

\$6.99 • ISSUE 151

TEACH




EDUCATION FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW



75 YEARS OF THE CANADIAN
CITIZENSHIP ACT

SPECIAL ISSUE

NOTES



Democracy appears to be under siege in many jurisdictions around the world, even within our neighbours to the south, the so-called bastion of the same. Sensibilities are heightened as we, a democratic society, grapple with what appears to be a never-ending pandemic that tests our collective mettle in so many ways. Even here in Canada, a relatively moderate nation overall, there is tension between those who will wear masks and receive vaccines and those who won't. As citizens, do we embrace these new mandates or rally against them?

It seems a fitting moment to herald the 75th anniversary of the Citizenship Act, a seminal piece of legislation that, even in 1947, was long overdue. At the time, the act was groundbreaking, if not flawed, although it has been amended on several occasions since. This commemorative year provides an opportunity to reinforce the notion that while citizenship does bestow rights upon individuals, it also demands a set of responsibilities in return. There is no free ride, in other words.

In this special issue, we are pleased to present you with a variety of perspectives on Canadian citizenship, and are extremely grateful for the support of the Canadian government in this endeavour.

An article written by Carolyn Cooper explores the democracy that evolved out of ancient Athens and how it compares to the democracy that functions today. In another piece, Carolyn Gruske examines how citizenship is often divided into “Big-C Citizenship” and “little-c citizenship”—or

civil and civic citizenship—and what roles these notions play in our society. Lynn Greiner looks at gender equality and citizenship, how women were not legally declared “persons” until the year 1929 and why it took decades afterwards for them to achieve the status we all expect today.

Teacher Nikita Griffioen informs us about the importance and relevance of Indigenous pedagogy and how this vital history is being incorporated into her school and classroom. Indigenous writer Kelly Boutsalis focuses on the Canadian citizenship test and its accompanying guide, exploring the information that is presented to newcomers as they travel the path to citizenship. Most importantly, Boutsalis draws attention to gaps in knowledge and sections that are out of date concerning the achievements of Indigenous peoples in this country.

Meagan Gillmore looks at what is being done to secure the vote for non-citizens: permanent residents who are often on the way to becoming citizens, and who are desperate to vote in municipal elections. What is preventing them from participating? And finally, the CURRICULA section examines the notion of respect as a vital aspect of citizenship and the requisite responsibilities that come along with it.

This issue of *TEACH* holds a mirror up to our collective face and encourages us all to ask the question: is our democracy trembling, or is Canada still on solid ground? Please read on and find out.

Until next time.

WILI LIBERMAN
PUBLISHER



CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 08** | **Éy Swáyel! Welcoming Indigenous Pedagogy as a Canadian Educator**
Nikita Griffioen
- 12** | **What is Citizenship?**
Carolyn Cooper
- 16** | **Engaged and Disenfranchised: The Quest to Give Voting Rights to Permanent Residents**
Meagan Gillmore
- 20** | **One Small Step: Women's Rights and the Citizenship Act**
Lynn Greiner
- 28** | **Civic or Civil? What Kind of Citizens are We?**
Carolyn Gruske
- 32** | **Is It Time to Update the Citizenship Test?**
Kelly Boutsalis

INFOGRAPHIC

- 04** | **75th Anniversary of the Canadian Citizenship Act**

CURRICULA

- 24** | **Canadian Citizenship: Respect**

AD INDEX 35

PUBLISHER AND EDITOR
Wili Liberman

MANAGING EDITOR
Lisa Tran

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Raenu Sarathy

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Kelsey McCallum

CONTRIBUTORS
Kelly Boutsalis
Carolyn Cooper
Meagan Gillmore
Lynn Greiner
Nikita Griffioen
Carolyn Gruske

ART DIRECTOR
Pauline Lopez

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Kate Orlova

JUNIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Amos Chin

TRANSLATOR
Tommy Guignard

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD
Bernice Slotnick
Teacher (Retired)

John Myers
*Curriculum Instructor,
OISE (Retired)*

Rose Dotten
*CEO and Head Librarian,
Shelburne Public Library*

TEACHMEDIA

Canada 

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT



Before 1947, there was no legal status for Canadian citizens—they were still considered British subjects.

On June 27, 1946, the Canadian Citizenship Act was passed. It came into force on January 1, 1947, under the government of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. It was the first law that defined Canadian citizenship as a legal status independent from that of British subjects, and was an important part of Canada's growing sense of identity.

The new Act outlined who was now considered Canadian, and how Canadian citizenship could be obtained or revoked.



Upon commencement of the Act, Canadian citizenship was automatically granted to the following individuals:

NATURAL-BORN CANADIANS

Any person who was born in Canada or on a Canadian ship before 1947.

Any child born outside Canada to a Canadian father before 1947, or whose father was a British subject with **Canadian domicile** (i.e. had lived in Canada for five years as a landed immigrant).

✳ For children born out of wedlock, these same requirements were considered of the mother, instead of the father

CANADIANS OTHER THAN NATURAL-BORN

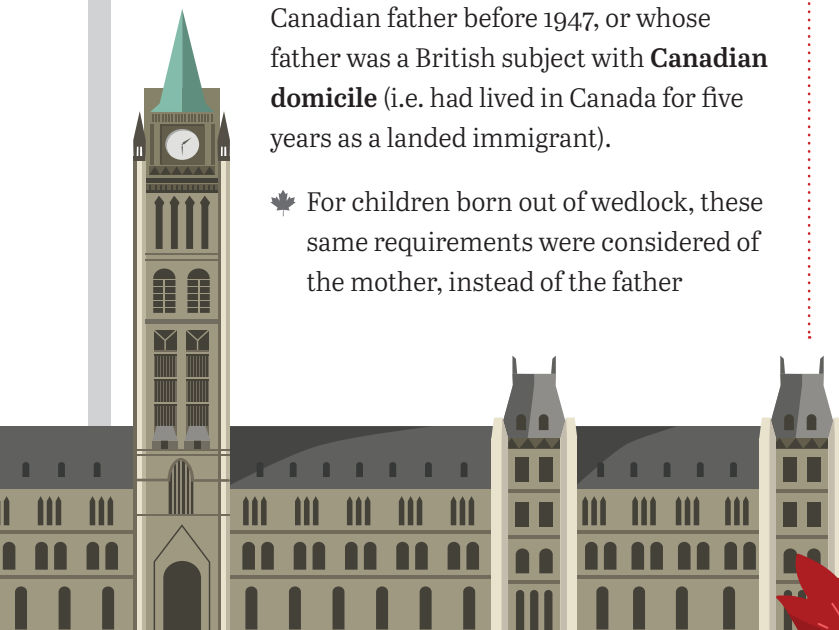
Any British subject who had acquired Canadian domicile before 1947.

Any person who was granted a certificate of naturalization and had not become an alien before the commencement of the Act.

Note: The Act had certain provisions that applied specifically to women born outside Canada. Immigrant women were only granted citizenship if they:

✳ Were married to a Canadian before 1947

✳ Were British subjects who had been granted permanent residence to Canada before 1947





After the Act came into force, Canadian citizenship could be acquired by:

- ✳️ Anyone born in Canada or on a Canadian ship
- ✳️ Children born outside of Canada to a Canadian father or, if the child was born out of wedlock, to a Canadian mother
- ✳️ Immigrants who had lived in Canada for five years, were of good character, able to speak either French or English, and had knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Canadian citizenship
 - The language requirement could be ignored if an immigrant had lived in Canada for over twenty years
- ✳️ Immigrants who had served in the Canadian armed forces during WWI or WWII and had lived in Canada for one year
- ✳️ Foreign women who married a Canadian and had lived in Canada with their husband for one year

Note: Anyone whose citizenship application was rejected could make another application after a period of two years.

Loss of citizenship could occur for individuals who:

- ✳️ Served with the army of a country at war with Canada
- ✳️ Chose to renounce their citizenship
- ✳️ Obtained citizenship in another country (dual citizenship was not recognized at the time)
- ✳️ In the case of children, those whose parents became citizens of another country
 - In these situations, once a minor turned 21, they had a year to file a declaration that they wished to retain their Canadian citizenship and renounce any other nationalities they might possess
- ✳️ In the case of women, those who became Canadian citizens through marriage would lose their citizenship if their husband ceased to be a Canadian citizen



The Governor in Council reserved the right to revoke citizenship from any person other than a natural-born Canadian who:

- ✳️ Engaged, traded, or communicated with an enemy country while Canada was at war
- ✳️ Obtained a fraudulent certificate of naturalization or of Canadian citizenship
- ✳️ Lived outside of Canada for more than six years
- ✳️ Was disloyal to the British Crown or convicted of treason in Canada



Many changes have been made to citizenship law since the original 1947 Canadian Citizenship Act. On **February 15, 1977**, it was replaced by the 1977 Citizenship Act which is still in force today. Notable differences between the old act and the new one included:

- ✳ Recognition of dual citizenship
- ✳ Acquisition of citizenship from either a Canadian father or mother, for children born abroad
- ✳ Fewer provisions on how citizenship could be lost
- ✳ Removal of the distinction between “British subjects” and “aliens.” British subjects no longer received special treatment; now all immigrants who sought to become citizens were made equal



The Citizenship Act was amended in **2009** to address the issue of “lost Canadians”—those who were never granted Canadian citizenship due to various interpretations of Canada’s nationality law.



