

Aboriginal Treaty Rights

Rights that some Aboriginal peoples of Canada hold as a result of their ancestors' longstanding use and occupancy of the land. Examples include hunting, trapping and fishing rights on ancestral lands. Aboriginal rights vary from group to group depending on the customs, practices, traditions, treaties and agreements that have formed part of their distinctive cultures. NOTE: "Aboriginal peoples" is not a preferred name; Ontario's First Nation communities have expressed publicly and politically that they prefer Indigenous Peoples.

SOURCE: Library & Archives Canada, [*"Terminology Guide: Research on Indigenous Heritage"*](#)

Aboriginal Title

In general, "Aboriginal title" refers to the rights of Aboriginal Peoples to the occupation, use and enjoyment of their land and its resources. NOTE: "Aboriginal peoples" is not a preferred name; Ontario's First Nation communities have expressed publicly and politically that they prefer Indigenous Peoples.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [*"Indigenous Peoples' Terminology Guidelines for Usage"*](#)

Ally

Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.

Allies commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

SOURCE: OpenSource Leadership Strategies, [*"The Dynamic System of Power, Privilege and Oppressions"*](#)

Anti-Racism

Anti-Racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

SOURCE: Racial Equity Tools, [*"Glossary"*](#)

Asexual

A term describing individuals who do not experience sexual attraction or do not have interest in or desire for sex. Asexuality is different from celibacy, which means abstaining from sex. Asexuality is often viewed as a spectrum – meaning there are varying levels and identities regarding someone’s emotional, spiritual and romantic attraction. The best way to refer to the asexual community is to use the umbrella term “ace” or “aces” as in the “ace community,” which acknowledges that spectrum.

SOURCE: The Trevor Project, [“Trevor Support Center Glossary”](#)

Bisexual

A person who experiences attraction to both men and women. Some bisexual people use this term to express attraction to both their own sex and/or gender, as well as to people of a different sex and/or gender.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Black Lives Matter

A political movement to address systemic and state violence against African Americans. Per the Black Lives Matter organizers: “In 2013, three radical Black organizers—Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi—created a Black-centered political will and movement building project called #BlackLivesMatter. It was in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer, George Zimmerman. The project is now a member-led global network of more than 40 chapters. [Black Lives Matter] members organize and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.”

SOURCE: Black Lives Matter, [“Herstory”](#)

Cisgender

A person whose gender identity corresponds with the social expectations associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Cultural appropriation

Theft of cultural elements for one's own use, commodification, or profit — including symbols, art, language, customs, etc. — often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant (i.e. white) culture's right to take other cultural elements.

SOURCE: Colors of Resistance, [“Colors of Resistance Archive”](#)

Diaspora

Diaspora is "the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions...a common element in all forms of diaspora; these are people who live outside their natal (or imagined natal) territories and recognize that their traditional homelands are reflected deeply in the languages they speak, religions they adopt, and the cultures they produce."

SOURCE: Leong Yew, [“The Culture of Diasporas in the Postcolonial Web”](#)

Enfranchisement

The process involved in giving up one's status as an Indian; predominate during era of Indian assimilation practices. In 1985, this practice was terminated by Bill C-31.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [“Indigenous Peoples' Terminology Guidelines for Usage”](#)

Extinguishment

The history of extinguishment of title has its roots in old or historic treaties which contained the words “cede, release, surrender” of their rights, title and privileges to the lands included within the limits of that particular treaty.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [“Indigenous Peoples' Terminology Guidelines for Usage”](#)

Fiduciary obligation

A legal duty described by the Supreme Court as the obligation of one party to look after the well-being of another. Canada has fiduciary obligations to Indigenous people, meaning that Canada must consult and negotiate with Indigenous people whenever their interests are concerned.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [*"Indigenous Peoples' Terminology Guidelines for Usage"*](#)

FAAB

An acronym that refers to someone who was assigned female sex at birth. It stands for Female-Assigned at Birth. This may also be expressed as Coercively Assigned Female at Birth (CAFAB).

