unemployment. Fear spread that the now unemployed Chinese workers would take jobs from the white labour force, and the BC government encouraged the Federal Government to halt further Chinese immigration.

The Government of Canada responded by implementing the Chinese Immigration Act / Exclusion Act, that required every Chinese worker or immigrant to pay a $50 head tax to enter Canada. In 1903, the tax was raised to $500, and in 1923, Canada passed a new Chinese Immigration Act that stopped Chinese immigration completely until the repeal of the act in 1947. As a result, many Chinese immigrants experienced long separations from their families, and some were never reunited. It wasn't until 1967 that Chinese immigrants were admitted under the same point system as immigrants from other nations.

Prime Ministers Brian Mulroney and Jean Chretien refused to provide an apology or redress to the Chinese-Canadian community, despite Mulroney’s 1988 redress agreement for the Internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War II. In 2000, the Chinese Canadian National Council, active since the early 1980’s, filed a class action lawsuit based on the Government of Canada’s earlier violation of international human rights. This lawsuit was dismissed by the courts because the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is not retroactive. The Chinese Canadian National Council continued to travel across Canada to raise awareness for the early contributions of Chinese workers and to highlight the injustices they faced, eventually registering over 4,000 head tax payers and families under the slogan to ‘recognize, redress and renew.’

In 2005, the National Congress of Chinese Canadians, a separate national umbrella organization for Chinese-Canadian institutions and communities, worked with Paul Martin’s Liberal government to negotiate a redress agreement, including a $2.5 million community foundation. The Chinese Canadian National Council objected to this settlement and argued for greater involvement of head tax payers and their descendants in the redress process, including an apology and individual financial restitutions to those directly impacted.
In response, redress for the Chinese Head Tax became a federal election issue in 2006. On June 22 of that year, Canada’s newly appointed Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, gave a formal apology to the estimated 80,000 Chinese head tax payers and families. Additionally, the approximately 20 surviving head tax payers and spouses of those deceased were able to claim a symbolic payment of $20,000.

While some from the Chinese-Canadian community accept Stephen Harper’s apology and redress agreement, others feel that descendants of head tax payers should receive financial compensation if the original payer was not alive to collect the limited payouts provided through the 2006 apology.

In October 2013, British Columbia’s Minister of International Trade, the Honorable Teresa Wat, announced a public consultation process to discuss the wording for an Apology for Historical Wrongs. Financial redress was explicitly not included within the terms of reference. These consultations followed the leaking of a confidential document in advance of the spring 2013 election listing an apology as a quick win strategy to attract voters. Some members of BC’s Chinese-Canadian community have participated in subsequent consultations, while others have critiqued the process and its intended outcomes.
Within days of the Japanese Government attacking Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, Canadian Pacific Railways fired most of its Japanese workers and the Canadian government seized Japanese fishing boats, forcing fishermen to stay in port. This persecution escalated on December 18, 1941 when Japanese Government forces attacked Hong Kong and imprisoned or killed many Canadian soldiers.

Canada’s senior military officials and the RCMP opposed action against Japanese-Canadians and believed this community posed no threat to the west coast of Canada. Still, a 100-mile wide strip on the west coast was designated a “restricted area” under the War Measures Act and all Japanese males between the ages of 18 and 45 were removed and sent to road camps in the interior of British Columbia. By March of 1942, all Japanese-Canadians were asked to leave the area and women and children were sent to live in holding facilities in livestock barns at Hastings Park.

In order to stay together, many families agreed to move to Alberta or Manitoba to fill labour shortages. In 1943, the confiscated property of interned Japanese-Canadians was sold to pay for their own internment, leaving most with little more than a suitcase of personal belongings. With the end of WWII, Japanese-Canadians were given a choice to move east of the Rockies or return to Japan to be repatriated. An estimated 4,000 Japanese-Canadians were exiled to Japan by 1946. It was not until April 1, 1949 that Japanese-Canadians were again allowed to freely move across Canada.
At the same time, Japanese-Americans were initiating a redress movement in the United States, prompting the NAJC and other groups to lobby for redress in Canada. By January 1984, the NAJC had developed a redress mandate asking the Government of Canada for an official acknowledgment of the injustice, compensation for the suffering of Japanese-Canadians, and legislation to prevent similar violations of human rights in the future. While Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau rejected the request for redress, Brian Mulroney and the opposition Progressive Conservatives promised compensation for Japanese-Canadians.