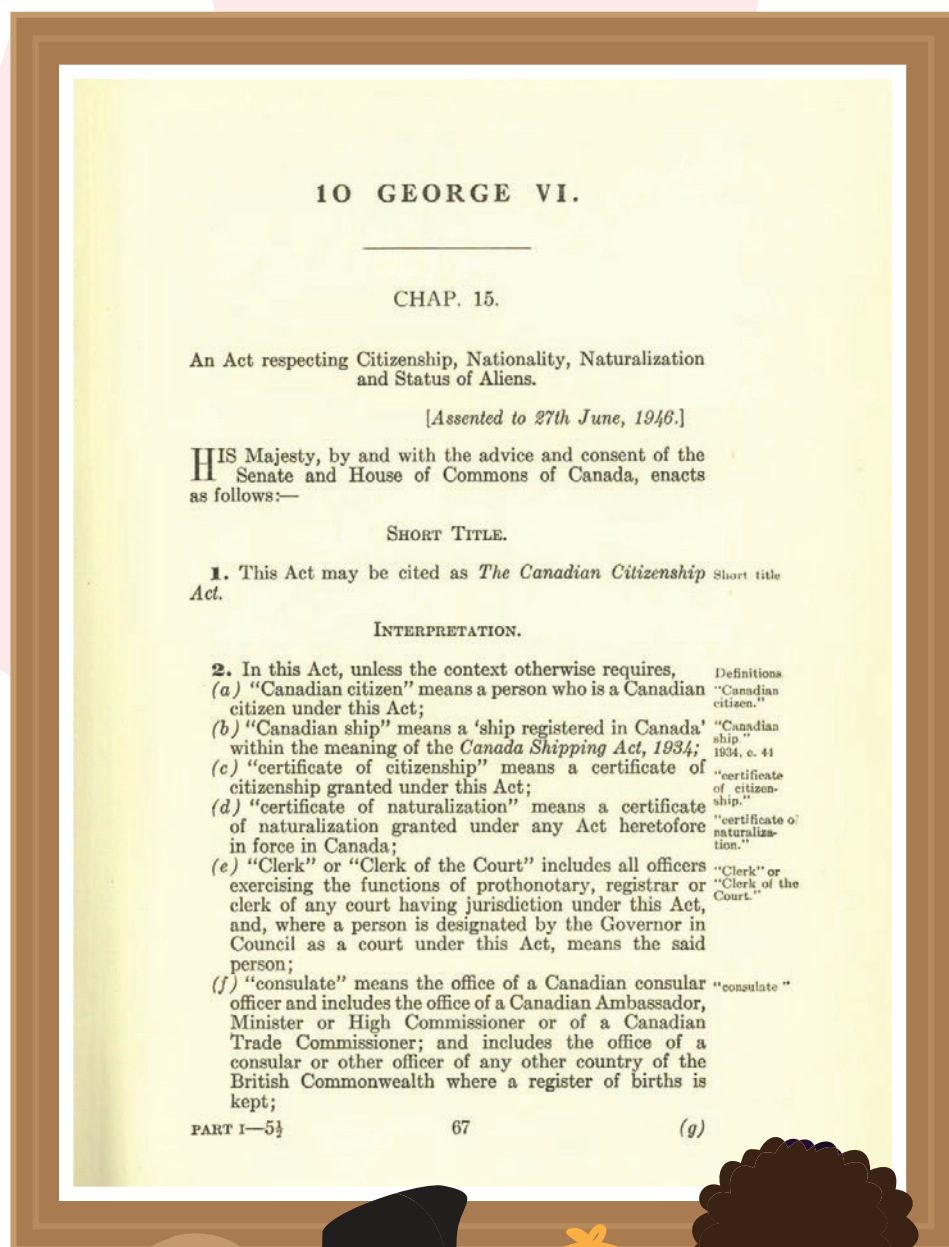
In **2014** the Act was revised again, in an effort by the Conservative government at the time to address issues of terrorism. These changes made it more difficult to obtain Canadian citizenship by increasing the residence requirement for applicants and expanding the reasons why citizenship could be revoked.



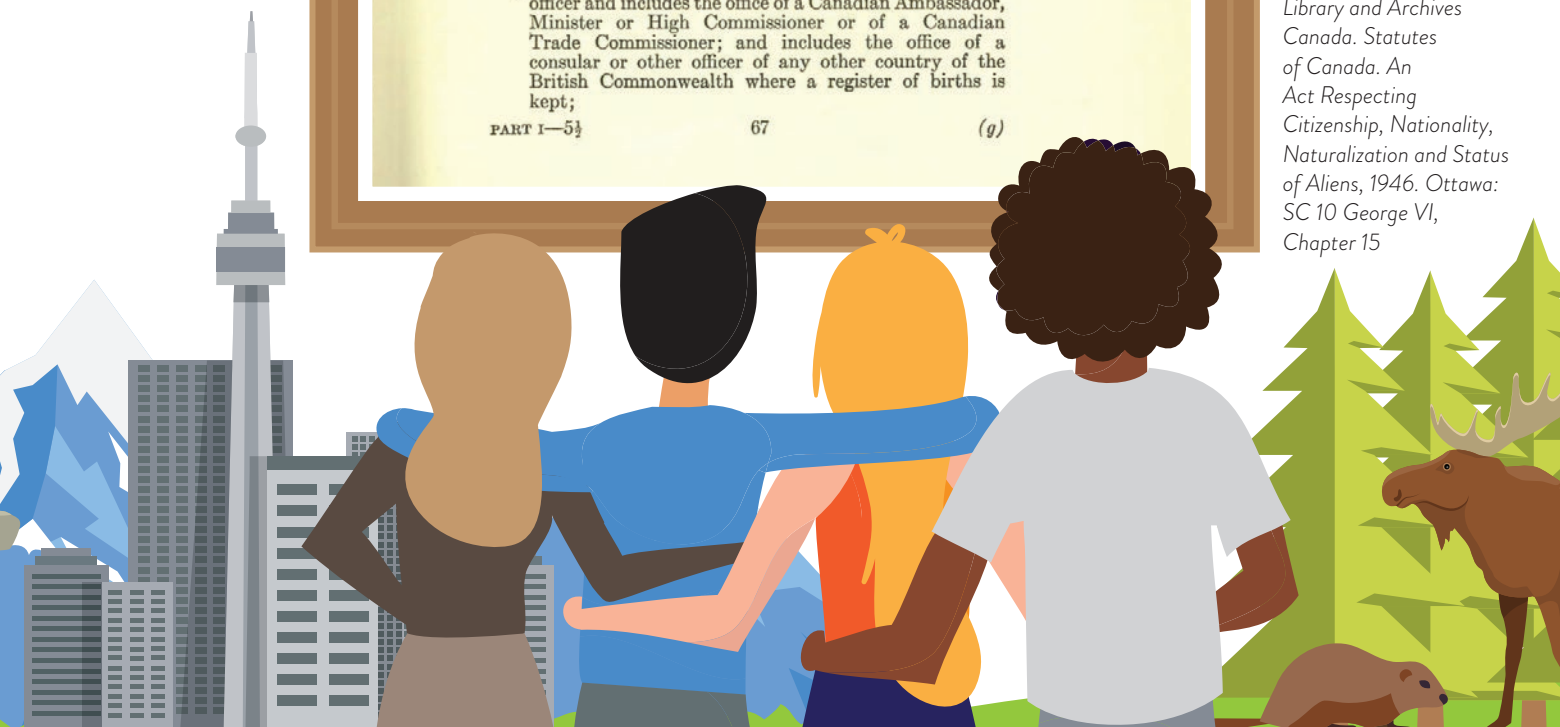
Then in **2017**, as a result of the Liberal victory two years prior, Parliament passed legislation to repeal many of the changes introduced in 2014.



This is the first page of the original Canadian Citizenship Act.
The full document can be found [here](#).



Library and Archives
Canada. Statutes
of Canada. An
Act Respecting
Citizenship, Nationality,
Naturalization and Status
of Aliens, 1946. Ottawa:
SC 10 George VI,
Chapter 15



Éy Swáyel!


Welcoming Indigenous Pedagogy as a Canadian Educator

By Nikita Griffioen

What does it mean to be Canadian? For me, that question has several different answers.

In a personal sense, my identity as a citizen of Canada is tied to my love and appreciation of nature. I'm lucky to live in British Columbia, where the mountains, desert, forest, and ocean are both my home and my playground. The indescribable beauty of living here cannot be explained so much as it must be experienced. From scaling the Stawamus Chief on a weekend, to taking a dip in the Salish Sea, or avoiding rattlesnakes in Nk'Mip desert on a hot August day, the province's beauty is unparalleled (even our licence plates proclaim it—"Beautiful British Columbia" can be seen on every car).





With the privilege of living and teaching in a place such as this, however, comes an important responsibility, one that speaks to another part of my identity as a Canadian: educating students about Indigenous history and working towards reconciliation with the Peoples who have resided on this land since time immemorial. As an educator in Canada, whose homeland has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples long before me, I have the opportunity and responsibility to teach this history to my students.

Together these two parts of my identity, personal and professional, define what being Canadian means to me.

RED AND ORANGE

Last year, on May 5th, the Indigenous Leadership team at the secondary school where I work organized a demonstration to commemorate [Red Dress Day](#). They put great effort into taping 4,000 cut-outs of red dresses to every door, wall, and window of the school's airy rotunda. I had donned red that morning myself, to raise awareness for the more than 4,000 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Though such a staggering number of women and girls have gone missing, their families have not received closure or answers regarding their whereabouts or perpetrators. I, along with many of my colleagues, wore red not to pay homage to the red on Canada's flag, but rather to demonstrate solidarity in our desire to bring justice to these cases.

Not even a month later, the unmarked graves of 215 Indigenous children were found at a former residential school in Kamloops, with more graves being found at other schools afterwards (and still—such findings are ongoing). These residential schools were Canada-wide, a government and church-driven initiative that stole Indigenous children from their families and forced them into boarding schools where they were stripped of their language and culture, and subjected to physical and emotional abuse.

The last residential school did not close until 1996, and the trauma these schools caused is still prevalent in Indigenous communities, as younger generations struggle with the horrors that their parents and grandparents experienced. Canadians wear orange to honor them—the deceased, and those living today.

Though these facts are shocking, they are not unique. Time and time again, stories of injustice, prejudice, and racism towards Canada's Indigenous peoples are brought to the surface. Many of those injustices are still happening to this day. In light of this, we must ask ourselves: how do we work towards true, healing, and authentic reconciliation? I believe it begins with education.

RECONCILIATION THROUGH EDUCATION

The school where I work has a wonderful and innovative Aboriginal Education Program. This program houses teenagers with Indigenous backgrounds, giving them access to additional support, counselling services, cultural exploration, and adults to advocate for their well-being (both academic and personal). Students and educators who are part of the program also work to educate the rest of the staff and school regarding Indigenous knowledge. Sometimes Indigenous students can be seen dancing in the rotunda in traditional dress, drawing everyone into their culture with beautiful and thoughtful movements. These dances are often organized by the students themselves; with the support of the Aboriginal Education Program, they feel empowered to share their culture in various ways. Staff and students can watch these dances and be introduced to some elements of Indigenous tradition.

