

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY

Level 3





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ENGAGEMENT



IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT THE LAND

DEAR READER,

How are you feeling about your journey thus far?

We understand that the unlearning process can be mentally and emotionally taxing. Before embarking on the next stage of this journey, we invite you to take the time to reflect and let go of anything that weighs heavily on your shoulders or in your heart.

While the first part of this educational journey was largely about unlearning some harmful and inaccurate information, the next part will invite you to engage with the Indigenous ways of living by opening your mind to transcend the colonialist framework. You'll be challenged, but our hope is that you will come out of these levels with a new understanding of the history and essence of so-called Canada.

THE LAND AS A LIVING CONCEPT

The next part of your journey begins with the Land. We ask you, however, to forget about any definitions you may already associate with the concepts of land and territory. Instead, we invite you to imagine the Land as a living, breathing entity with which Indigenous Peoples are socially and sacredly involved.



THE LAND SPEAKS ITS OWN LANGUAGE.

SHE TELLS THE STORY OF OUR ANCESTORS.

SHE ACTS AS A PLACE OF GATHERING AND CEREMONY.

THE LAND HAS NO BORDERS AND IMPOSES NO LIMITS ON US.

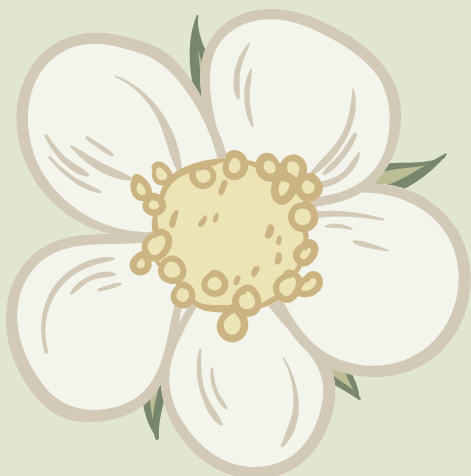
SHE EXISTS SIMPLY AS OUR RELATIVE

SHE IS PART OF OUR IDENTITY.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, Indigenous Peoples lived a life without territorial boundaries. For some communities, home was rarely a fixed place, following the animals, the elements and the seasons, and shaping lifestyles deeply rooted in the rhythms of nature. Indigenous communities have cultivated a reciprocal relationship with the Land. While the Land provided them with food and shelter, they in turn acted as her stewards and protectors.



In fact, the concept of land ownership did not even exist in Indigenous life. In other words, Indigenous Peoples didn't own the Land, they were the stewards of the territory they inhabited. They cared for the Land and maintained the delicate balance between the ecosystems that shared the resources.





WHEN THE LAND STOPS BREATHING

You can probably imagine how the arrival of the Europeans disrupted Indigenous ways of life.

What began as a mutual land-sharing agreement quickly turned into a colonial relationship that devastated the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island.

Armed with the Doctrine of Discovery and Western legal concepts, Europeans declared that they had discovered the territories already occupied by Indigenous Peoples, proceeding to assert their control over it. It is now well documented that, although so-called Canada has a sovereign claim to the territory in practice (de facto sovereignty), this sovereignty has not been obtained legally or legitimately (de jure sovereignty). It has simply been affirmed and assumed over time.

After reading levels 1 and 2, you now understand the colonial strategies used

by the Canadian state to eradicate, assimilate or displace Indigenous Peoples while asserting its sovereignty. During this period, the government in place saw the Indigenous Peoples as a hurdle. To gain better access to resources and exploit the Land for profit, the government imposed a massive sedentarization project on Indigenous communities. Whether it was the creation of reserves for the First Nations, forced relocation or sedentarization throughout the North for the Inuit, or the initial dispersal and eventual creation of settlement communities for the Métis, the aim was to contain Indigenous communities to small parcels of land in order to keep them out of the way.

Perhaps the worst consequence of this colonial strategy was the rupture of the relationship between the Peoples and the Land, and the total disruption of the ecosystem that had previously been well protected and respected. Today, Indigenous communities have access to only a fraction of their original territory, and their disconnect from the Land has seriously endangered traditional knowledge, languages and cultures.





