

Indigenous-Settler Relations and Collections: A Learning Series at Victoria University

About the Series

In a spirit of reconciliation and learning, Victoria University Library presents a series of events and conversations about the history of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada. Archival documents and items, from the library's special collections, related to the history of Indigenous communities will serve as a departure point for these discussions.

Recent Event (Nov. 2023)

Nêhiyaw (Cree) Syllabics & Decolonizing Archives: Continuing the Conversation

Please join us for a conversation about Nêhiyaw Syllabics and archival decolonization, hosted by Victoria University Library (Toronto). We aim to use the Nêhiyaw Syllabics as a case study related to the broader topic of decolonizing settler archives. Our panel includes Indigenous studies scholar and archivist Carmen Miedema and researcher Samara mîkiwin Harp.

The syllabics are a Nêhiyaw (Cree) language system of writing that uses symbols to represent syllables. We will discuss Nêhiyaw early and original accounts of how the syllabary was given to the community as a sacred gift. In addition, we will discuss accounts that credit James Evans with developing the syllabary. The [James Evans fonds](#) at Victoria University Library currently houses syllabics and copies of a printed Nêhiyaw syllabic hymn book. Materials from the Evans fonds are [available online](#).

To provide background information and allow for an informed conversation, please review the following sources prior to the event:

Required Readings:

Harp, Samara mîkiwin. "[Origins of Cree Syllabics](#)." Library and Archives Canada Blog, March 9, 2023.

Miedema, Carmen. [Building bridges: dismantling eurocentrism in archives and respecting Indigenous ways of doing it right](#). Review chapter 3: "Transforming Eurocentrism in the Archives."

Wheeler, Winona [*published as* Stevenson, Winona]. "[Calling Badger and the Symbols of the Spirit Languages: The Cree Origins of the Syllabic System](#)." *Oral History Forum*, 19-20 (1999-2000): 19-4.

Supplementary Readings:

Steering Committee on Canada's Archives. "[Reconciliation Framework: The Response to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Taskforce](#)." Review (at minimum) the "Reconciliation Framework at a Glance" on page 17.

Thompson, Samantha, Velea Goulden, Tawa Ducheneaux, and Arthur Amiotte. "[Your Friend, Standing Bear](#)." Peeling the Past blog [Region of Peel Archives].

Panelists Bio:

Carmen Miedema is a Nêhiyaw woman and mother of four from the Peepeekisis Cree Nation in Southern Saskatchewan. Carmen worked as a Digital Archive Assistant at the NCTR where she concentrated predominantly on the care of the Centre's material object collections. Carmen holds a B.A. (Hons) in History and Anthropology from Brandon University; a M.A. in Archival Studies from the University of Manitoba, and is in the fourth year of her Ph.D. program through the Indigenous Studies department at the University of Manitoba. Her master's thesis looked at the need for settler archives to build relationships with Indigenous communities, and how relationships have the potential to benefit not only the archives but more importantly, the communities.

Samara mîkiwin Harp was an archivist with the *Listen, Hear Our Voices* initiative at Library and Archives Canada. She now works in Woods Cree language revitalization and is further pursuing archival studies. Samara grew up in Winnipeg, Manitoba, with Cree roots in both the Southend and Pelican Narrows areas of Treaty 6 in northern Saskatchewan. The first of her father's family arrived in Ontario in the 1800s from Ireland and England.

Date & Time:

Monday November 6, 2023, 2:00 - 3:30 PM EST

Note: this is an online event that starts on the hour (not 10 minutes after the hour). A link for the session will be sent to you upon registration. The event is not limited to those affiliated with Victoria University or U of T.

Registration Required: [Register here.](#)

Past Events

Peter Jones/Kahkewaquonaby: Visions of Equality and Mississauga Self-Determination in the 19th Century

(Past) ONLINE: Thursday April 27th, 2023, 1:00pm-2:15pm EDT

Peter Jones (1802-1856) was an Ojibwa Chief (known as Kahkewaquonaby), a Methodist minister and an English-Anishinaabemowin translator.

This online event, focusing on Jones' advocacy work, features two brief presentations, followed by open discussion.

Roxanne Korpan will discuss Peter Jones' involvement in a General Council held at Orillia in 1846, which was attended by other Mississauga and Mohawk leaders as well as church and colonial government leaders. At this meeting, settler leadership promised the attending Indigenous Nations that manual labour schools (also called residential schools) would lead to equality and independence, a vision of education shared by Jones. But when the agreements made at Orillia were implemented, the government instead endorsed a model of education that paved the way for the violent assimilation enacted through the national system of residential schools for Indigenous children.

Darin Wybenga, will present on Peter Jones/Kahkewaquonaby's drafting of a Constitution for the Mississaugas in 1830 and how it encompassed two different ideologies.

About the presenters:

Roxanne Korpan is a settler researcher from Treaty 4 territory who recently completed her PhD at the

University of Toronto. Her dissertation focuses on how Kahkewaquonaby/Peter Jones envisioned Christianity as a way of mediating colonial dispossession, affirming Mississauga self-determination, and building mutually respectful relations with settler society. Roxanne is also a senior researcher with Archipel Research & Consulting, which is an Indigenous-owned firm specializing in research related to Indigenous communities and equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Darin Wybenga works for the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation as the Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Coordinator for their Dept. of Consultation and Accommodation. This work primarily consists of educating project proponents about the history of the treaty lands, territory, and people of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Prior to working with the MCFN, Darin taught history and geography and served as vice-principal and curriculum coordinator in elementary schools in Southern Ontario.