On September 22, 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney formally apologized in the House of Commons to all Japanese-Canadians for internment. Following the formal apology, Brian Mulroney and NAJC President Art Miki officially signed the redress agreement offering: $21,000 for each individual Japanese-Canadian who had been either expelled from the coast in 1942 or was alive in Canada before 1 April 1949 and remained alive at the time of the signing of the agreement; a community fund of $12 million to rebuild the infrastructure of the destroyed communities; pardons for those wrongfully convicted of disobeying orders under the War Measures Act; acknowledgement of Canadian citizenship for those wrongfully deported to Japan and their descendants; and matching funding.
of $12 million to create the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. Additionally, the War Measures Act was repealed in 1988.

British Columbia and the City of Vancouver played instrumental roles in the 1942 Japanese-Canadian internment and segregation that followed. On May 2012, the Government of British Columbia apologized to the Japanese-Canadian community. The City of Vancouver followed in September 2013 with a formal apology for its wartime motion requesting “the federal government to remove all residents of Japanese racial origin and enemy aliens to areas of Canada well-removed from the Pacific Coast.”
Lesbian, gay and bisexual people prefer partners of the same gender as themselves at least some of the time. “Transgender” (trans*) includes both transsexual people, whose genitalia do not match their innate sense of their own gender, and gender variant people, whose sense of their own gender is neither male, nor female. Some trans* people have medical treatment including hormones and surgery to bring their bodies into alignment with their gender identity. The term ‘queer’ is an umbrella term that includes lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people.

The Government of Canada did not decriminalize homosexuality until 1969, following then-Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau’s famous statement that “there’s no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation.” Homosexuality was still officially classified as a mental illness by the World Health Organization until 1990.

During the post-war years, extending into the 1970’s and 1980’s, lesbians and gay men experienced regular violence and police harassment. This prejudice is reflected in the government’s response to the 1980’s HIV/AIDS epidemic, when support for research and treatment remained low, in part because HIV/AIDS was considered to be a gay disease.

In 1995, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms should be interpreted as including sexual orientation. This allowed for further challenges to discriminatory legislation in areas such as retirement benefits, spousal support, same sex adoption, and the inclusion of sexual orientation in human rights legislation. The first Canadian same-sex marriages occurred in 2003 after successful litigation in the Ontario and British Columbia Courts of Appeal. The Government of Canada finally amended legislation in 2005 to recognize same-sex marriage across Canada.

State Can ’11 data indicates a 10% increase in sexual orientation-based hate crimes, despite a decrease in hate crimes based on race, ethnicity and religion.

Despite legal progress, the effects of trauma persist for many LGBTQ Canadians who have suffered emotional and physical violence. Statistics Canada 2011 data indicates a 10% increase in sexual orientation-based hate crimes, despite a decrease in hate crimes based on race, ethnicity and religion (these statistics do not include hate crimes against trans* Canadians). Unresolved legal issues for LGB Canadians include the right for men who have sex with men to...
donate blood, and the need for information about the LGBTQ communities in Canada to be included in all school curricula.

The legal struggles for trans* rights goes back only about 20 years in Canada. All trans* people are protected from discrimination in human rights legislation on the ground of ‘sex’ even if the applicable legislation does not include ‘gender identity’ as a ground of discrimination.

However, trans* people face ongoing discrimination because the “M” or “F” on their birth certificate does not match their gender identity, and may not match their gender presentation. Significant concerns have been expressed about the presence of gender markers on government-issued identification and policies that require people to report their gender, both of which result in systemic negative impacts on trans* Canadians.

