



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Canadian
Coast Guard

Garde côtière
canadienne



BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2021

THE FUTURE IS
now

CANADA.CA/BLACK-HISTORY-MONTH

#BHM2021

Ask Me Anything: Black History Month

February 16 @ 1pm EST

Canada



During Black History Month, people in Canada celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians and their communities who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate, and prosperous nation it is today.

We are pleased to invite you to participate in our Ask Me Anything: Black History Month event, to highlight stories from members of the Black community.

This is the second in our series of Ask Me Anything sessions that are giving us a platform to share stories, listen, ask respectful questions and continue on our journey to becoming a more inclusive organization. Diversity comes in many forms: gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, culture, etc. These all contribute to an individual's uniqueness, talent and perspective. We know, through diversity, workplaces and communities are stronger, more successful and resilient. Though we are all different, we must also remember the bonds that unite us.

Keynote speaker

**Susan Young, Executive Assistant, Communications,
Fisheries and Oceans Canada & Virtual Counselor, Canadian Forces Morale
and Welfare Services, National Defence**

Susan's parents immigrated to Canada from the Caribbean island of Trinidad. She was born and raised in Montreal, Quebec. Susan has a Certificate in Justice Studies from Algonquin College, an Honours Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminology and Psychology from Western University, and a Graduate Certificate in Social Service Work from Algonquin College.

Susan is very active in anti-racism and inclusion efforts. She is currently a part of the DFO National Network for Diversity & Inclusion; the Anti-Racism Ambassadors Network; the Federal Black Employee Caucus, the Communications Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Working Group and the Positive Space Initiative. Susan, along with DFO employee Katherine "Kat" Middleton, developed an anti-racism resource document geared toward educating others on anti-racism and how to become an ally. The document includes internal and external resources for adults and children. It has received positive feedback and has been shared interdepartmentally.



Keynote speaker

Darren Ruck, MBA, Senior HR Advisor, Public Services and Procurement Canada



Darren was born and raised in Halifax Nova Scotia. He started his career with the Department of National Defence in 1984 where he was last appointed as a civilian operations manager in Base Supply, CFB Halifax.

After 14 years in the banking industry, he joined Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) where he has occupied roles as Regional Manager, Diversity and HR Planning and A/Regional Manager, Learning and Programs. He is now on assignment with the National office of PSPC, Diversity and Inclusion Unit.

An experienced facilitator and trainer, Darren has a passion for learning and promoting an inclusive workplace that supports good health, great careers and engagement at all levels.

Darren holds a Master of Business Administration from Saint Mary's University. He has also been an active community volunteer in areas of restorative justice, and non-profit board governance.

History of Black History month in Canada



In 1993, Dr. Jean Augustine made history as the first African-Canadian woman elected to Canada's House of Commons as a Member of Parliament. She has had many impressive achievements over her long career which have earned her many awards including the appointment of a Member of the Order of Canada, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

In 1996, Dr. Augustine put forward a motion to designate February as Black History Month, it passed with unanimous consent in Parliament. During the month of February people in Canada celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Black people and their communities who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate, and the prosperous nation it is today.

Questions and Answers

So what is racism anyway?

Racism is the act of discrimination against a person based on their skin colour or culture. It happens in big and small ways. It can be easy to recognize, for example using racial slurs in the street or harder for others to see, for example always being followed around in stores.

What is clear, is the person experiencing these acts FEEL them and it affects them deeply. There is ongoing stress and trauma related to constantly living in a world that treats you as “less than”. Discrimination can also be compounded depending on a person’s self-identity.

Racism isn’t just personal acts of hurt. It also occupies space in institutions. It has been quietly weaved into policies, programs and decision-making over generations making it hard to locate and dismantle.

For a more nuanced explanation of racism, discrimination and intersectionality, refer to the sections 1 and 3 of the Referenced Definitions and Concepts below.

I feel confused about the definition of race and ethnicity?

So, you are not alone here, there are ongoing debates about how race and ethnicity should be defined. There has also been a major shift in how the term has been used over the past couple of decades. In fact language always evolves and changes over time.