However, programs like this do not exist in every school. There are both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who attend school knowing nothing of the history of injustice towards First Peoples in Canada. Without knowledge of this oppression (both in the past and what is occurring today), steps towards reconciliation cannot be taken.

This is why it's important for me, as both a Canadian citizen and as an educator, to teach with reconciliation in mind. This can be a daunting task, especially as a



white teacher; respect is needed for Indigenous protocols and history. But instead of letting the immensity of this undertaking lead us educators into apathy, we must learn how to teach with an Indigenized curriculum.

This does not mean simply inserting Indigenous facts into our lessons. Rather, curriculum can be taught with Indigenous pedagogy in mind, gently welcoming students into Indigenous knowledge and practices without risk of tokenism.

It's important to differentiate between knowledge and appropriation—forcibly incorporating Indigenous ideas or methods into lessons, without understanding the significance behind them, is appropriation.

How can we begin to reach this understanding? Educating ourselves about Indigenous history and the Indigenous land we are on is a great place to start.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN THE CLASSROOM

Students must first be taught about the history of Indigenous peoples and the injustices done against them, including residential schools. This knowledge fits neatly into a social studies curriculum but can also be worked into others: English classes can read short stories, novels, or essays from Indigenous perspectives; science and math classes can take a look at case studies regarding areas or statistics where these things transpired.

After getting students familiar with the facts and truths of Indigenous history and events, Indigenous pedagogy can be implemented into the classroom, regardless of subject matter. Several ways to do this include having students move their desks aside and put their chairs in a circle, omitting any “head” position and meeting one another on an equal level, or having a class discussion reach a consensus, with all students listening carefully to each other, reiterating the importance of respectful debate and encouraging empathy. In doing so, an educator is embracing Indigenous ways of teaching.

I utilize these methods in my own classroom and talk with the students about why I choose to do so. As these practices are inclusive, gentle, and fit well with any curriculum, they are well-received by students. By encouraging active listening, compromise, and not allowing myself to take a “head” position, this also helps to create a sense of community in my classroom, and feelings of comfort between the students.

Learning simple phrases in the Indigenous language of your area can be another effective way to include Indigenous content. For example, on the unceded shared territories of the Stó:lō people, Sema:th and Matheqwi First Nations, the phrase “Éy Swáyel” with hands raised is an appropriate and friendly form of greeting.

Inviting Indigenous Elders to speak with students, if possible, is also a wonderful idea. In doing so, it is important to follow proper protocol. Each Indigenous land area differs in terms of protocol, so it is vital to familiarize yourself with what to do. For example, it can be appropriate to present the Elder with a gift of sweetgrass or tobacco (depending on where you're located) when asking them to come into the classroom to share their knowledge. After they speak to the class, another offering is presented to them. Another gift to give an Elder would be the inquisitive minds of the students. Having the class prepare questions beforehand and creating an open dialogue during the Elder's visit demonstrates respect and interest for the knowledge being presented.

ASK QUESTIONS, ASK FOR HELP

The most important thing for educators to do is identify their own biases and gaps of knowledge. This can start by asking ourselves questions such as: How has my mindset been colonized? Where do I see underrepresentation in my lessons or curriculum? What are the areas I do not feel confident in addressing? There is a difference between going to the Indigenous department at your school to ask for an assignment to hand out, and actively working to identify your own biased mindsets and to remedy them with self-education and reflection.

Do not be afraid to ask for help; Indigenous departments will have useful resources for educators wishing to broaden their own knowledge. The more Indigenous knowledge we

have, the less room there is for bias, and the more readily we will be able to create welcoming and inclusive lessons.

As we embrace and educate ourselves regarding Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy, we need to acknowledge that this takes time and genuine effort. As formidable or unfamiliar as the task could be, there is authentic worth in working hard at this to ensure we are fostering healthy mindsets towards Indigenous ways of being in our students.

I acknowledge that I am still on my own learning journey when it comes to incorporating Indigenous practices and knowledge into my teaching. As a non-Indigenous person and educator, I believe it is important to make sure that all students feel safe and welcome in my class. I also believe it is crucial that they be introduced to Indigenous knowledge. In order to accomplish this, I need

to continue identifying my own biases and areas where I lack knowledge.

I know there is no way that I can fully understand the tolls residential schools have taken on Indigenous peoples, but I can acknowledge and educate myself about that portion of Canada's history, and do my part as a responsible Canadian citizen by working towards reconciliation in my own teaching practices.

NIKITA GRIFFIOEN currently teaches in Abbotsford, British Columbia. When she's not in class, you can find her traveling, snowboarding, surfing, reading, or making art.





TEACHMEDIA

THE GREAT CANADIAN BOOK PROJECT

TEACH is excited to launch a new video series in collaboration with **Canadian School Libraries!** These videos showcase Canadian titles as valuable teaching tools to help engage students.




teachmag.com/great-canadian-books



What is Citizenship?

By Carolyn Cooper

What it means to be a citizen has changed dramatically since the concept first appeared in ancient Greece.

Ask several people what it means to be a citizen, and you'll likely hear a variety of answers. At its simplest, most people are citizens of the town or city they live in, with the same social, cultural, and civil rights and legal protections offered all residents of Canada (regardless of status) under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

National citizenship grants certain civic rights that make it more valuable than residency, such as the ability to vote in elections and run for political office. Because of this, the Canadian government places restrictions around who has official citizenship status, who can apply for it, and how citizenship is effected through the naturalization process. Becoming a citizen is often an aspirational goal for newcomers to Canada, and immigrants are encouraged to apply for citizenship so they may fully participate in Canadian society.

That would have been a strange concept to citizens of ancient Athens—one of the 1,000-plus city-states, or “poleis,” spread across what we now call Greece during the fifth century BCE—where the idea of democratic decision-making and official citizenship first appeared. Citizens participated directly in running the polis. It was never considered a status that could be transferred to newcomers, and instead was used to restrict the economic, legal, and political power of non-citizens.

LIFE IN THE POLIS

Fifth century BCE was a tumultuous time in the Greek world, marked by wars, political uprisings, and shifting demographics. Literature, science, philosophy, and political ideas were rapidly changing society, especially in Athens, the largest polis. Athens' rulers had always defined who “belonged” in the city, although the definition became more limited over time. At its core was a belief in autochthony—that Athenians were born from the earth as direct descendants of Erichthonius, the first king of Attica and Athens. That meant foreign-born residents of the polis would never be considered true Athenians.

Athens, at its height, was an incredibly multicultural place, and people flocked to it as merchants, craftsmen, teachers, and philosophers. “But they could never become citizens,” says Victoria Wohl, professor and chair of Classics

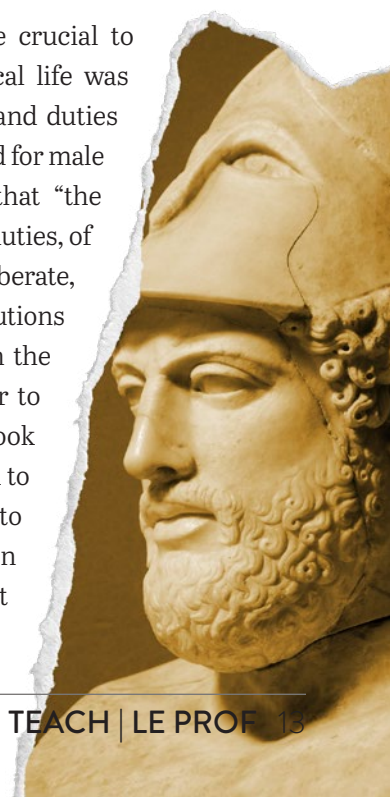
at the University of Toronto. “These are the ‘metics,’ the resident aliens, and often they lived generations in Athens.” Slaves captured during wars were also a significant portion of Athens' population, and together with metics comprised roughly 75 percent of the city during this time.

As Athens grew to between 250,000 and 300,000 people, the right for a person to call themselves an Athenian citizen became increasingly coveted. “The most definitive legal definition came in 451 BCE, under the regime of the statesman Pericles, who tightened up the requirements for citizenship,” Wohl explains. “He defined citizenship as the natural-born child of two Athenian parents. Before that citizenship was much more open—you had to have an Athenian father, but your mother could be foreign born.”

Wohl says that following the Persian Wars, Athens began to rebuild its fleet, mercantile power, and imperial ambitions. “One theory is that citizenship is closely tied to empire, both because there is more wealth to be distributed—and now it matters who is going to get a share in that wealth—but also because an empire entails new people coming in and lots of engagement with non-Athenians,” she continues. “So, defining the barriers between who is an Athenian and who is not becomes more important. In fact, at least twice toward the end of the fifth century, there were reviews of the citizen rolls in each political district of Athens, and people were kicked out.”

THE RIGHTS OF ATHENIANS

While metics and slaves were crucial to the Athenian economy, political life was restricted to citizens. “Rights and duties went really closely hand-in-hand for male citizens,” says Wohl, adding that “the primary rights, and in fact the duties, of a citizen were to judge and deliberate, so to serve in the political institutions of the democracy and speak in the assembly on issues that matter to the city.” Debates and voting took place in public assemblies open to all male citizens, who drew lots to fill political offices and serve on juries to deliberate trials without a judge.





“Our conception of democracy in ancient Athens is that it was much more direct and participatory,” explains Keith Cherry, post-doctoral fellow at the University of Alberta. “The idea of being a citizen was that you were directly involved in the governing of your polis, and in the decisions that affected you. So it was not a representative democracy, it was a system based around being directly involved in decision-making yourself.”

Male citizens were expected to serve in the military, but so were metics, who were unable to contribute to political or economic decisions affecting Athens. “So, you can imagine the frustration of these wealthy metics who are contributing to the city, paying taxes, serving in the military, and yet could never rise in the political arena,” says Wohl.

Although Athenian women didn’t have traditional citizenship rights like Athenian men, they still had other rights that distinguished or elevated them in the eyes of the law from non-Athenian women. Wohl says, “... they didn’t have political rights, they couldn’t represent themselves in court, or represent themselves in economic dealings. [But] women [still] had a kind of citizenship status... it was manifested very differently.”

Wohl explains that female citizens instead had the right to participate in religious functions on behalf of the city in ways that non-Athenian women couldn’t. “That was an important right, and ideologically very central to the Athenians, because maintaining a good relationship with the gods was central to the prosperity of the city,” she says. “That meant, for example, participating in parades for the goddess Athena, and public sacrifices for the gods and goddesses. Those political rituals were vital to keeping the city healthy.”