LAND AS A SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP

Indigenous communities are said to reflect the health of the Land. While Canada continues to ravage and exploit the territory, many communities remain disconnected from their way of life and identity. However, over the years, many of them have resisted and continue to claim their right to self-determination.

Although the narrative surrounding land claims is often framed in legal terms, forcing Indigenous Peoples to use the colonial system in place, it is essential to understand that Indigenous rights to the Land are inherent and ancestral. In other words, land rights are not rights that can be granted; they exist simply because Indigenous cultural identities and practices are inextricably linked to the Land. The Indigenous communities and the Land coexist to foster a reciprocal sacred relationship deeply intertwined with lifestyles that ensure cultural, spiritual, economic and ecological sustainability.

As you navigate through the next levels of this educational pathway, you'll discover several concepts related to self-determination and different models of governance. We ask you to keep in mind that all this is linked to the Land and anchored in it. Because it's always been about the Land.

DECLARATION OF GRATITUDE

Although these levels were written by the Decolonial Toolbox team, they were largely inspired by the work of Indigenous giants who have dedicated their lives to reclaiming **Indigeneity**¹ and educating the public about Indigenous realities. We are deeply grateful to have taken part, directly or indirectly, in the teachings of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Throughout this educational tool, we recognize and honour their work in the hope that their voices will be heard and turned into action. As you navigate this tool, we hope you'll keep the Land you live and play on in your hearts.



¹ Definition: "Considering the diversity of indigenous peoples (...) the system has developed a modern understanding of this term based on the following: Self-identification as Indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member, historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies, strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources, distinct social, economic or political systems, distinct language, culture and beliefs, form non-dominant groups of society, resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities."

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), Fact Sheet on Indigenous Peoples.

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Whose Land is it Anyway? A

Manual for Decolonization

Peter McFarlane and Nicole Schabus (editors), 2017

INSPIRATIONS

As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, 2017

Split Tooth

Tanya Tagaq, 2018

All my relations & Indigenous Feminism (No.1) [podcast episode]

Wilbur, M. et Keen, A. (hosts),
(February 26, 2019)

Memory Serves: Oratories

Lee Maracle, 2015

Making Love with the Land

Joshua Whitehead, 2022

Sanaaq

Mitjarjuk Nappaaluk, 2014

INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY



INDIGENOUS LAND STEWARDSHIP AND AUTONOMY

Indigenous Peoples have always been the stewards of the Land we call Canada. The arrival of European settlers greatly disrupted this relationship to the territory and, incidentally, the concept of territorial sovereignty, by forcibly introducing new legal concepts.

To understand **territorial sovereignty** from an Indigenous lens, it's necessary to highlight narratives that share the dynamics surrounding Indigenous Land governance. The resources in the following section reveal the cultural resilience and contemporary struggles that shape the dialogue on Indigenous territorial sovereignty. These narratives span from past Land governance practices to ongoing resistance against encroachments. They challenge colonial frameworks while amplifying Indigenous voices and experiences. By weaving these stories together, we aim to dismantle colonial narratives and deepen understanding of Indigenous territorial sovereignty.



Canadians have been breaking their promises to Indigenous people

CBC Docs

Cree filmmaker Tasha Hubbard explores the history of Treaty Six in this documentary clip. She explains how the Canadian government used hunger and violence to force Indigenous nations on the prairies onto reserves, revealing the broken promises that continue to impact communities today.



What land back means for this reclamation camp

CBC News

Kanien'kehá:ka journalist Ka'nhehsíio Deer documents the re-occupation of traditional Kanien'kehá:ka land in this article. The piece examines a 341-year-old land grievance and illustrates the growing importance of the Land Back movement for contemporary Indigenous resistance.



Land governance: Past

David Suzuki Foundation

This video explores the history and complexities of land governance through environmental, social, and cultural perspectives. It emphasizes sustainable and equitable land management practices while highlighting Indigenous approaches to territorial stewardship and community-based decision making.



Invasion

Michael Toledano,
Unist'ot'en Camp

This documentary examines the Wet'suwet'en Nation's resistance to the Coastal Gaslink pipeline project. It provides insight into contemporary territorial defence efforts and reveals the contradictions between government reconciliation rhetoric and ongoing colonial practices.