Ethnicity is currently the preferred term. It is defined by Statistics Canada as identifying the origin or ancestry, race and identity of an individual.

For more information on race and ethnicity refer to section 2 of the Referenced Definitions and Concepts below.

Questions and Answers

How can not eating lunch with someone be considered discrimination?

So this isn't an easy concept; and to properly explore it you must first understand unconscious bias. Unconscious bias is the act of subconsciously categorizing people into stereotypes as a way for your brain to rapidly sort data. It is a natural process that has both its advantages and disadvantages.

Each individual's personal bias is developed when they are young. It is based on their experiences and is influenced by the attitudes of family, friends and community members. Humans have the natural tendency to identify with people who are similar to them. This can often be described as just "feeling more comfortable with person 1 then person 2".

So, when there is a new person to the team and that person is of a different ethnicity there may be an automatic signal from your brain to feel uncomfortable. As such, you may not invite them to lunch—because you are just not sure you will have anything in common—this is exclusion or discrimination based on ethnicity.

The exclusion of others is a choice, and one that can be changed one act at a time. It means over-riding your sub-conscious and making room at your table for varied voices and opinions.

For more information on overt and covert racism along with micro- and macro-aggression refer to section 3 of the Referenced Definitions and Concepts below.

Questions and Answers

I don't feel privileged, how can I be seen as having privilege?

White privilege isn't about you and your individual life. It is about how society has been created and continues to hold the white person's experience as the gold standard. The gold standard is often demonstrated as a White family consisting of a mom, dad, son, daughter and a dog living in suburbia with a white picket fence. This is considered the normal and is often the prototype for experiences and products.

White privilege is the act of not facing daily racism and managing the emotional toll of it. It is seen in the boardrooms across corporate North America where there is no parity. It is finding the products for your skin and hair at any store you visit. It is seeing yourself reflected everywhere in print and media. It is automatically and systematically ensuring the ease in which you move within society based on the colour of your skin

For more information on white privilege and fragility refer to section 4 of the Referenced Definitions and Concepts below.

I'm not a bad person, I'm not the problem, I feel like you are just blaming me; what can I do?

So that my friend, is the experience of white fragility. It is the concept that you and the people you know are all good people. No one meant any harm or ill will by that statement or action and you (the Black person who pointed something out) are just being mean or overly-sensitive.

As a human, it is your job to make society better than what you were born into. To combat white privilege and fragility listen to those who have less privileged, work to amplify their voices and use your voice to ensure greater equity. Know that it is a long road, and while time and effort are spent explaining past actions and justifying current positions the needle isn't moving towards a more equitable future. Do your best to overcome your feelings of hurt and guilt privately and prioritize space for the lived-experiences of Black people.

For more information on white privilege and fragility refer to section 4 in the Referenced Definitions and Concepts below.

Questions and Answers

Ok I get it, but what can I one person really do to make a change?

You can do so much.

You can become a safe space! A person people go to when they have been discriminated against. When they have been treated differently solely because of who they are, the colour of their skin, where they were born, or what they believe.

You can support Black authors, artists, inventors, speakers and change makers by seeking out their work and showing multinational companies that the world IS interested in the content and value of their contributions.

You can interrupt when you see acts of discrimination by ensuring Black people are able to voice their opinions and their ideas.

You can tell a person you SEE them you HEAR them you RECOGNIZE their experience and they have your support.



YOU CAN MAKE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES WITH JUST SMALL DAILY ACTS OF EMPATHY AND KINDNESS TO OTHERS.

Referenced Definitions and Concepts:

Section 1. Racism

Individual racism refers to an individual's racist assumptions, beliefs or behaviours and is "a form of racial discrimination that stems from conscious and unconscious, personal prejudice" (Henry & Tator, 2006, p. 329). Individual racism is connected to/learned from broader socio-economic histories and processes and is supported and reinforced by systemic racism. ([link](#))

Racism is a system of advantage based on skin color. The focus of the definition is less on attitudes than results. It is the societal disparities between White people and non-White people. It is the continued societal norms and institutions that create and support these disparities. ([link](#)) The evolution of the terminology surrounding racism, discrimination and prejudice continues to evolve. John McWhorter breaks down the history of the definition and its evolution in an article for the Atlantic that can be read [here](#).