To not exercise your rights and duties as a citizen was more than frowned upon. “An Athenian citizen who didn’t exercise his rights was considered less than a full human being,” says Wohl. “And in fact, the Athenian word for a private person who doesn’t participate in politics is *idiōtēs*, which is where we get the word idiot. And it could always be used against you by your enemies.”

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

The 1947 Canadian Citizenship Act sought to create a new national identity for Canadians, while attempting to define the parameters of citizenship during a time of mass immigration to the country. Although the Act has gone through many changes, it still outlines who can obtain citizenship and how, as well as the rights and duties of citizens.

Individuals born in Canada have citizenship, as do foreign-born children of Canadian citizens. Immigrants can retain official citizenship status of another country while applying to become a permanent resident of Canada, and then a naturalized Canadian citizen. That involves being able to speak English or French to a certain proficiency, meeting residency requirements, and passing a citizenship test that highlights Canadian history, ideals, and institutions.

Only citizens can vote in elections, hold high-level security jobs, and apply for a Canadian passport. At the same time, all residents have certain duties to the state, including obeying the laws and paying taxes, while citizens have the added duty of sitting on juries when called.

CITIZENS AND THE STATE

Concepts of citizenship status, including the idea that it can be granted, changed with the rise of the modern democratic state. Today, mechanisms of the state—the government ministries, the legislature, and the courts—are staffed by paid professionals who we trust to oversee day-to-day decision-making on our behalf.

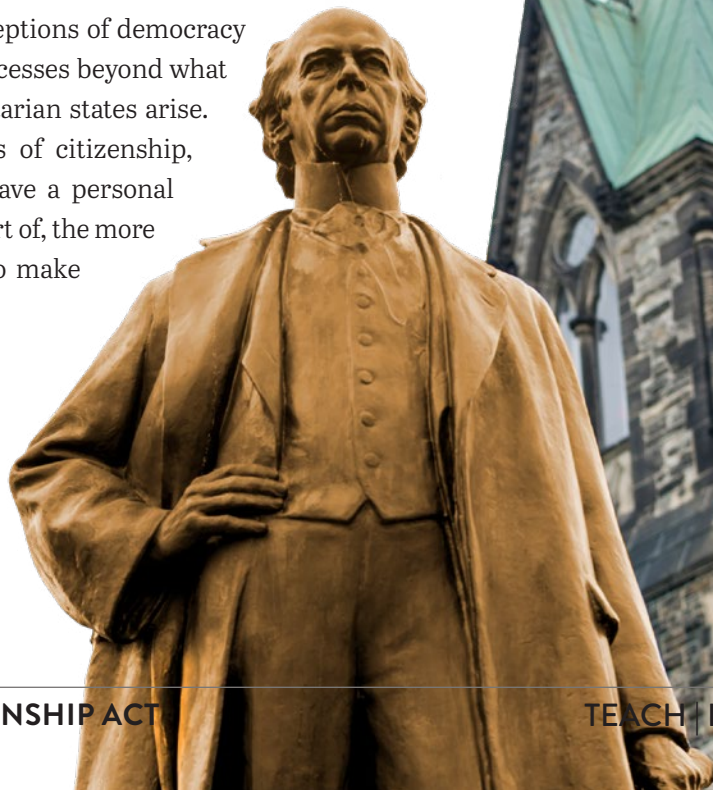
Issues of national concern are debated between politicians and in the media, with little citizen input until elections are held (although social media has already shown its power to sway public opinion). We also rely on the state to protect us by maintaining law and order, as well as to provide healthcare, public infrastructure, education, community services, and much more.

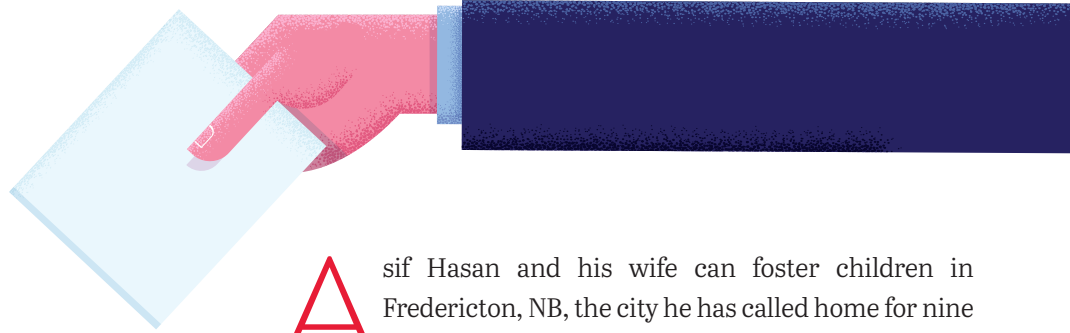
“With the advent of the modern bureaucratic state and the capitalist economy, we started developing representative institutions rather than participatory democratic institutions. And so citizenship started to transform,” says Cherry. “Today it’s not about actively making decisions anymore—it’s about the right to choose the people who make your decisions for you. So citizenship, in the political sense at least, appears mostly in our ability to vote for who those people should be, which is really quite a profound shift in how we think about politics in our society and the role of the ordinary person in it. It really affects the character of our democracies, and the character of citizenship—it becomes a much less intimate part of our lives. It’s something we have to think about every few years when we go to the polls, but it’s not a daily fixture of existence the way it would have been in Athens,” Cherry continues.

Civil duties that are not necessarily political, but which Cherry says add texture to our political community, have also become more removed for many citizens. “These are all the things that we do to pull our society together that don’t depend on the state, like attending protests and engaging in direct action, but part of the transition towards a thinner, less substantive vision of citizenship has been the de-emphasizing of those social aspects, of the obligations we have to actually be directly involved in our society.”

Cherry adds that the thinner our conceptions of democracy get, the easier it is to hollow out those processes beyond what we’ve consented to, which is how authoritarian states arise. “Thus, the more robust our conceptions of citizenship, the more people understand that they have a personal responsibility for the society that they’re part of, the more difficult potential authoritarians find it to make those moves without opposition.”

CAROLYN COOPER is a freelance writer and editor living in Kawartha Lakes, Ontario.





Engaged and Disenfranchised: The Quest to Give Voting Rights to Permanent Residents

By Meagan Gillmore



Asif Hasan and his wife can foster children in Fredericton, NB, the city he has called home for nine years. But he can't help decide who will form the municipal government.

Hasan came to Canada from Bangladesh as an international student at the University of New Brunswick and acquired permanent resident status after he finished school. Living in Canada has been a dream for him, he shares.

"I always admired that this is a land for liberty, to practice freedom," Hasan says. So when he found out he couldn't vote in municipal elections he was shocked. "It just didn't make sense to me that my voice is muted," he remembers.

PROVINCIAL REGULATION

As a small business owner and entrepreneur, Hasan has helped several people find work in the community. Not only does he pay taxes, but he's actively helping the city's economy grow. He decided to begin a local campaign to give permanent residents in Fredericton the chance to vote. It grew into a provincial initiative, the Lost Votes Campaign New Brunswick. The group estimates that there are 29,500 permanent residents in the province who are unable to vote because they're not citizens.

The campaign is getting noticed. In December 2020, a bill was introduced in New Brunswick's legislature to change the province's municipal voting law to give permanent residents the right to vote in municipal elections. "We have a political will," Hasan says.

That is rare. The discussion about making permanent residents eligible to vote in local elections has happened in a number of municipalities across the country. While many city councils have approved motions supporting the change, those actions aren't enough to expand the number of eligible voters. In Canada, provincial and territorial governments determine who can vote in municipal elections, and they all currently have laws restricting that right to Canadian citizens. So far, no provincial or territorial government has agreed to allow non-citizen residents to cast ballots for their municipal representatives.

“All the best issues require a few kicks at the can to get through a provincial government,” says Joe Mihevc, a former Toronto city councillor who brought forward a motion in 2013 about giving permanent residents the right to vote in municipal elections. While it passed, the Ontario government rejected the idea a few years later when considering changes to the province’s Municipal Elections Act. “Sooner or later, one of [these motions] will break across Canada,” Mihevc affirms.

Several countries around the world allow permanent residents to vote in local elections, although some require these individuals to have lived in the country for a specific amount of time. Citizens of European Union countries can also vote in municipal elections of other European Union nations.

“Canada is quite unique in how intensely provinces regulate the municipalities,” says Chris Erl, a doctoral student in the department of geography at McGill University in Montreal, a city that in 2021, discussed allowing permanent residents to vote in municipal elections. “The city is the creature of the province.”

RESIDENCY VS. CITIZENSHIP

However, there are specific features of municipal government that make it the obvious place for a discussion about expanding voter rights to non-citizens, explains Erl.

“It’s the level of government that most people will interact with on a day-to-day basis whether or not they know they’re interacting with it,” he says, noting that decisions about emergency services, policy, transit, and waste collection are all made at the municipal level. Permanent residents help fund these services through their property taxes, just like citizens do, but they can’t vote to elect the people who will manage those services. “It’s one [level of government] that non-citizens will be actively paying into but have absolutely no say in what happens.”

While municipal politics are concerned with very specific geographic areas, voters often can live elsewhere. In some jurisdictions, local voting is open to citizens who own property in the municipality—even if the owners live somewhere else.

“You can live outside of Canada and retain your Canadian citizenship,” says Alejandra Bravo,

director of leadership and training at the Broadbent Institute in Toronto. Years ago, Bravo worked on a campaign to study the prospect of permanent residents voting in Toronto. She also ran in two municipal elections.

On the contrary, she adds, “the evolution of the municipal franchise has always been around recognizing the relationship of a person to a piece of land.”

“Because it’s already tied to residency and not citizenship, it seems like one of the places where you can make that shift,” says Keith Cherry, a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Alberta’s faculty of law. Cherry supports non-citizens gaining the ability to vote in municipal elections. In his view, everyone who is affected by a political decision should have some input into the decisions that are made.

“It’s hard for me to see a danger in allowing more people to vote,” he says. “I tend to think everybody should be able to vote on any decision that affects them. The only legitimate reason someone should not be allowed to vote is to say, ‘You are not affected by this decision.’”