The E.J. Pratt Library holds a [collection of items created by or related to Peter Jones](#) (correspondence, notebooks, copies of petitions to the British Crown and more).

Everyone is welcome!

Nehiyaw (Cree) Syllabics & Decolonizing Archives

Description

Join us in a conversation about the Nehiyaw Syllabics housed at Victoria University Library. We aim to use it as a case study related to the broader topic of decolonizing settler archives.

The syllabics are a Nehiyaw (Cree) language system of writing that uses symbols to represent syllables. We will discuss Nehiyaw early and original accounts of how the syllabary was given to the community as a sacred gift. In addition, we will also discuss accounts that credit James Evans with developing the syllabary. The [James Evans fonds](#) at Victoria University Library currently houses syllabics and copies of a printed Nehiyaw syllabic hymn book.

Our panel includes Carmen Miedema and Walter Strong, their biographies are provided below.

To provide background information and allow for an informed conversation, you may wish to review the following sources prior to the event:

- Bak, Greg, Tolly Bradford, Jessie Loyer, and Elizabeth Walker. "[Four Views on Archival Decolonization Inspired by the TRC's Calls to Action.](#)" *Fonds d'Archives* no.1, 2017, pp. 1-21.
- Hutchinson, Gerald M. "[Evans, James.](#)" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003.
- Stevenson, Winona. "[Calling Badger and the Symbols of the Spirit Languages: The Cree Origins of the Syllabic System.](#)" *Oral History Forum*, nos. 19-20, 1999-2000, pp. 19-4.
- Strong, Walter. "A Question of Legacy: Cree Writing and the Origin of the Syllabics." . Accessed Feb 1, 2022. <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/a-question-of-legacy-cree-writing-and-the-origin-of-the-syllabics>.

Carmen Miedema is a Nehiyaw woman and mother of four from the Peepeekisis Cree Nation in Southern Saskatchewan. Carmen worked as a Digital Archive Assistant at the NCTR where she concentrated predominantly on the care of the Centre's material object collections. Carmen holds a B.A.

(Hons) in History and Anthropology from Brandon University; a M.A. in Archival Studies from the University of Manitoba, and is in the third year of her Ph.D. program through the Native Studies department at the University of Manitoba. Her master's thesis looked at the need for settler archives to build relationships with Indigenous communities, and how relationships have the potential to benefit not only the archives but more importantly, the communities.

Walter Strong is an assignment producer for CBC North in Yellowknife. He was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., but now calls the Northwest Territories home. Before becoming a producer he was a general assignment reporter privileged to report stories from the lands of the northern Dene, Inuit and Inuvialuit.

Date & Time

(Past) Online event: Friday, 29 April, 2022, 2:30 pm–4:00pm EST.

Registration

[Registration required](#). *First 10 registrants who attend will receive free coffee cards.*

Victoria University & the Student Missionary Movement

Description

The Methodist Church in Canada directly supported its missionary activities in Indigenous communities in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries through its extensive publishing program. Indigenous preachers, teachers, and translators, as well as Victoria University students and alumni, authored books, journal articles, and reports that were distributed by William Briggs and other publishing bodies of the Church. These publications included manuals and advice books on how to conduct missionary work, which were used in the training of aspiring young missionaries.

There is an extensive print culture associated with the missionary activities of the Church, providing important historical evidence of the agenda to convert Indigenous People to Christianity in order to advance assimilation.

Join us for an informative session on the print culture associated with Indigenous-settler relations presented by [Agatha Barc](#) (Reader Services and Instruction Librarian) and facilitated by [Jonathan Hamilton-Diabo](#) (Assistant Professor of Theology, June Callwood Professor of Social Justice, and Special Advisor to the President, Indigenous Initiatives).

(Past) Online Event:

Online event: Tuesday, 26 April, **2022** 2:30 pm–4:00 pm EST.

On the Development of Schools in the 19th Century and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

Description

This event has two parts, an asynchronous learning activity and a live event. Both are related to the

aspects of the history of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Asynchronous Activity (ongoing until April 29, 2022):

View the digitized 1844 petition requesting formal education for members of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and share your thoughts about this important historical artefact.

Access this learning module anytime by [self-enrolling into this Quercus course: uoft.me/PetitionSchools](https://uoft.me/PetitionSchools)

Participants in the online discussion in Quercus will be entered into a draw for a thank you prize, a [gift box](#) from Raven Reads.

(Past) Online Event:

A discussion with [Margaret Sault](#), Director of Lands, Membership and Research for the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation. Learn about some of this history and current activities of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation from this esteemed MCFN Band Member.

Live event: Thursday, 31 March **2022**, 1:15 pm–2:15 pm EST.

Part of the [Campus \(Re\)Conciliations Conference](#).



Last updated: July 30, 2024

Source URL:

https://library.vicu.utoronto.ca/research_resources/indigenous_settler_relations_and_collections