Our Nationhood

Alanis Obomsawin, NFB

This documentary follows the Listuguj Mi'kmaq nation's struggle to protect their traditional lands and resources. Filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin captures their efforts to control logging and fishing activities while asserting their inherent rights to territorial management.



The Power Was With Us: Idle No More

APTN

This two-part documentary examines the history and legacy of the Idle No More movement that began in 2012. APTN captures this Canada-wide uprising's impact on Indigenous rights activism and its ongoing significance for contemporary resistance movements. [Part 2 is here.](#)



I am the Magpie River

Nikan Productions

This film explores efforts to protect Muteshekau Shipu (the Magpie River) through Western legal frameworks. It contrasts the concept of 'legal personality' with the Innu understanding of the river as a living entity deserving inherent protection.

LAND BACK MOVEMENT

The Land Back movement reveals diverse stories that illuminate the profound connections Indigenous Peoples have with their heritage. These narratives delve into themes of asserting rights, environmental stewardship, and reclaiming Ancestral lands. It's not just a journey through history; it's an ongoing call to honour and sustain the deep connections Indigenous Peoples maintain with their roots. Land Back is an ongoing struggle and a vision for the future—a fight for Indigenous rights to self-determination and self-governance.

It is, however, important to recognize that the Land Back movement is not universally claimed by all Indigenous Peoples. Some communities have their own movements and approaches to reclaiming territory that align with their distinct histories, cultures, and governance systems.

Land Back is not only a campaign to claim back the Land, it is also a "political framework that allows us to deepen our relationships across the field of organizing movements working towards true collective liberation." ²

Land Back is “not just physical, it’s a conceptual space and what our future can hold on the land, where we can be our entire selves and address violence against our bodies and minds and hearts and spirits.” — Kati George-Jim³

Land Back means “Indigenous peoples confronting colonialism at the root. It’s about fighting for the right to our relationship with the earth. It’s about coming back to ourselves, as sovereign Indigenous Nations.”
– Ronald Gamblin⁴

Land Back is “a call for the return of Indigenous land and resource management (...) the expression and realization of Land Back is self-determined and is locally and even personally specific. It is about more than returning land; it is about the return of Indigenous governance and knowledge systems holistically implemented.”⁵

² NDN Collective, *Hesápa – A LANDBACK FILM*
³ Yellowhead Institute, *#LandBack: What Does It Mean & How Do You Enact It?*
⁴ 4Rs Youth Movement, *LAND BACK! What Do We Mean?*
⁵ Kristi Leora Gansworth (IPCA Knowledge Basket), *Land Trusts and Indigenous Peoples: The Canadian Context*
⁶ Canadian Bar Association *Understanding the Difference between Aboriginal Law and Indigenous Law*



What Is Land Back ?

David Suzuki Foundation

This webpage examines the Land Back movement and its significance for environmental protection. The David Suzuki Foundation emphasizes Indigenous decision-making systems for land stewardship while explaining how Indigenous governance addresses contemporary environmental challenges.



Land Back

Yellowhead Institute

This free online course examines colonial land dispossession policies and Indigenous resistance movements. Based on the Yellowhead Institute's research, it explores contemporary examples of nations reclaiming sovereignty and provides analysis of Land Back strategies.



Land Back Podcast

CBC Listen

Gitxsan investigative journalist Angela Sterritt explores how Indigenous Nations in British Columbia are reclaiming their territories. Each episode examines different community initiatives and approaches to sovereignty, highlighting diverse strategies for land reclamation and self-determination.

PATHWAYS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

In this part of our journey, we will look at the broad concept of self-determination and explore the relationship between the colonial state and Indigenous Peoples through the lens of historical treaties, contemporary claims, international law and the struggles against the colonial state.