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

First Nation(s)

First Nation is a term used to identify Indigenous peoples of Canada who are neither Métis nor Inuit. This term came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the term "Indian" and "Indian band" which many find offensive. First Nations people includes both status and non-status Indians so there's a need to careful with its usage, especially if in reference to programs that are specifically for status-Indians.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [*"Indigenous Peoples' Terminology Guidelines for Usage"*](#)

Gender

Gender is a system that operates in a social context to classify people, often based on their assigned sex. In many contexts this takes the form of a binary classification of either 'man' or 'woman'; in other contexts, this includes a broader spectrum.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

Gender expression

The way a person presents and communicates gender within a social context. Gender can be expressed through clothing, speech, body language, hairstyle, voice, and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics or behaviours, which are often associated with masculinity and femininity. The ways in which gender is expressed are culturally specific and may change over time. May also be referred to as gender presentation or gender performance.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

Gender identity

Gender Identity is a person's internal and individual experience of gender. This could include an internal sense of being a man, woman, both, neither or another gender entirely. A person's gender identity may or may not correspond with social expectations associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Since gender identity is internal, it is not necessarily visible to others. It is important to remember that gender identity is not the same as sex / assigned sex.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

Gender/sex binary

The notion that there are only two possible sexes (male/female) and genders (man/woman), and that they are opposite, distinct and uniform categories. This view also asserts that gender is determined by sex.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

Genderqueer

A person whose gender identity and/or expression may not correspond with social and cultural gender expectations. Individuals who identify as genderqueer may move between genders, identify with multiple genders, or reject the gender binary or gender altogether.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

Heteronormativity

A cultural and societal bias, often unconscious, that privileges heterosexuality, and ignores or underrepresents diversity in attraction and behaviour by assuming all people are heterosexual.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Indian Act

The Indian Act is federal legislation that regulates Indians and reserves and sets out certain federal government powers and responsibilities toward First Nations and their reserved lands. The first Indian Act was passed in 1876, although there were a number of pre-Confederation and post-Confederation enactments with respect to Indians and reserves prior to 1876. Since then, it has undergone numerous amendments, revisions and re-enactments.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [“Indigenous Peoples’ Terminology Guidelines for Usage”](#)

SOURCE: [Indian Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5\)](#)

Indigeneity

Indigenous populations are composed of the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them, by conquest, settlement or other means and reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial condition; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form part, under a state structure which incorporates mainly national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant. NOTE: Ontario’s First Nation communities have expressed publicly and politically that they prefer the term “Indigenous Peoples.”

SOURCE: [United Nations Working Group for Indigenous Peoples](#)

Inuit

Inuit Indigenous people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. Inuit are not covered by the Indian Act.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [“Indigenous Peoples’ Terminology Guidelines for Usage”](#)

Intersectionality

Exposing a person's multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life.

SOURCE: Intergroup Resources, [*"Intersectionality"*](#)

LGBTQ

An acronym for "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two Spirit, Queer and Questioning" people. This acronym is often used as an umbrella term to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to gender and attraction. This acronym takes many forms and can include: LGBPTTIQQ2sAAS+.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

MAAB

An acronym that refers to someone who was assigned male sex at birth. It stands for Male-Assigned at Birth. This may also be expressed as Coercively Assigned Male at Birth (CAMAB).

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*"Glossary of Terms"*](#)

Métis Peoples

Métis Peoples are people of mixed Indigenous and European ancestry. The Métis National Council adopted the following definition of "Métis" in 2002: "Métis" means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry and who is accepted by the Métis Nation." *Métis are now covered by the Indian Act.

SOURCE: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., [*"Indigenous Peoples' Terminology Guidelines for Usage"*](#)

Microaggression

The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

SOURCE: Derald Wing Sue, [*“Microaggressions: More than Just Race,” Psychology Today*](#)

Non-Binary

Anything that falls outside of the binary system (see definition above). Intersex, genderqueer, and bisexuality are all examples of non-binary identities.

SOURCE: The Trevor Project, [*“Trevor Support Center Glossary”*](#)

Non-Status (Indian)

Non-status Indians generally lack status under the Indian Act but have Indian heritage. This lack of status can be the result of a variety of reasons and circumstances (i.e. their ancestors were never registered, they lost their status when they voted or enrolled into the Canadian Army, or when a woman married a non-status Indian or non-Indigenous person).