Discrimination: is an action or a decision that treats a person or a group badly for reasons such as their race, age or disability. These reasons, also called grounds, are protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act. ([link](#))

Institutional / Systemic Racism: is a form of racism that is embedded as normal practice within society or an organization. It can lead to such issues as discrimination in criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power, and education, among other issues. ([link](#))

Intersectionality: the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group. As these systems overlap, the individual is often faced with multiple systems of discrimination or disadvantages. ([link](#))

Referenced Definitions and Concepts:

Section 2. Race and Ethnicity

"Race" and "ethnicity" are complex terms and often used interchangeably. These terms were initially separated to designate "race" as a biological quality and "ethnicity" as a cultural phenomenon. This distinction mirrors efforts to distinguish sex and gender. Unlike "sex" and "gender," however, there is little agreement on core distinctions between race and ethnicity. ([link](#))

Genetic studies in the late 20th century refuted the existence of biogenetically distinct races, and scholars now argue that "races" are cultural interventions reflecting specific attitudes and beliefs that were imposed on different populations in the wake of western European conquests beginning in the 15th century. ([link](#))

Ethnicity: is somewhat multidimensional as it includes aspects such as race, origin or ancestry, identity, language and religion. It may also include more subtle dimensions such as culture, the arts, customs and beliefs and even practices such as dress and food preparation. It is also dynamic and in a constant state of flux. Statistics Canada currently uses the term ethnicity to identify origin or ancestry, race and Identity. ([link](#))

BIPOC: Black people, Indigenous peoples and people of colour ([link](#))

Referenced Definitions and Concepts:

Section 3. Covert and explicit/overt racism

Racism and prejudice are practiced in many different ways. Some forms are easy to identify and demand reparations, others are much more subtle and insidious in their practice making them much harder to identify and route out.

Covert racism: is racial discrimination that is concealed or subtle rather than obvious or public (Coasts & Morrison, 2011). It is done in a way that allows the perpetrators to claim “plausible deniability” and undermine the harm. ([link](#))

Explicit (overt) racism: is the intentional and/or obvious harmful attitudes or behaviors towards another minority individual or group because of the color of his/her skin (Elias, 2015). ([link](#))

Micro-aggression: is a term used for brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups. (Tina Walter @ CCG’s The Power of Inclusion a Diversity Symposium)

Macro-aggression: Large-scale or overt aggression toward those of a certain race, culture, gender, etc. ([link](#))

Race-based stress and trauma: a natural byproduct of the types of negative and harmful experiences that BIPOC have to deal with on a regular basis. ([link](#))

Referenced Definitions and Concepts:

Section 4. White Privilege and Fragility

The unearned, daily privileges that white people experience because they are not subject to racism. These privileges can often appear invisible to white people because they are so normalized and considered to be the standard. Examples of White privilege include seeing 'yourself' reflected everywhere, such as, having products and clothing designed for your hair and skin, seeing yourself represented in the media, on shows and movies and through music. It is the ability of being outside your home without being profiled. White Privilege is the product of legacy and exists because of historic, enduring racism and biases. ([link](#))

“Put simply, white privileges are the unearned privileges that white individuals experience on a daily basis (often unconsciously) because they are not subjected to racism. These benefits are often “invisible” to white individuals because they feel like “a given,” like something that everyone experiences.” ([link](#))

White fragility: Is the immediate resistance and defensiveness a white person feels when they are told about systemic racism. It is often followed by the act of choosing not to understand what systemic racism means and how it unfolds; the persistent ideology of white supremacy; the act of fragility manifesting itself in anger based on discrimination; the damage of not understanding individuals' intentional or unintentional role in supporting the “system”. (Tina Walter @ CCG's The Power of Inclusion a Diversity Symposium). It is also the concept of the high social cost, especially borne by Black people, when pointing out discrimination and prejudice. That White people will often band together and defend or excuse acts of racism. White fragility holds racism in place ([link](#))