Indigenous Peoples have rights based on the fact that they occupied the Land and held governance systems long before the arrival of European settlers. Therefore, the concept of Indigenous rights often includes the right to self-determination, the Land and her resources, as well as the right to maintain Indigenous ways of life.⁶



DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ABORIGINAL LAW AND INDIGENOUS LAW

“**Aboriginal Law** is the body of laws and rulings that determine the constitutional rights of Indigenous People and govern the relationship between them and the State. It is based namely on colonial instruments (Royal Proclamation of 1763, British North America Act of 1867, Constitution Act of 1982, Indian Act) and on the sources of Indigenous law.”



However, this may look different depending on whether Indigenous communities are First Nation, Inuit or Métis. Recognition of Aboriginal Rights may also vary from community to community depending on whether they have historical or modern treaty relationships, or have court-recognized rights.

As will be discussed throughout this level, Indigenous communities, whether First Nation, Inuit or Métis, have been reclaiming their inherent right to self-determination for centuries now. Communities continue to fight for Indigenous rights at the federal, provincial and local levels using three main routes: international law as defined by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the **Royal Proclamation** of 1763, as well the court decisions, which includes the **Canadian Constitution** of 1982.

“Indigenous Law is a legal system derived from Indigenous societies themselves. It comes from First Nations communities across the country (such as the Nuu-chah-nulth, Haida, Salish, Tsimshian and Haeltzuk nations) and encompasses the relationship to the land, the spirit world, Creation stories, customs, processes of deliberation and persuasion, codes of conduct, rules, teachings and axioms for living and governing.” ([Canadian Bar Association, 2025](#)).



Indigenous People: Terminology guide

Indigenous Corporate Training

This terminology guide provides essential definitions for Indigenous-related concepts and legal frameworks. Indigenous Corporate Training covers key terms related to self-determination, governance, and rights recognition that are fundamental to understanding contemporary Indigenous politics.



Home on Native Land

RAVEN

This free online course explores colonial policies used to dispossess Indigenous nations of lands and rights. It examines differences between Indigenous and settler legal systems while highlighting how nations use traditional law to protect lands and assert rights.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

At the global level, Indigenous rights are recognized and defended by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)⁶, adopted by the world organization in 2007. This declaration sets out the basic rights of Indigenous Peoples around the world, including the right to self-determination, to the preservation of our cultures and to the management of our internal affairs.

The UNDRIP is the result of decades of advocacy with various colonial, state and international bodies to assert our existence and our rights. Its creation was a major event for the recognition of our Peoples and represents a worldwide tool to defend ourselves against aggression and the violations of our individual and collective rights.



United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

United Nations

This booklet contains the complete text of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in 2007. It provides the foundational international framework for Indigenous rights, including self-determination, cultural preservation, and territorial sovereignty.



Understanding UNDRIP & Bill C-15

Warrior Life Podcast

Indigenous legal experts discuss UNDRIP's human rights protections and Canada's implementation through Bill C-15. Pam Palmater, Brenda Gunn, and Murray Sinclair examine the domestic legislation's implications and assess the government's commitment to Indigenous rights recognition.

THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION IS A KEY PART OF THE UNDRIP:

Article 3: “Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of this right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”⁷

Article 4: “Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.”⁸

⁷ United Nations United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

⁸ United Nations, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Resolution 61/295)



In 2021, the federal government passed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, affirming that the UNDRIP has application within Canadian law and obliged Canada to create, in collaboration with Indigenous communities, a national action plan to implement and achieve the objectives of the UNDRIP.⁹ So far, there have been both positive and negative reviews of its putting into practice from Indigenous communities across Canada.¹⁰

“Legislative reform and the implementation of new legislative measures can have a positive impact on the lives and experiences of Indigenous communities, particularly if they re-establish their traditional Anishinabek governance models and implement their own traditional laws and culturally unique frameworks.”

Anishinabek Nation

“For Inuit women, who experience much higher rates of violence and sexual assault than non-Indigenous women, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan represents an opportunity to secure essential commitments to increase the safety of Inuit women, and to address the root systemic causes that allow heinous acts to continue to occur.”

Gerri Sharpe, President, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada

⁹ Government of Canada, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*

¹⁰ Department of Justice Canada, *Second Annual United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Progress Report*





INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE

In this section, we talk about ancestral governance systems, the impact of colonization on them, and the many ways in which our precursors and contemporaries mobilized to ensure that our rights were respected.

