

Indigenous Treaty Relations in Canada: The History and the Cover-up

Reviewing "No Surrender: The Land is Indigenous." Sheldon Krasowski in conversation with Thomas White Thunderbird

By [Michael Welch](#)

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A week ago, as of this writing, huge numbers of people, clad in orange t-shirts, took to the streets. It was the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Canada's newest holiday. [1]

And it was meant to commemorate the pain and tragedy of the history and ongoing impacts of residential schools, the education facilities to which Indigenous children were directed and by design stripped of their ancestry to be converted to the "superior" ways of the European-Canadians. [2]

Many students never survived the experience. Many were buried on the land of the school. The brutal treatment of these Indigenous students had effects on their ability to parent or relate to parents within their communities resulting in inter-generational effects that persist even today.[3]

The Residential school is just one product of the unity on land between Indigenous people and the settler population. If institutions like this are indicative of the asymmetric relationship between the two of them, one should consider how the Treaties forged in the 1870s set the stage for generations of cruelty.[4]

Many historians hypothesized that cultural misunderstanding led to the break down of Treaty negotiations between Indigenous representatives and Treaty commissioners.

However, more recently, an academic from Saskatchewan spent a great deal of time researching eyewitness testimonies from the side of First Nations and found that, together with extracts from the settler side, came to the conclusion that the Treaties were beholden to a strategic plan on the part of the Canadian government that forced the “surrender” of the native land even though this issue was never actually discussed by Indigenous nation after Indigenous nation. [5]

This issue of the Global Research News Hour has the distinct privilege of interviewing the academic, his name is Sheldon Krasowski, about the Treaties and their repercussions for the suppression of First Nations and the fraudulent “victory” of European settlers that still persists to this day.

We will also have a special host. Thomas White Thunderbird is also of Indigenous ancestry and will conduct the interview as part of the station’s “Pass the Mic” week.

Sheldon Krasowski has taught in both history and Indigenous Studies departments at First Nations University of Canada; Vancouver Island University; the University of Saskatchewan; Blue Quills First Nations College; the University of Calgary; and Athabasca University. ” In 2011, he received a PhD in history from the University of Regina for the dissertation, “Mediating the Numbered Treaties: Eyewitness Accounts of the Numbered Treaties Between the Crown and Indigenous Peoples, 1871-1876.” He is currently Director of Research and Archives at the Office of the Treaty Commissioner in Saskatoon.

(Global Research News Hour Episode 403)

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Notes:

1. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/national-day-truth-reconciliation.html>
2. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/residential-schools>
3. ibid
4. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-treaties>
5. <https://www.amazon.ca/No-Surrender-Land-Remains-Indigenous/dp/0889775966>

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