Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence and Decolonization

Instructor: Seb Bonet

Course Description: The Final Summary Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (2015) states that “[v]irtually all aspects of Canadian society may need to be reconsidered” (vi) in pursuit of reconciliation between indigenous people and Canadian settlers. The report also explains that “reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one” (vi).

This course attempts to respond to the contemporary issue of settler colonialism by thinking through some of the implications and responsibilities arising from the TRC’s report. We will do our theoretical thinking in three clusters. First, we will unpack the process and present of colonization to theorize settler colonialism. Second, we will try to learn a little about the cultures that have been subject to genocide to theorize indigenous resurgence. Third, we will consider the question of reconciliation to theorize what meaningful decolonization might look like.

Course Outcomes/Objectives:
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This course invites participants to theorize the relation between settlers and indigenous people, not as an abstract issue to be studied from the sanitized vantage point of the academy, but as a pressing problem whose resolution entails deep and wide-scale transformation of contemporary life.

Required Resources May Include:
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Course readings will centre indigenous authors, from Glen Coulthard and Leanne Simpson to Robin Wall Kimmerer, Sarah Hunt and Jeff Corntassel.

1This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.