Nehiyaw (Cree) writer Emily Riddle points out that traditional governance systems go beyond legal and political frameworks. They encompass social relations shaped by culture and cultural practices. Governance is a way of taking care of one’s own. The settlers' imposition of a Western governance system was designed to disconnect Indigenous Peoples from each other, break social bonds, and destroy traditional support networks.¹¹

¹¹ Emily Riddle, GUTS Magazine (Indigenous) Governance is Gay



Obey

Telling our Twisted Histories

Kaniehtiio Horn and guests explore the colonial concept of "obey" and its absence in Indigenous languages. They contrast Western hierarchical governance with Indigenous systems that emphasize consensus-building, mutual respect, and collective decision-making processes.



The Indian Act vs Self-Determination

Centre for First Nations Governance

This document contrasts Indigenous self-administration under the colonial Indian Act with genuine self-determination. The Centre for First Nations Governance explains the fundamental differences between imposed colonial governance and Indigenous self-governance based on traditional systems.



John Borrows on Indigenous Law: Restoring Legal Traditions and Governance

UVic Indigenous Law Research Unit ILRU

Anishinaabe law scholar John Borrows explains the foundations of Indigenous legal systems and their relationship to Canadian and international law. He discusses gender roles in traditional governance and representation issues in contemporary Indigenous politics and legal frameworks ([More from Dr. Borrows here.](#))

IMPACTS OF COLONIZATION

Before the arrival of settlers, and over millennia, Indigenous Nations had established very distinct decision-making systems where women, elders and two-spirited people played a crucial role. Over the centuries, successive laws, policies and decisions based on a colonial and paternalistic approach¹² have been imposed, such as the Indian Act of 1876, which to this day continues to determine how most First Nations in Canada are governed.¹³

¹² ¹³ *Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Self-government: Learn about Indigenous self-government in Canada*



Abuses of Power: Aboriginal Peoples: Fact and Fiction

Institut Tshakapesh

This educational tool from Institut Tshakapesh debunks common myths about Indigenous peoples in Quebec. It highlights historical and contemporary abuses of power by colonial institutions while providing factual information to challenge widespread misconceptions and stereotypes.



Métis

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, Canadian Geographic

This atlas section explores Métis governance and political development across different historical periods. Canadian Geographic examines Métis settlements, political activism from the 1950s-1970s, and contemporary governance structures that reflect distinct Métis approaches to self-determination. We recommend the following chapters for understanding self-government from a Métis perspective: [Métis Settlements and Farms](#), [Activism 1950s to 1970s](#), and [Modern Political Life](#).



Indian Act and Elected Chief and Band Council System

Indigenous Corporate Training

This article examines the history of the Indian Act's imposed chief and council system and its ongoing impacts. Indigenous Corporate Training explains how colonial governance structures continue to challenge First Nations' efforts to restore traditional decision-making systems.



Ellen Gabriel on Importance of Traditional Governance

Warrior Life Podcast

Mohawk activist Ellen Gabriel discusses the fundamental differences between traditional Indigenous governance and Indian Act systems. She reflects on how colonial governance structures disrupt traditional decision-making processes, particularly regarding territorial management and community self-determination.



Hungry Days in Nunavut: The Façade of Inuit Self-Determination

Kunuk (Sandra) Inutiq, Yellowhead Institute

This article challenges claims about Inuit self-determination in Nunavut despite the territory's creation in 1999. Kunuk Inutiq explains how colonial structures and external control continue to limit genuine self-governance, revealing the gap between political rhetoric and lived reality.

“Historically, in Manawan, the band council was administered by whites.

I’ve seen photos from the 1950s and ’60s showing the Indian agent participating in a community evening with the Atikamekw. The first Atikamekw employees arrived around 1986.

The first department the Atikamekw managed was Sports and Recreation, then they were able to manage Culture. Although the Band Council councillors and chief were Atikamekw,

the administration of the reserve was carried out by white people from outside the community. Today, most of the Board’s employees are Indigenous, but there are still government auditors who drop in from time to time.”