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

But even countries that allow permanent residents to vote in local elections typically don’t allow them to vote in regional elections for provincial or state governments, or for national elections. (Chile, Ecuador, and Uruguay do, but only if potential electors meet an additional set of criteria.)

“The idea that to vote you should be a citizen is deeply engrained, even in countries where the right to vote has been extended at the local level,” says Willem Maas, a professor of political science at York University in Toronto. “That’s why it hasn’t been extended at the national level. In order to vote for your city council, it’s fine if you’re a permanent resident. But for our national polity we really want you to prove that you’re a member of this polity by acquiring citizenship and acquiring Canadian citizenship.”

Canada’s voting policy can’t be determined by what other nations do, explains Andrew Griffith, who has written several books about citizenship and multiculturalism and is a former government employee.

“I think it’s a false comparison,” Griffith says of arguments that Canada should expand voting rights for local elections because other nations have done so.



“We obviously should look at what other jurisdictions and other countries do—it’s perfectly valid to ask these questions. [But] we shouldn’t do it just because the others do it. We have to look at what makes sense in our particular context.”

When compared to other countries, Canada has a very high rate of immigrants who become citizens. In 2016, the last year for which census data is available, 86.2% of immigrants to Canada had become Canadian citizens. “It probably makes more sense to focus on getting citizenship so they have full voting rights,” says Griffith.

What this percentage fails to take into account, however, is how long ago those citizens immigrated to Canada. Data indicates that the citizenship rate is actually declining among recent immigrants. A November 2019 [report](#) from Statistics Canada says that in 2016, only 43% of immigrants who had been in Canada for five years were citizens, compared to 68.1% in 1996.

Decreases are also noticeable among immigrants with lower incomes. In 1996, 65.8% of immigrants whose annual household income was \$10,000 or less had become Canadian citizens. This was almost equal to the 66.2% of immigrants in the highest bracket with yearly incomes of over \$100,000 who had naturalized. By 2016, the gap was considerable. Of those immigrants in that same lowest income bracket, only 51.5% had become citizens while 66.7% of those in the highest bracket had.

NEWCOMERS TO CANADA

Individuals who work with immigrants say these disparities are reasons to ensure permanent residents can vote at local elections as soon as possible. New immigrants, especially those with lower incomes, often use a lot of municipal services, and local politicians need to know how they can better serve them.

“The sooner that newcomers become engaged in the voting process, then the more likely they are to keep voting,” says Jennifer Watts, a former city councillor in Halifax Regional Municipality and the chief executive officer of the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia.

“It’s a wonderful way to say to newcomers who just arrived in our province: ‘We want you to stay here. We know that you pay taxes, you volunteer, you create jobs, you work in your communities—you’re good neighbours.

We think that all of those things are really beneficial for you being able to make decisions around municipal issues,’” says Watts.

This is particularly important in the Atlantic provinces where immigrants often leave the area for more populated regions of Canada. Sebastian Salazar-Chavez, community and social planner for the city of Fredericton, explains that there is no guarantee that allowing permanent residents to vote in municipal elections will be enough on its own to reverse the trend of people leaving the area.

“It would be a small thing,” says Salazar-Chavez, who moved to Canada from Peru more than a decade ago and became a Canadian citizen in 2013 after working for years as a city planner for Fredericton. “But having anything else that would help retain people is always a good thing. You want as many reasons for people to stay.”

Community engagement is very important to new immigrants, shares Tara Bedard, executive director of the Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership, an organization that works with immigrants in Ontario’s Waterloo Region. In June 2021, Waterloo City Council passed a motion asking the Ontario government to allow permanent residents to vote in local elections. Bedard has often heard new citizens talk about how excited they are to vote.

“Many people who have been permanent residents in Canada and become citizens have not had the ability to vote in any elections for a very long time,” she says. “It is something that people feel they have been missing. It is something that they are looking forward to, and it is something that they are intent on exercising as a right at the moment when they’re able to.”

In Fredericton, Asif Hasan “absolutely” plans on becoming a Canadian citizen. “I’m definitely blessed to be in Canada,” he says. “I know that Canada truly wants to make everybody feel that they belong here, but we [still] have a lot to figure out.”

MEAGAN GILLMORE is a freelance journalist in Toronto, ON.





SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

GET A 1-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION FOR ONLY \$12.99*

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION INCLUDES: 2 PRINT EDITIONS + 6 DIGITAL EDITIONS

SHOP.TEACHMAG.COM



*PRICE IN USD

One Small Step: Women's Rights and the Citizenship Act

By Lynn Greiner

The issue of gender equality in Canada isn't new. Women have been fighting for their rights since well before Canada was a country. Although total equality still hasn't been achieved, legislators have been dragged, often kicking and screaming, closer towards equal rights for well over a century. The seemingly simple matter of citizenship is a prime example of this struggle.

The Citizenship Act that came into effect on January 1, 1947, was a good news/bad news piece of legislation for Canadian women. Before that date, there was no legal status for any "Canadian citizen" (Canadians were, legally, British subjects), no matter their gender, but women who lived in Canada still had fewer rights at the time than men.

To get a sense of how much the 1947 Act affected women, we need to take a look at what they were—or more correctly, were not—before and after it was passed.

WOMEN AS "PERSONS"

To begin with, a woman was not legally considered a "person" until 1929. Since they were not persons, women were not allowed to vote, sit on juries, or become legislators, coroners, magistrates, or judges.

Married women could not sign legal agreements, own property, or keep their own wages; in fact, they



had no status in civil law, and did not even have custodial rights over their children. The double standard we still fight today remained alive and well. In the case of divorce, for example, a man just had to prove adultery, whereas women had to prove adultery as well as desertion without reason, extreme cruelty, incest, or bigamy. Marital rape was unknown, not because it never happened but because it was not against the law. A woman was her husband's property.

Things first began to change when provincial governments in Ontario (in 1884) and Manitoba (1900) passed the Married Women's Property Act, giving women in their jurisdictions some of the same legal rights as men. The Act allowed women to enter into legal agreements and buy property. Other provinces and territories slowly followed suit, with Quebec the last to sign in 1964.

These rights, however, did not yet include all those of a "person." Governments were still using the male-only "persons" argument to exclude women from positions of power in areas such as politics and the justice system, because those positions were only open to "qualified persons." Then in 1927, five women took a big step towards equality for women in Canada. These women—Henrietta Muir Edwards, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Emily Murphy, and Irene Parlby, later known as the [Famous Five](#)—asked to have the Supreme Court of Canada decide whether the "persons" defined in the [Constitution Act](#) (originally known as the British North America Act) of 1867, that created Canada, included women.

The Supreme Court ruled that women were not "persons," but the Famous Five refused to give up and took their appeal to the British Privy Council. In 1929, the Privy Council reversed the Supreme Court's decision, deciding that the word "person" was not clear, and that if the British North America Act had meant to exclude women, it should have clearly said so. When announcing the decision, Lord Sankey, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain said, "The exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours. And to those who would ask why the word 'person' should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?"

The next year, with women now considered "persons" under the law, the first woman was appointed to the Senate.

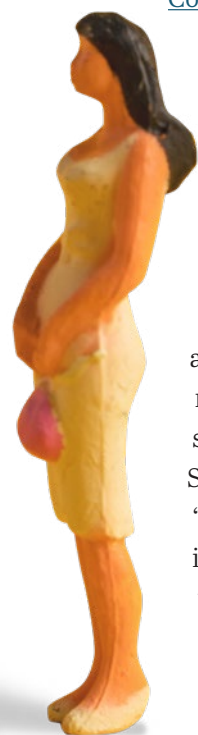
CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION PRE-1947

Despite these advances, a woman's position was not secure. She could lose or gain British citizenship simply by marrying, "thanks" to Britain's Nationalization Act of 1870. The Act declared that alien women acquired the status of a British subject after marrying British men, and that British women lost it upon marrying aliens, even if they never left the U.K. It also prevented women from applying for naturalization on their own.

Canada's 1881 [Naturalization Act](#), rather than creating a status of citizenship for Canadians that separated them from Britain, said that persons under its jurisdiction were simply British subjects living in Canada. Like the British 1870 legislation, Canada's Naturalization Act tied married women's citizenship to that of their husbands. Only natural-born widows who had been made alien by marriage could apply to have their British citizenship restored. Wives and children of newly-nationalized men also automatically became British subjects. And, of course, the rules often only applied to white women.

Women didn't fare much better when Britain enacted the [British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act](#) in 1914. It created an empire-wide standard of British subjecthood and continued to tie a woman's nationality to that of her husband, although it contained the provision that she would now lose her British citizenship only if she acquired a new nationality through her marriage. It also allowed women whose husbands acquired a new nationality during the marriage to make a declaration that they wished to remain British subjects. The 1914 Act permitted individual nations within the British Empire to enact their own legislation with their own restrictions as well.

Canada was the first country to do so with its [Naturalization Act of 1914](#). The new law's stipulations around marriage, however, combined with the U.S. Cable Act of 1922 (that did not automatically grant American citizenship to alien wives of its citizens), made Canadian women who married U.S. citizens, stateless. This wasn't fixed until 1930, with the signing of the League of Nations [Convention on Certain Questions Relating to the Conflict of Nationality Laws](#).



Immigrant women in Canada were not treated well by the 1914 Naturalization Act, either. It identified “married women, minors, lunatics, and idiots” as persons with disabilities who were ineligible to receive certificates of naturalization. As with previous Acts, the status of married women and children continued to be tied to the male head of the family.

Decades of squabbling followed, with governments creating contradictory rules for various political reasons. There were even some women’s groups that lobbied against naturalization through marriage for immigrant women, while at the same time supporting bills that championed the right to personal naturalization. These groups argued that non-English speaking immigrant women who became Canadians through marriage lacked the knowledge to practice good citizenship.

THE INDIAN ACT

These gender regulations were mirrored in the Indian Act of 1867, explains feminist historian Dr. Veronica Strong-Boag. First Nations women lost their Indian status, as did their children, if they married a man without status. Yet a Status Indian male marrying a non-status woman retained his status, and his wife and children would actually gain status rights.

The Indian Act also denied women the right to possess marital property or to participate in band governance. In 1884, it was amended to allow men to leave property to their wives in their wills, although an Indian agent would have to assert that the wife was of “good moral character” before she could inherit. But it wasn’t until 1951 that women could vote in band elections, and it took until 1985 for the Act to be changed to restore status to women who had lost it through marriage, along with their children.