SOURCE: Lakehead University Teaching Commons, [*“Indigenous Terminology”*](#)

Pansexual

A person who experiences attraction to people of diverse sexes and/or genders. The term pansexual reflects a desire to recognize the potential for attraction to sexes and/or genders that exist across a spectrum and to challenge the sex/gender binary.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [*“Glossary of Terms”*](#)

POC – People of Colour

Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-White racial groups. Racial justice advocates have been using the term “people of color” (not to be confused with the pejorative “colored people”) since the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying frame across different racial groups that are not White, to address racial inequities. While “people of color” can be a politically useful term, and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, e.g., “non-White”), it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate.

SOURCE: Race Forward, [“Race Reporting Guide”](#)

Pronoun usage

Using the correct pronouns at someone’s request, is a way of validating that we all have the right to live our truth, to share our truth, and to be granted safety, respect and dignity in doing so. This involves knowledge about personal pronoun options beyond she/her/hers for women and he/him/his, for men when referring to someone in the third person. Some people go by the non-binary, gender neutral pronoun set; they/ them/theirs. Over time, we have also seen the addition of other non-binary, gender neutral options.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Restorative justice

Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by crime and conflict. It places decisions in the hands of those who have been most affected by a wrongdoing, and gives equal concern to the victim, the offender, and the surrounding community. Restorative responses are meant to repair harm, heal broken relationships, and address the underlying reasons for the offense. Restorative Justice emphasizes individual and collective accountability. Crime and conflict generate opportunities to build community and increase grassroots power when restorative practices are employed.

SOURCE: The Movement for Black Lives, [“Glossary”](#)

Spectrum

This is a term that is often paired with sex or gender to recognize that people may have a range of experiences (and realities) in both of these aspects of identity.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Status (Indian Status)

Status Indians are those who are registered as “Indians” under the Indian Act within Canada. This is a legal identity.

SOURCE: Lakehead University Teaching Commons, [“Indigenous Terminology”](#)

Transgender

A person who does not identify either fully or in part with the gender associated with the sex assigned to them at birth—often used as an umbrella term to represent a wide range of gender identities and expressions.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Transitioning

The social, legal, and/or medical process a trans* person may go through to make their gender identity fit their gender expression, presentation, or sex. This word means many different things to different people, and a person doesn’t have to experience all or any of these common transitioning elements to identify as their true gender.

SOURCE: The Trevor Project, [“Trevor Support Center Glossary”](#)

Treaty Indian

Treaty Indians are those who are members of a community whose ancestors signed a treaty with the Crown and as a result are entitled to treaty benefits.

SOURCE: Lakehead University Teaching Commons, [“Indigenous Terminology”](#)

Two Spirit (or 2-Spirit)

An English umbrella term that reflects the many words used in different Aboriginal languages to affirm the interrelatedness of multiple aspects of identity—including gender, sexuality, community, culture and spirituality. Prior to the imposition of the sex/gender binary by European colonizers, some Aboriginal cultures recognized Two Spirit people as respected members of their communities. Two Spirit people were often accorded special status based upon their unique abilities to understand and move between masculine and feminine perspectives, acting as visionaries, healers and medicine people. Some Aboriginal people identify as Two Spirit rather than, or in addition to, identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

White privilege

Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

SOURCE: [Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity](#), CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services.

Queer

A term used by some in LGBTQ communities, particularly youth, as a symbol of pride and affirmation of diversity. This term makes space for the expression of a variety of identities outside of rigid categories associated with sex, gender or attraction. It can be used by a community to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender or attraction (as with the acronym LGBTQ), or by an individual to reflect the interrelatedness of these aspects of their identity. Queer was historically a derogatory term for difference, used in particular to insult homosexuality and LGBTQ people. Although sometimes still used as a slur, the term has been reclaimed by some members of LGBTQ communities.

SOURCE: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, [“Glossary of Terms”](#)

Questioning

A person who may be processing or questioning their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

SOURCE: The Trevor Project, [“Trevor Support Center Glossary”](#)