— ALEXANDRE NEQUADO, ATIKAMEKW LINGUIST

WAMPUM AND ANCESTRAL ALLIANCES

For Indigenous Peoples, wampum belts, necklaces, and treaties are important tools in the struggle to preserve, strengthen, or achieve self-determination.

The wampum is part of the Indigenous oral traditions, while the treaties, drafted by Europeans, reflect Western concepts of land relations. Even today, colonial authorities fail to fully respect treaties, and misunderstandings persist regarding both historic and recent agreements.

WAMPUM

They are objects made from shell beads used from the 17th to 18th centuries to seal agreements between Indigenous Nations. They were then used as diplomatic and political tools with European nations.

The word “wampum” in the singular refers to belts and necklaces made with wampum beads, which are written in the plural.



Wampum – Beads of Respect and Agreement

McCord Stewart Museum

This infographic explains the diplomatic significance of wampum belts and necklaces in Indigenous treaty-making. McCord Stewart Museum explores how these sacred objects functioned within traditional governance structures and continue to represent binding agreements between nations.



Episode 4: Oral history

Richard Hill, Historica Canada

Tuscarora Elder Richard Hill shares oral teachings about wampum belts and their significance to Haudenosaunee governance. He discusses the Confederacy's territorial vision and explains how traditional knowledge systems continue to guide contemporary Indigenous politics and diplomacy.



UNCEDDED TERRITORIES

The term “unceded territory” is used to designate territories that have not been sold or acquired by treaty by colonizers. In Kepek, most territories have the legal status of unceded territory. In the rest of Kanata, however, many territories were sold at derisory prices through treaties, including the 11 Numbered Treaties.

TREATIES

A treaty is “a legally binding agreement defining the rights and obligations of the signatories, and is protected by international law. Negotiated and adopted by two or more sovereign nations, treaties are formal agreements used to strengthen and protect the relationship between these parties.”¹⁴





Modern treaties

Land Claims Agreements Coalition

The Land Claims Agreements Coalition offers six free online courses covering modern and historic treaties from Indigenous perspectives. These educational resources examine treaty-making processes, implementation challenges, and the ongoing significance of these agreements for Indigenous self-determination.



The Treaty Map: Indigenous Perspectives on Treaties in Canada

Yellowhead Institute

This interactive digital resource presents Indigenous perspectives on all historical and modern treaties across Canada. The Yellowhead Institute map examines each agreement's negotiation context, implementation history, and ongoing implications for Indigenous communities and territorial rights.



Treaties and the Treaty Relationship

Canada's History

This special issue presents Indigenous perspectives on Canada's foundational Treaties, examining historic and modern agreements from First Nations viewpoints. Contributors explore Treaty-making processes, the ongoing significance of nation-to-nation relationships, and the challenges of interpreting Treaties as living agreements essential to understanding relationships between Indigenous peoples and the Crown.



Treaty 3: Honouring its truths

Carlie Kane, Canadian Museum for Human Rights

Anishinaabe scholar Carlie Kane provides detailed analysis of Treaty No. 3 negotiations within the broader context of western territorial colonization. She explains how fundamentally different worldviews created translation challenges that continue to complicate treaty interpretation and implementation today.



Trick or Treaty?

Alanis Obomsawin, NFB

Filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin examines the complexity of modern treaty negotiations and their aftermath. This documentary reveals contrasting interpretations between Indigenous communities and government authorities, highlighting ongoing disputes over treaty implementation and Indigenous rights recognition.

INDIGENOUS STRUGGLES FOR AUTONOMY AND SOVEREIGNTY

On the political scene, Indigenous People have long been mobilizing to make their voices heard within colonial institutions and to claim their autonomy. Through resistance movements, negotiations and legal action, they fight for the recognition of their ancestral rights, the respect for treaties and the governance of their territories. The demands relate to the issues of political sovereignty, natural resource management, education, child and family services, justice and the right to self-determination. Despite the obstacles, these struggles have led to significant progress, such as the recognition of certain territorial rights, self-government for 43 Indigenous communities, and 2 education agreements covering 35 Indigenous communities.¹⁵

¹⁵ Crown–Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, *Self-government: Learn about Indigenous self-government in Canada*



Distinct rights: What does it all mean?