Canada’s 1947 Citizenship Act did not mention any of its First Nations people, thus denying them citizenship. This was amended in 1956, granting citizenship retroactive to January 1, 1947.

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT OF 1947

After World War II, Canada’s Secretary of State Paul Martin Sr. (father of the 21st Prime Minister of Canada, Paul Martin Jr.) introduced the bill that became the [Canadian Citizenship Act](#), saying, “For the national unity

of Canada and for the future and greatness of this country it is felt to be of utmost importance that all of us, new Canadians or old, have a consciousness of a common purpose and common interests as Canadians; that all of us are able to say with pride and say with meaning: ‘I am a Canadian citizen.’” The bill was enacted on June 27, 1946, and came into effect on January 1, 1947.

The Act made Canada the second Commonwealth country, after the Irish Free State, to create its own citizenship while still supporting its British heritage.

It treated married women as independent of their husbands; they would not lose their citizenship if they married a foreign national or if their husband ceased to be a Canadian citizen, unless they had received their citizenship as a result of that marriage. Dual citizenship was not permitted—if a Canadian became a citizen of another country, their Canadian citizenship was revoked (this changed with the Citizenship Act of 1977).

The 1947 Act, however, did not address the issue of women who had lost their nationality by marrying aliens before the Act was passed. Many of these women were ones who had married foreign soldiers during World War II; although native-born, they now had to apply for Canadian citizenship. A major outcry ensued, as women protested the absurdity and hardships they went through to recover their nationality. This situation was finally resolved by an amendment to the Act in 1950.

Women born outside Canada were not granted citizenship by the Act, unless they were British subjects who had been issued permanent residency or they had married a natural-born Canadian.

The Act still restricted parental rights as well. It defined the “responsible parent” of a child, for citizenship purposes, as the father—unless the father was dead, the mother had been awarded custody by the court, or the child had been born out of wedlock.

Later citizenship legislation in 1977, 2007, 2009, and 2014 in part remedied some of these issues around gender equality. [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) cites a few examples:

- The Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947 was replaced with a new Citizenship Act on February 15, 1977, which is still in force today. Under the 1977 Act, a person’s gender or marital status no longer

has any effect on their ability to pass citizenship on to any of their children born abroad. Canadian citizenship can come from either parent, regardless of that parent's marital status.

- To address the issue of those born abroad before February 14, 1977, who were not citizens, the 1977 Act contained a remedial provision. It allowed for citizenship to be granted to children born between January 1, 1947, and February 14, 1977, in wedlock to a Canadian mother. In 2004, the grant provision was further extended to children born between 1947 and 1977 to a Canadian father out of wedlock. The provision expired in August 2004.
- Further changes to the Act in 2009 resolved many inequalities related to prior legislation, giving citizenship to people who had previously not been citizens. For example, these changes ensured that a person born outside Canada to a Canadian parent after January 1, 1947, is a citizen from birth, regardless of the marital status or gender of the parent. (Note that these changes specifically addressed cases where the person was born in the first generation outside Canada.) Those born abroad in the first generation who did not apply for the remedial grant automatically became Canadian citizens under the changes to the Act in 2009.
- As of 2019, applicants now have the option of choosing "X" as a gender identifier in all citizenship-related

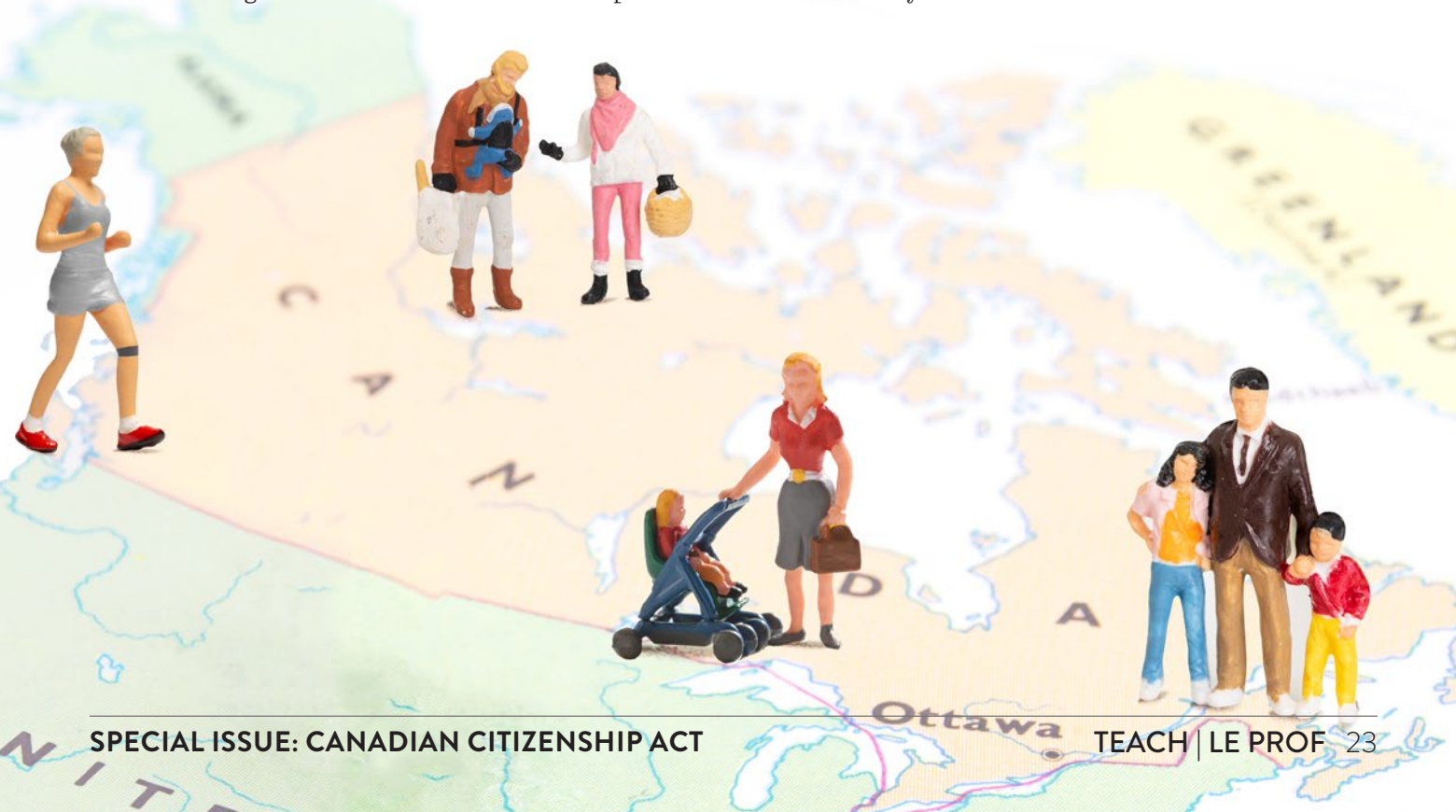
application forms where sex/gender information is requested, to ensure non-binary gender inclusivity of newcomers and all Canadians.

- A 2020 change in the interpretation of "parent" under the Citizenship Act allows non-biological Canadian parents who are their child's legal parent at birth to pass down Canadian citizenship to any of their children who are born abroad in the first generation. This helps Canadian parents who have relied on assisted methods of human reproduction to start a family, including members of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada also says that, "The Department continuously seeks to offer equal access to citizenship and continues to conduct research on the impact that gender and diversity (among a suite of other factors) can have on barriers to citizenship."

But despite some of these recent changes, we still have a long way to go. While the Citizenship Act of 1947 was one small step towards gender equity, and subsequent Acts have moved us further in the right direction, there is plenty of work yet to be done to ensure that all women—from all backgrounds—enjoy the same rights as men.

LYNN GREINER is a freelance writer who has covered technology, history, business, and many other areas for more than 20 years.



Canadian Citizenship: Respect

GRADES:

7 TO 10

SUBJECTS:

 HISTORY
 SOCIAL STUDIES
 CITIZENSHIP
 GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP
 CIVICS

DURATION:

6 TO 8 CLASSES

We are humbly thankful for being part of Canadian society. We recognize all the blessings of freedom, peace, harmony and appreciation that we live in here. We are also blessed to be part of the vast Canadian mosaic, as a Rainbow full of colours and variety.

– Max Aranguiz, Canadian citizen formerly from Chile


KEY CONCEPTS & ISSUES

This lesson plan explores the idea of respect as it relates to the law, the environment, and each other. How do we make active citizenship a relevant question for youth? How do we bring this idea into their consciousness? Using this lesson plan is a good start.


BACKGROUND

The Canadian Citizenship Act has reached its 75th anniversary and beyond. The purpose of this lesson plan is to help establish a dialogue with youth that will stimulate thought and debate about citizenship. More to the point, it is vital that youth become actively engaged in citizenship-based activities, take an active role in their respective communities, and explore and understand what it means to fully be a Canadian citizen.

Canada is a magnet for immigrants, as one of the most culturally diverse countries in the entire world. For those who are new to our country, citizenship may mean everything. But for the second generation and beyond, the importance of citizenship may get lost in the hectic scramble to succeed in school, at work, in life.

Youth must understand that citizenship includes certain rights, and with these rights comes an obligation to participate in the community. Citizens bear the responsibility for helping to run their communities; helping give a society its life and vigour. Any democratic nation is only as strong as its citizens. Without active commitment and participation, the community suffers and grows weak.