Many trans* people do not feel safe participating in gendered sports or activities, or accessing public spaces such as washrooms and change rooms. These problems are so severe that in 2010, a Trans Pulse study indicated that an estimated 47% of trans* youth in Ontario had thought about suicide in the past year.

Despite progress in obtaining certain legal rights, the shift towards cultural acceptance of LGBTQ Canadians is still incomplete. Unlike many communities that collectively experience discrimination, and who support each other in the experience of discrimination, many LGBTQ Canadians face prejudice from their own peers and families if they disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity, leading many to remain closeted and without support networks.

RALLY PROTESTING VIOLENCE AGAINST GAYS AND LESBIANS, DEMANDING PROTECTION FROM THE POLICE AND COURTS. AUGUST 1979. PHOTO CREDIT: BC GAY AND LESBIAN ARCHIVES
The Komagata Maru Incident highlights early Canadian attitudes toward immigration, as best illustrated by British Columbia Premier Richard McBride’s 1912 statement: “British Columbia must be kept white...we have the right to say that our own kind and color shall enjoy the fruits of our labour.”

Canada’s Continuous Passage Act was created in 1908 in an effort to prevent immigration from India. The Act stated that immigrants must “come from the country of their birth, or citizenship, by a continuous journey and on through tickets purchased before leaving the country of their birth, or citizenship.” Additionally, if an Indian immigrant was able to make the continuous journey, he or she was required to have $200 on his or her person to enter British Columbia.

On May 23, 1914, the Komagata Maru arrived near Vancouver’s present-day Stanley Park carrying 376 hopeful passengers who had chartered the ship to sail from one port of the British Empire, Hong Kong, to another in Vancouver, Canada. Passengers, mostly from Punjab in British-occupied India, understood that their journey would directly challenge the Continuous Passage Act but asserted the right to free passage within the British Empire.

Upon the arrival of the Komagata Maru in Vancouver, the ship was met with hostility and resistance from Canadian authorities, who reiterated that the ship had not adhered to the Continuous Passage Act. Of the passengers, only 20 returning residents plus the ship’s doctor and his family were allowed to disembark. The Vancouver-based Khalsa Diwan Society and other members from Vancouver’s South Asian community provided relief to the remaining passengers by raising money for legal aid, provisions, and the cost of extending the boat’s charter. Two months passed while the ship stayed docked in Burrard Inlet until the BC Court of Appeal upheld the anti-Asian order-in-council.

Following a failed, forceful attempt to remove the ship from the Inlet, the Canadian Government instructed a navy cruiser to escort the Komagata Maru from the shores of BC. The passengers resisted until the government agreed to provide provisions. The ship left Vancouver on July 23, 1914. Upon the ship’s arrival in India, the Komagata Maru was...
met by British officials and a confrontation occurred, leaving twenty passengers dead with many more injured and incarcerated.

On May 23, 2008, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia passed a motion of apology for the passengers onboard the Komagata Maru who were denied entry into Canada. In August 3, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper officially apologized for the Komagata Maru Incident in front of a large crowd at Surrey’s Bear Creek Park. Members of a group representing certain descendants of the Komagata Maru passengers stormed the stage following the Prime Minister’s apology, stating that they would not accept the apology because it had not been given in the House of Commons, like those provided for the Japanese Canadian Internment, Chinese Head Tax and Indian Residential Schools.

Following Stephen Harper’s formal apology, Citizen and Immigration Canada provided funding for several community-based projects to commemorate the Komagata Maru as part of its Community Historical Recognition Program.

PHOTO CREDIT: LEONARD FRANK, VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS 6231
In BC, these included a museum and monument overseen by the Khalsa Diwan Society, a book published by the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society, and the Komagata Maru Journey website by Simon Fraser University.