Aboriginal Peoples: Fact and Fiction, Institut Tshakapesh

This educational resource clarifies the distinct constitutional rights of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Institut Tshakapesh explains legal principles, historical foundations, and contemporary challenges related to Indigenous rights recognition, self-determination, and governance implementation.

Timeline

First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission

This timeline documents key developments in Indigenous political organization and autonomy negotiations in Quebec and Labrador. The Commission traces major milestones that led to increased self-governance agreements and the creation of Indigenous-controlled health and social services.

Métis and the Constitution

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, Canadian Geographic

This resource traces the Métis Nation's long struggle for constitutional recognition as an Indigenous people in Canada. Canadian Geographic highlights the identity politics and legal challenges involved in securing official recognition and the implications for Métis rights and self-governance.

How this family fought to protect Haida Gwaii's land and culture

The Current

This podcast examines generations of Haida resistance to protect their ancestral territories and culture. Matt Galloway explores the 2024 historic agreement that returned stewardship to the Haida Nation and discusses implications for the archipelago's future, including property rights and decolonization efforts.

Wampum belts: the first treaties in North America

CBC Indigenous

This documentary explores wampum belts as North America's first treaty documents, used to formalize agreements between Indigenous nations. CBC Indigenous explains how these sacred diplomatic tools functioned before and after European contact, establishing protocols that predate colonial legal systems.

MODERN TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS

During the first major hydroelectric projects of the Government of Quebec in the 1970s, Indigenous Peoples rose up to demand a seat at the decision-making table. Indigenous communities faced the potential destruction of thousands of acres of territory and the destabilization of traditional ways of life. As Kepek claimed territories inhabited since time immemorial, the Eeyou/Eenou nation of the James Bay region and the Inuit of Nunavik began working together to defend their rights. The Naskapi Nation then signed a similar agreement in 1978, the Northeastern Quebec Agreement.

These movements led to the emergence of modern agreements legally defining the relationship between those Indigenous groups and the Quebec government. The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, signed in 1975, paved the way for an unprecedented dialogue on land and cultural claims, laying the foundations for official recognition of ancestral rights. Subsequent agreements in Nunavik, as well as the Nunavik Inuit Declaration of 2018, bear witness to the dynamic of self-determination and the persistent will of Indigenous Peoples to forge their future with respect for their traditions and history.



Together We Stand Firm

Cree Nation Government

This documentary chronicles the complex negotiations leading to the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. The Cree Nation Government focuses on Indigenous negotiators' perspectives and strategies during these landmark discussions that established new frameworks for Indigenous-government relations.



So That You Can Stand

Ole Gjerstad

Filmmaker Ole Gjerstad presents the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement negotiations from Inuit perspectives. The documentary includes voices from communities that opposed the agreement, revealing internal debates about rights protection and the complexities of treaty-making processes.



Nunavik

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, Canadian Geographic

This atlas section examines Nunavik's geography, history, and contemporary Inuit governance structures. Canadian Geographic covers the Nunavik Agreement's implementation, land rights recognition, and community initiatives focused on preserving Inuktitut language and traditional cultural practices within modern governance frameworks.



Nunavik Inuit Pass Significant Self-Determination Resolution

Makivvik

This press release documents progress toward establishing Inuit self-government in Nunavik based on traditional values and governance systems. Makivvik outlines developments following the Nunavik Inuit Declaration, emphasizing cultural foundations and the implementation of internationally recognized self-determination rights.



Modern Treaties in Canada: A One Hour Course

Land Claims Coalition

This comprehensive course examines modern treaties' legal significance and role in Indigenous-Crown relations. The Land Claims Coalition covers negotiation processes, community impacts, and economic implications while highlighting the complexity of contemporary land claims and their implementation challenges.



A Troubling Observation in Quebec

Aboriginal Peoples: Fact and Fiction

This article examines specific challenges facing Indigenous communities in Quebec, focusing on Innu, Naskapi, and Cree Nations' experiences. Institut Tshakapesh highlights ongoing territorial disputes and rights recognition struggles within Quebec's complex legal and political context, emphasizing communities' continued efforts toward territorial control and sovereignty.