The rights of Canadian citizens:

- Equality rights: equal treatment before and under the law, and equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination
- Democratic rights: the right to participate in political activities, to vote and run for political office
- Legal rights: the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, the right to retain a lawyer and be informed of that right, and the right to an interpreter in court proceedings
- Mobility rights: the right to enter and leave Canada, to move and take up residence in any province or territory
- Language rights: the right to use either the English or French language in communications with Canada's federal government
- Education rights: French and English minorities in every province and territory have the right to be educated in their own language



With rights come responsibilities:

- Understand and obey Canadian laws
- Participate in Canada's democratic political system
- Vote in elections
- Allow other Canadians to enjoy their rights and freedoms
- Appreciate and help preserve Canada's multicultural heritage

CASE STUDY:

Molokai emigrated from Somalia with his family ten years ago. Somalia is a country that is politically unstable and frequently suffers from terrible droughts. It was split by catastrophic tribal warfare that saw at least 300,000 civilians die from violence or lack of adequate food and water. It is also an arid land with little clean water. Due to the civil unrest, the country's infrastructure is fragmented and dysfunctional. Molokai was co-opted as a child soldier. His father and two of his brothers were killed in the ongoing struggles between the warring tribes. Finally, Molokai's mother, his sister, an aunt, and an uncle were able to emigrate to Canada. Molokai is now 18 years old. He is in his second last year of high school. He didn't have the opportunity to go to school for a number of years because the schools were closed periodically in Somalia. Molokai and his family live in a high-rise building in the west end of the city. Many Somalis live there. Some call it an urban ghetto where the Somali immigrants have been warehoused to keep them out of the way. Some live there because they feel more comfortable with those from their own community who speak the same language and understand the culture and customs of Somalia.

Molokai says it is difficult for him to fit in here. His attitude and perspective is very different from those outside of the Somali community. He still has feelings of anxiety even though he has been removed from his homeland for quite some time. In Canada, he feels physically safe but has difficulty fitting in. Here in Canada, you can argue, you can discuss, and debate. There is no

need to be afraid of such things. There is no need to wonder if water will flow from the taps or if a drought will eradicate the crops. It is peaceful and secure yet he still feels uneasy and restless. At least in Somalia, he was accepted for what he was, not viewed with suspicion or disbelief by others. Despite these unsettling feelings, Molokai knows that for him to be successful and help his family, he needs to do well in school, go on to study at college or university, then get a decent job. Here, he can dream of a career. Here, he knows there is a future. In Somalia, the future was dark and forbidding. No one knew what would happen from day to day. But still there are many barriers.



STEP ONE

TEACHER DIRECTED DISCUSSION

Divide the class into small groups so that they can read and discuss the story of Molokai. Can they relate to his feelings and sense of alienation? What can Molokai do to help himself feel more like he is part of the community at large? Alternatively, what can others do to help him feel accepted, to help ease the unsettling feelings that he still carries within him? There may be students in the class who have emigrated recently or whose parents emigrated from another country. How did they cope with a new country, new values, and different perspectives? Do they have any suggestions as to strategies that someone like Molokai might employ to help him feel better about his situation? Have students consider the following scenarios:

- Molokai goes to buy a chocolate bar from a variety store. The store owner eyes him suspiciously. Molokai feels like a criminal even though he hasn't done anything wrong.
- Molokai routinely burns garbage in the back parking lot of his apartment building. When a neighbour objects because the smoke is blowing onto his balcony and it smells bad, Molokai states that he is doing no harm, merely getting rid of unwanted waste.
- Molokai gets into an argument with a classmate. Instead of listening to his point of view, the classmate shoves him to the ground, and the "debate" has to be broken up by a hall monitor. Molokai and the classmate both end up in the principal's office and receive a suspension for fighting.



STEP TWO

STUDENT LED EXPLORATION

Keep the same small discussion groups. Have each group select one of the scenarios and devise some solutions to Molokai's dilemma. The group will then present an oral report to the rest of the class. Make a list of the solutions and strategies on the board for everyone to read. Now introduce the concept of respect into the discussion. Do the student responses involve this idea? For example, is it reasonable to expect Molokai to have respect for the law if he feels like a criminal even though he's done nothing wrong? That if he had respect for his neighbour and for the environment, he wouldn't burn garbage behind his apartment? That if both Molokai and his classmate had respect for each other's point of view, the discussion wouldn't have ended up as a shoving match

that got them both into trouble? Have students consider inserting some respect into each of the scenarios at the beginning. What difference would it have made?



OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. The way in which people interact is represented in their use of language. Language reveals perspective and attitude. Students will take the following terms and phrases and use them in a written context that illustrates how they can be used to demonstrate either respect or disrespect. A separate short paragraph must be written using three of the following words or phrases.

Terms/Phrases: contempt, hatred, trust, violation, admiration, name-calling, discriminate, using your own judgement, blazing a trail, taking pride in, resolution, protest against, out of control, narrow-minded, misunderstanding, and coming to terms.

2. Divide students into pairs and have them consider the following scenarios:

- A young black man is stopped by the police and questioned for no apparent reason while walking down the street;
- Two girls who are friends are talking and one tells the other she is being sexually harassed by her boss at her part-time job;
- A land developer wants to build a new subdivision on a fragile wetland.

You are a futurist who makes predictions based on known factors. Select one of the above scenarios and write a detailed description (half page minimum) of what takes place with the statements above as the starting point. What happens next and how does the situation end?

Since you are a futurist and have some measure of control over the scenario, try writing about it from a different perspective. Inject some mutual respect into the scenario (mutual being between the characters you have created), and then write out the scene as fully and with as much detail as possible. Include some dialogue to make it even more realistic (half page minimum).

3. Divide the students into teams. Have each team member read his/her scenarios to the others in the group. Each group should discuss what they liked/disliked about each member's scenarios. Remember, there is a before and after scenario for each situation and each must be read. Have the group then select one set of scenarios written by a member of the group. That member will then direct the others to "act out" or at least "read out" the two scenarios that have been selected. These performances will be presented to the rest of the class. If feasible, record the presentations on a mobile device, tablet, or digital camera and play them to the class.



Civic or Civil?

What Kind of Citizens Are We?



By Carolyn Gruske

Especially in an election year, it is easy to understand voting as an act of citizenship. Similarly, applying for a passport—a document proclaiming that the bearer belongs to one country while travelling to foreign nations—is another. What's more difficult to comprehend, however, is how wearing a mask during a pandemic could be seen as a way to express citizenship, as could staging a protest or organizing a community childcare program. It all depends on how narrow a definition of citizenship one is willing to apply.

In discussions about political science, it is possible to make the distinction between *civil* citizenship and *civic* citizenship. Civil citizenship pertains to how people interact with state

institutions (by voting or running for elected office, paying taxes, or having their rights affirmed under law), whereas civic citizenship tends to focus on how people live and interact within a community, be it a neighbourhood, a city, an ethnic diaspora, or some other definition of a group. Civil citizenship is always related to the nation, but civic citizenship can reach beyond national borders and stretch into global citizenship, or it can retract into small, hyper local citizenship.

While the terms civil and civic may be well understood and used within academic circles, they aren't necessarily the only descriptors of these ideas and definitions of citizenship. Depending on who is speaking, phrases like "Big-C Citizenship" (civil) and "little-c citizenship" (civic) may be used instead.

What matters, however, is understanding that being a citizen means more than just sewing that nation's flag onto a backpack. It means living together and making things better for all residents of the country, whether they're officially citizens or not. It means understanding the rights and freedoms and obligations that come with citizenship, and working to expand and extend them. For teachers, it also means leading discussions about how a country such as Canada can be a place with systemic injustices but can still be considered a good place to live.

NEW CANADIANS AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CANADIAN

Immigrants who are on the path to becoming Canadians can provide an easy-to-understand perspective of how people can feel like Canadian citizens and engage civically as citizens, long before they swear an oath to Queen Elizabeth II and formally become Canadians in the eyes of the law.

Salimah Dhalla is a member of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC), an organization co-founded by the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul. The ICC organizes citizenship ceremonies, including roundtable discussions where soon-to-be Canadians can share their experiences of the path towards citizenship. According to Dhalla, the director of program delivery,

feeling Canadian and feeling like a citizen are things that happen long before the official ceremony takes place.

"We ask them, 'What was the moment that you started to feel Canadian?' or 'Do you think you will feel Canadian after you take the oath?' I would say 90-plus percent of people feel Canadian, even before they do any of the legal requirements that require them to become a Canadian citizen," she explains. "It's really lovely to hear that the step of that last legal requirement is obviously important. But the responsibilities and what makes each of us Canadian—outside of our ability to vote—those core values, are already apparent to people... through what they do in their communities. The communities reach out to them, and bring out that inherent sense of responsibility."

Yasmine Mohamed, the director of digital programs (at the time of writing), adds that while the ICC is primarily focused on delivering enhanced ceremonies (ones held in spaces that are open to the public and that involve local community members), it also emphasizes how much a citizen can both gain from and give back to a community.

"What we started thinking about is that in a lot of our work there's a big difference between Big-C Citizenship and little-c citizenship. We're thinking about rights and responsibilities, obligations, but we're also thinking about how people can be a part of their community, and take an active interest in making the community better. I think that little-c citizenship is really what we focus on because it's so true that whether you have Canadian citizenship or not, everybody can be an active citizen, an active member of their community and work towards inclusion, and to supporting other people in their communities," says Mohamed.

EXCLUDED CITIZENS

Stéphanie Gaudet is a University of Ottawa professor in the school of sociological and anthropological studies. She is also the director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Citizenship and Minorities (CIRCEM). Gaudet takes a more inclusive view of what citizenship is, what it means, and how it should be performed. She points to people who are disqualified from partaking in certain citizenship rights and responsibilities but who can still be what she refers to as "active citizens." Children and adolescents who are too young to vote, for example, can still participate in democracy and offer solutions to pressing issues.

“If we talk about a problem, [young people] need to have the possibility to hope and to change things, maybe just little things. It’s very important because if they feel that they can’t effect change, they will not be confident that democracy can be an effective political regime and they will just drop out of [participating in politics and democracy].”

As a positive example, Gaudet cites work done by the city council in Gatineau, QC, which allowed young people “to influence the city’s agenda” by doing things such as offering input into transit scheduling.

Without those kinds of opportunities, young people can lose faith in the democratic political system. Gaudet points to the fact that even when young people are old enough to vote, their turnout rate is lower than other demographics, and despite the common wisdom that they will pick up the voting habit later in life, research shows this hasn’t been happening.

“I think it’s a big concern, but I don’t want to say that youth are not participating, because they do participate. They are very active for environmental causes and for social justice. They don’t trust politicians and institutions. It’s not perfect, but it’s still a way to express yourself as a citizen.”

Gaudet’s own work on civic engagement deals with people who feel excluded from fully participating in Canadian society because of their gender or sexual orientation, because they are racialized minorities, or because there are other factors that exclude them from the mainstream political discourse. Without finding ways to include their voices, Gaudet says there can’t really be a true democracy.