The opportunity for further apology by BC’s provincial government was implied in a memo leaked prior to the spring 2013 election, which noted this as a potential quick win to engage Indo-Canadian voters. This memo has initiated further discussion both inside and outside the Indo-Canadian community about the nature of official apologies and the risks of politicization.

PHOTO CREDIT: LEONARD FRANK, VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS 6232
In the first half of the 20th century, Canada carefully regulated the immigration of Jews and other minorities. In 1933, Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany and antisemitic policies in Nazi Germany and Austria increased sharply. 1938 saw the destruction of Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues during the Nazi-organized Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass), a turning point for European Jews.

That same year, Canada’s Director of Immigration, Frederick Blair, began tightening immigration policies. These regulations would become known as the infamous “none is too many” immigration policy for Jews. In order to impose these antisemitic policies, Blair raised the amount of money that immigrants needed to possess to enter Canada from $5000 to $15,000, an unrealistic number for many Jews who fled from Europe without their possessions and without access to their savings.

In addition, knowing that Jews traditionally made their homes in urban centers, Blair imposed a regulation stating that all immigrants must prove that they were farmers. Antisemitism was common across Canada at this time, and many industries, including medicine, academia and law, wouldn’t hire Jews. Many Jewish-Canadians became self-employed business owners, and there was substantial intra-community employment (Jews hiring Jews) in the needle-trade, textiles, and factories.

In 1939, the M.S. St. Louis, carrying 937 passengers, mainly German-Jewish refugees, wasn’t permitted to enter Canadian waters due to the Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King’s rejection of their request for asylum, stating that this was not “Canada’s problem.” With that, the Jewish refugees returned to Europe where many perished in the Holocaust. By welcoming the Jewish refugees onboard the M.S. St. Louis, Canada could have made a strong statement against Hitler’s actions. Instead, Canada’s refusal confirmed the Nazi assumption that other countries did not care about Jews, and Canada became partially complicit in a genocide that would lead to the slaughter of six million Jews over the course of the Second World War.
Following Kristallnacht, Britain granted entry to an additional 5,000 German male refugees, joining the tens of thousands who had already found safety in Britain. These men, ranging from 18-45 years old, were freed from concentration camps with the promise to emigrate out of Germany. With the outbreak of WWII in 1939, Britain established tribunals to consider which refugees were considered a threat to national security. In 1940, Canada was called on as a colony of Britain to host roughly 2,300 Jewish refugees in internment camps in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick. These “high risk enemy aliens” were held for up to three years.

Between 1933 and 1939, the Canadian government accepted only 4,000 of the 800,000 Jewish refugees who escaped Nazi-controlled Europe. Given the post-War refugee crisis, Prime Minister King was forced to revisit Canada’s immigration laws. Between 1946 and 1952, Canada allowed large numbers of refugees or displaced people to settle in Canada. Future changes to Canada’s immigration laws came about in part because of the Holocaust, including the decision to accept refugees from the Vietnam War in the 1970’s.
The Jewish community in Canada has focused significant energy towards healing and memorialization efforts. In 2011, the Canadian Jewish Congress commissioned a memorial sculpture at Canada’s Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Halifax to recognize Canada’s decision in 1939 to turn away the Jewish refugees on the M.S. St. Louis. This project was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which also provided funding for a national education program.

The Jewish community also continues to highlight other communities’ injustices as well as its own. Examples include efforts to support Aboriginal communities working to overcome the legacy of Residential Schools, and exhibits to highlight the persecution of gay men during the Holocaust.

ST. LOUIS HAMBURG. PASSENGERS BOARD THE M.S ST. LOUIS IN HAMBURG HARBOUR. PHOTO CREDIT: UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM, #31701
DISCUSSION TOOLS
This section draws on the preceding case studies and other sources to describe a partial list of reconciliation processes and outcomes.

