

# THE WHO, WHY, WHAT, WHEN, AND HOW OF RACE IN CANADA

TO COUNTERACT RACISM WE MUST ACT CONSCIOUSLY AND THOUGHTFULLY... BUT WHY?

BECAUSE THROUGH OUR HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT, THE CONCEPT OF RACE HAS BEEN CAREFULLY AND INTENTIONALLY INSTILLED IN ALL OF US. HOWEVER, THROUGH A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT RACE IS WE CAN BEGIN THE HEALING PROCESS. HERE IS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RACE IN CANADA:

## The What

- Race is a harmful process of 'othering'
- By identifying and objectifying the differences of another and assigning meaning to those differences we determine ones 'race' and create stereotypes
- However, there is, in fact, no biological difference between so-called races

## The Who

- Race categorizes people based on physical appearance such as skin colour, hair, and facial features.
- As well as cultural differences such as language, customs, and beliefs
- Race does not determine one's capabilities

## The How

- By devaluing others, a hierarchy is created that keeps people divided
- These divides are exploited through misinformation and misunderstanding
- Racism and stereotypes are perpetuated through media, stories and habit that uphold the misconception that race is a biological difference

## The Why

- To expand colonial empires
- To maximize profit & gain

To achieve these objectives, race was assigned to Indigenous Peoples and used as a tool of justification to:

- Displace Indigenous communities
- Apprehend land and resources
- Attempt to assimilate Indigenous people into Western culture

## The When

- Race was introduced to Indigenous peoples during colonization. So race in Canada is about as old as Canada itself!
- The racial discourse we are born into is a recent invention designed to justify the immoral ideologies and practices that fuel the settler state

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## RACE IS TRANSFORMATIVE

### What was Race Before?

- Nationhood
- Ancestry
- Genealogy
- Culture

### What has Race Become?

- Political
- Division
- Comparative Difference
- Superior vs Inferior

IF THE MEANING OF RACE CAN CHANGE, WE CAN UNLEARN RACISM

THROUGH REPETITION AND OUR ENVIRONMENT, WE ARE CONDITIONED TO UNDERSTAND THAT RACE MAKES US DIFFERENT FROM ONE ANOTHER. UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE IS NO SCIENCE TO RACE, AND THEREFORE NO DIFFERENCE BEYOND APPEARANCE AND CULTURE, CAN HELP US THINK CRITICALLY AND DIFFERENTIATE FACT FROM FICTION. RACE IS A CONSTRUCT OR A SOCIAL EXPERIMENT IMPOSED ON SOCIETY THAT KEEPS US DIVIDED. HOWEVER, BY DECOLONIZING OUR LEARNING, WE CAN CHANGE THE IDEOLOGY OF RACE AND BEGIN A JOURNEY TOWARD MEANINGFUL HEALING.

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