“In 2011, DiAngelo coined the term “white fragility” to describe the disbelieving defensiveness that white people exhibit when their ideas about race and racism are challenged—and particularly when they feel implicated in white supremacy.” ([link](#))

Referenced Definitions and Concepts:

Implicit bias: Subconscious attitudes or associated stereotypes towards people that shape the way we think of and treat others. It includes different qualities such as race, age, gender, nationality, etc., and can be formed based on where, when, and how you grew up. Being mindful of implicit bias can help us to act more in line with our conscious values and beliefs. ([link](#))

“We have a bias when, rather than being neutral, we have a preference for (or aversion to) a person or group of people. Thus, we use the term “implicit bias” to describe when we have attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge.” ([link](#))

“Instituting specific procedures of decision-making and encouraging people to be mindful of the risks of implicit bias can help us avoid acting according to biases that are contrary to our conscious values and beliefs.” ([link](#))

Section 5. Allyship

Allyship is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. It is not self-defined, work and efforts must be recognized by those you are seeking to ally with. ([link](#))

Macro-affirmation: An individual supporting a member of a community in a personal positive way. To let them know they have been heard, have support and that allies exist. (Tina Walter @ CCG’s The Power of Inclusion a Diversity Symposium)

28 suggestions of films to watch for Black History Month

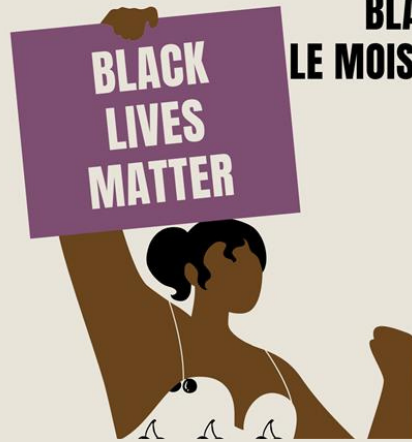
FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 HIDDEN FIGURES	2 THE IMMORTAL LIFE OF HENRIETTA LACKS	3 JUST MERCY	4 MALCOM X	5 THE COLOR PURPLE	6 HARRIET
7 BESSIE	8 BURDEN	9 I AM MLK JR.	10 4 LITTLE GIRLS	11 WHAT'S MY NAME: MUHAMMAD ALI	12 SELMA	13 13TH
14 SAY HER NAME: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SANDRA BLAND	15 40 YEARS A PRISONER	16 BETWEEN THE BLACKKLANSMAN AND ME	17	18 WHEN THEY SEE US	19 THE SOUL OF AMERICA	20 TRUE JUSTICE: BRYAN STEVENSON'S FIGHT FOR EQUALITY
21 CONFIRMATION	22 SELF MADE: INSPIRED BY THE LIFE OF MADAM C.J. WALKER	23 ALL DAY AND NIGHT	24 MISS VIRGINIA	25 MARSHALL	26 THE HELP	27 BLACK PANTHER

28

CHANGE & ACTION: RACISM IN CANADA

Acknowledgements



BLACK HISTORY MONTH
LE MOIS DE L'HISTOIRE DES NOIRS

“We’ve learned that quiet isn't always peace, and the norms and notions of what just is isn't always just-ice.”

– Amanda Gorman, Poet, Activist

Thank you for attending Ask Me Anything - Black History Month. To access all the resources visit this [folder](#). Here is also the [Report and Guide](#) from the Power of Inclusion Diversity Symposium.

This document was created by Katie Freer with support from Samantha Moonsammy, Beth Dodwell, Susan Young, Natasha Lim and Melissa Michaud Camacho as a support tool for this Ask Me Anything event.

Please contact the [CCG internal communications team](#) with any questions, comments and suggestions so we can all continue on our journey to become more inclusive and respectful.