Reconciliation outcomes, ranging in intention from addressing the past to planning for the future. This list is neither exhaustive nor intended to suggest preference. Developed with assistance from Gary McCarron.
Partial list of methods commonly used during reconciliation efforts. Developed with assistance from Gary McCarron.
The following discussion questions reflect common themes identified during outreach and planning for the *Reconciling Injustices in a Pluralistic Canada* dialogue.

**What is Reconciliation?**

- What does reconciliation mean in an inter-generational context, when many years have passed since the end of an injustice?
- How should the life-changing impact on affected individuals and communities inform efforts towards reconciliation?
- Does reconciliation end with a policy change, apology or compensation? What, if any, ongoing issues might continue to exist?
- What makes a good apology and in what contexts can apologies be beneficial or harmful?
- What different processes exist to achieve reconciliation? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each in different contexts?

**Challenges and Solutions for Reconciliation**

- Many communities affected by officially sanctioned injustices have internal disagreements about what reconciliation means and how it should be achieved. What principles should inform how governments consult or negotiate with affected communities?
- Are there specific safeguards or principles that governments should follow to ensure that efforts towards reconciliation remain sincere and apolitical?
- Some Canadians express concern that official apologies create divisions rather than healing and could become limitless in number. What criteria should determine whether governments provide apologies or redress for specific injustices?
- What principles should communities affected by injustice consider when deciding what reconciliation means for their specific circumstances?
FURTHER READING

Indian Residential Schools
Truth and Reconciliation Commission
About Us
trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=4
Reconciliation Canada
History and Background
reconciliationcanada.ca/explore/history/
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Indian Residential Schools - Key Milestones
aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1332939430258/1332939552554
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Statement of Apology
aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649
Richard Wagamese
Indian Horse
Douglas & McIntyre

Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act
UBC
Chinese Canadian Stories:
Uncommon Histories from a Common Past
chineseindian.ubc.ca/
Chinese Canadian National Council
Head Tax Redress Campaign
ccnc.ca/sectionEntry.php?entryID=10&type=Advocacy
Library and Archives Canada
The Early Chinese Canadians 1858-1947
collectionscanada.gc.ca/chinese-canadians/021022-1400-e.html
Office of the Prime Minister of Canada
Address by the Prime Minister
on the Chinese Head Tax Redress
pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2006/06/22/address-prime-minister-chinese-head-tax-redress
Citizen and Immigration Canada
Chinese-Canadian Community Projects
cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/programs/chinese.asp
Embrace BC
Apology for Historical Wrongs
embracebc.ca/embracebc/community/apology_for_historical_wrongs.page?WT.svl=Centre
Japanese Canadian Internment

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
*Japanese Internment*
[cbc.ca/history/](http://cbc.ca/history/)

Canada Race Relations Foundation
*Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement*

Discover Nikkei
*Lessons from the Japanese Canadian Experience*
[discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2013/6/7/jc-experience-1/](http://discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2013/6/7/jc-experience-1/)

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
*Vancouver apologizes for 1942 Japanese internment motion*

Sedai: The Japanese Canadian Legacy Project
*The Redress and its Worldwide Impact*

National Association of Japanese Canadians
Website
[najc.ca](http://najc.ca)

Social & Legal Exclusion of LGBTQ Canadians

barbara findlay
Website
[http://www.barbarafindlay.com](http://www.barbarafindlay.com)

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust
Website
[http://egale.ca](http://egale.ca)

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
*Timeline: Same-Sex Rights in Canada*

Parliament of Canada
*Charter Equality Rights*
[http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/bp402-e.htm](http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/bp402-e.htm)

Canadian Heritage
*Sexual Orientation and Human Rights*

BC Teachers’ Federation
*A Chronology of Advances in LGBT Rights in Canada, and in BC*
### Komagata Maru Incident

Simon Fraser University  
*Komagata Maru: Continuing the Journey*  
komagatamarujourney.ca/incident

Dr. Hugh Johnston  
*The Komagata Maru Incident*  
sikhpioneers.org/komagata%20maru.htm

The History of Metropolitan Vancouver  
*Komagata Maru*  
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