“We cannot talk about democracy without talking about justice. Justice is an idea related to democracy. Democracy is the will of each citizen to decide, to vote. We need to include everyone to have this idea of justice, of equity. So, if you want more inclusion, you have to be aware of what excludes people.”

EXPRESSING OPPOSITION

Although Gaudet stresses the value in getting everybody to talk about and share their lived experiences and to co-operate on projects, she knows that democracy can be

fractious. In fact, she teaches people—including students and new Canadians—that challenging the government is a necessary part of citizenship, and one that is a vital part of keeping any democracy thriving.

This is a view that Adelina Petit-Vouriot, research manager with the Samara Centre for Democracy—a research think tank named for the winged “helicopter” seed, or samara, that falls from maple trees—explains is a difficult one for some people to comprehend, especially if their social conditioning or their cultural background has taught them not to make waves or not to engage in public disputes.

Petit-Vouriot also says that if people can think of themselves as “political players,” this alters their perception of what they are capable of doing or changing or improving in society. It also “empowers them to... occupy their space in society and in a more visible way and a more proactive way. They can start thinking about their political efficacy and their ability to get things done.”

She adds that getting things done can mean getting confrontational but “that means a new, fresh kind of approach... Negative disagreements are part of the way we make decisions in society. And that’s something we should welcome.”

Beyond simply disagreeing, she emphasizes that protests and sit-ins are some of the more active, and acceptable, ways of participating as citizens.

Another thing that should be welcomed is an evolution of people’s civic literacy, explains Petit-Vouriot, as that enables individuals to develop an understanding of their place in society and how to interact as citizens. It also informs people how to engage with government “rather than just the nuts and bolts of how [a] political system or the structure works,” she says.

Civic literacy levels change as people gain more experience interacting with political systems and as political circumstances shift. COVID-19 is also likely to be a trigger for more people getting engaged in the political decision-making process, explains Petit-Vouriot, especially after listening to chief medical officers in each province explain why certain actions were (or weren’t) taken to deal with the pandemic.

CITIZENSHIP IN THE CLASSROOM

Angela Vemic, an assistant professor in the department of curriculum and learning at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) explains that most provincial and territorial jurisdictions have “something that resembles a civics course” in the curriculum. Students are typically expected to learn about civic rights and responsibilities in such courses, and in Ontario there is also a broader mandate, what she describes as a “citizenship framework.”

She explains that rather than focusing on capital-P Politics and capital-C Citizenship of the mandated civics course, the framework is more expansive in terms of what it means to be an engaged citizen, and about identity and belonging.

“Students say that they want to have more opportunities to learn... and to engage with these topics—controversial topics, public issues, environmental issues—because [that's what they are seeing on] social media and television,” says Vemic.

Understanding where opinions and facts originate and the differences between them is part of informed citizenship. Teaching that concept to students in today's social media world can be a challenge, especially because the definition of an engaged citizen shifts with the times.

Vemic explains that the teacher candidates at OISE tend to be in their early- and mid-20s and “many people that age now conceptualize citizenship differently. For many of them, to participate civically looks less like the traditional sort of voting, or attending a town hall, or signing a petition. [Instead] it looks more like boycotting, social media campaigns, and consumer choices. Those things all really matter. They are manifestations of what it means to be [an] engaged [citizen].”

CAROLYN GRUSKE is an award-winning reporter and magazine editor. She often writes about the intersection of business, technology and the law, but she also has a deep interest in educational topics.



Is It Time to Update the Citizenship Test?

By Kelly Boutsalis

“You never get a second chance to make a first impression” is a phrase often attributed to Will Rogers, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. For many newcomers to Canada, their first impression of the Indigenous peoples living on their ancestral lands in Canada often comes in the form of an outdated study guide for the citizenship test.

When the Citizenship Act came into force in 1947, it allowed people to become legal Canadian citizens for the first time. Under this Act, citizenship could be granted to permanent residents of Canada who, among other qualifications, showed they possessed sufficient knowledge of what it meant to be Canadian.

Today, candidates applying for Canadian citizenship must have “adequate knowledge of Canada” as well as an understanding of “the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.” Applicants display this knowledge by taking a citizenship test that covers topics such as Canada’s history, government, regions, and symbols. The practice materials to prepare for that test, as well as the test itself, should ideally be up-to-date and all-encompassing for each subject. Fundamental pieces of information are missing, however.

The latest version of the citizenship test study guide, *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of*

Citizenship, was printed in 2011 and is out-of-date in many areas—most notably the Indigenous sections. The language has changed significantly in the ten years since this guidebook was published. For example, although “Indigenous” is the current preferred term to discuss First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, *Discover Canada* refers to us as “Aboriginal.”

There’s also a nod in the acknowledgements section to the department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. That department restructured into two separate branches—Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), and Indigenous Services Canada—back in 2017.

As a Mohawk person, born and raised in Canada, I’d never had an opportunity to consider the contents of the citizenship test. But once I did, it was upsetting to see how Indigenous peoples are represented in what is, essentially, an introduction to this country for non-Canadians.

After reading the guide, Balkees Alsalehi’s entire impression of the country she calls home changed. Alsalehi, who came to Canada in 2014 from Iraq, only learned general Canadian history, with small pieces of information here and there. Her application to become a citizen is still in progress. She says it wasn’t until last September, when she joined a group at the Arab

Community Centre of Toronto for newcomers, that she was introduced to the *Discover Canada* book and learned more about Indigenous peoples.

Unfortunately, the guide is sorely lacking in the information it presents on Indigenous peoples, especially in terms of recent history, as well as our present-day accomplishments.

Discover Canada does address the history of residential schools—in just one single paragraph that reads: “From the 1800s until the 1980s, the federal government placed many Aboriginal children in residential schools to educate and assimilate them into mainstream Canadian culture. The schools were poorly funded and inflicted hardship on the students; some were physically abused. Aboriginal languages and cultural practices were mostly prohibited. In 2008, Ottawa formally apologized to the former students.”

There is no mention of the intergenerational impacts of residential schools on Indigenous families, of the trauma that continues to manifest as substance use disorders, abuse, and more.

The next paragraph in the study guide reads: “In today’s Canada, Aboriginal peoples enjoy renewed pride and confidence, and have made significant achievements in agriculture, the environment, business and the arts.”

The juxtaposition of those two paragraphs seems to imply that Indigenous peoples simply moved on from the horror and tragedy of residential schools.

According to Alsalehi, it’s as though today’s media is reporting on the history of residential schools in one way, while “the book is telling something different.” She thinks it would be “good to unify the information” to help give newcomers “a better idea about the contribution of Indigenous people.”

When first coming to Canada, Alsalehi hadn’t known the country even had native people. “Initially, I thought Canada was created by the settlers—until I read the book and found out that the Aboriginal people and their ancestors settled and established the country thousands of years before the explorers from Europe,” she says.

Despite opening up Alsalehi to Canada’s origins, she still felt that the study guide seemed antiquated. She remembers noticing that many of the book’s mentions of Indigenous peoples placed us in pre-Colonial times, giving her the impression that we don’t exist here anymore.

“They *were* there, but there’s [hardly anything] in the book that talks about their contribution in recent days,” she says.

This is something that is actively being remedied by the Office of the Minister of Immigration, Refugees

and Citizenship, explains the office's press secretary, Alexander Cohen. "In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 93, we have been hard at work over the past few years crafting a new Citizenship Guide that reflects contemporary Canada," he says. "It hasn't been updated for over a decade and contains outdated terminology and ideas—particularly regarding Indigenous peoples."

Three themes will drive the updated guide: relationships, opportunity, and commitment. It will also include a variety of historically underrepresented groups, such as the LGBTQ2S+ community, Black Canadians, and Canadians with disabilities.

Cohen says that the new guide will be more representative of the country. "It will be comprehensive, diverse and honest—helping new Canadians understand Canada's past and present, and their role in shaping our shared future. Central to our work is ensuring that new Canadians understand the integral role of the Indigenous peoples of this land."

The final product will be shaped by extensive consultations with leaders from the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council.

Cori Carl, author of *Moving to Canada: A complete guide to immigrating to Canada without an attorney*, was inspired to write her own guide after she became a Canadian citizen. While studying for her citizenship test, she discovered that many of the books and resources for aspiring citizens were out of date.

Originally from New Jersey, she was one of the first people to go through Express Entry—the application process aimed at skilled immigrants—and wanted to help guide others on how to do the same. Carl says she spent a week cramming for the citizenship test, reading the official study guide along with other guides that were available from libraries and reputable sources.

"Based on the test material, it's very much the narrative I remember from elementary school—and I'm an old millennial, I'm 37—which was: 'mistakes were made, and now we've learned, and everything is wonderful.'"

Carl says that it's been hard to unlearn what she was taught about Indigenous peoples as

a child. But at the same time, she's worried that there are too many nuances and too much history to be properly covered in a study guide and test.

"I don't know that the test itself is really a venue for teaching or testing anything so complicated," she says. "There's just so much history and so many layers to it." She is concerned that "simplifying it too much can come at a cost."

While Alsalehi suggests that an entire chapter be dedicated to Indigenous peoples, their history, and their modern accomplishments, Carl is unsure on how best to update the guide. She wonders if the sovereign Indigenous nations should get to write their own contributions.

"I understand the theory behind wanting to give everyone this basic background of Canadian history and values, but in this case, Canada has such a complicated relationship with Indigenous communities," Carl says.

It definitely seems like a ripe moment for the government to revisit the *Discover Canada* guide, as it is, for many residents, their first introduction to Indigenous peoples of Canada. There have been many discoveries and shifts in thinking and language since the guide's last publication, not to mention the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

"In this moment in Canadian history, I feel like I'm going through this learning process with all of Canada, and so is anyone who's living in Canada and is involved in their community and reading the news," says Carl.

KELLY BOUTSALIS is a Mohawk freelance journalist from the Six Nations of the Grand River. The bulk of her work focuses on highlighting Indigenous stories, and her words have appeared in the *New York Times*, *The Walrus*, *The Narwhal*, and more.





CONCEPT
OF ONE

CONCEPTOF1.COM

<A DIFFERENT WAY TO LEARN CODING/>

TRY IT FREE TODAY!



TEACHMEDIA

AD INDEX

The Great Canadian Book Project	11
TEACH Magazine	19
Concept of One	35



