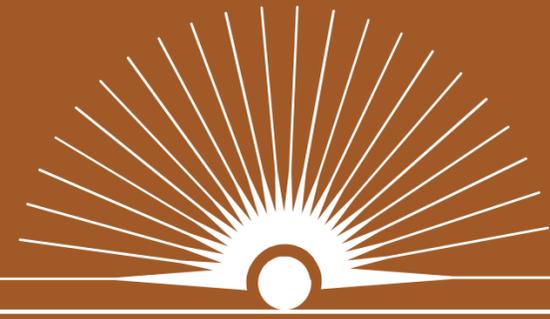
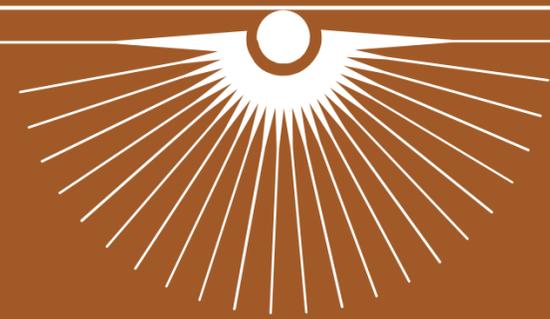


INDIGENOUS PEOPLES,  
POLICE,  
AND THE PRISON SYSTEM



THE U.S.



# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND POLICE:

- According to CNN in 2017, Indigenous Peoples in the U.S. are killed by law enforcement at a higher rate than any other race or ethnicity (while the rate is higher, the actual number of murders among Indigenous groups is not the highest) (Hansen)
- In 2017, a sheriff's deputy fatally shot a 14-year-old boy on the Bad River Reservation in Wisconsin (Hansen)
- Indigenous deaths as a result of police brutality are likely underreported for a number of reasons, including the relatively large homeless population (Hansen)
- California has an especially dark history of police violence against Indigenous Peoples (Golden)
  - Many cases involve sexual violence or other forms of gender-based violence, giving women hesitancy to come forward (Golden)
    - This leads to a lack of data
- Around 7 decades ago, California was given criminal jurisdiction over tribal members (Golden)





"Problems with data collection - and an unfortunate tendency to group Native Americans together with other ethnic and racial groups in data publications - have made it hard to understand the effect of mass incarceration on Native people."

— Roxanne Daniel, Prison Policy Initiative

# INDIGENOUS INCARCERATION:

- Indigenous Peoples who are part of the prison system are often grouped as "other" when reported on demographics (Daniel)
- In 2017, Oklahoma topped the list of states with the highest number of Indigenous inmates, followed by Arizona, Alaska, and California (Daniel)
- The National Institution of Justice states that these factors lead to a lack of data relating to Indigenous incarceration, including:
  - The Department of Justice (DOJ) has moved slowly
  - Reporting is voluntary
  - Data collection does not distinguish between tribes
  - Data aren't used to help Native communities
  - Cultural and socioeconomic barriers lead to undercounting (Daniel)

# INDIGENOUS INCARCERATION, CONT.:

- A detention rate of 255 for every 100,000 means that Indigenous youths are far more likely to be confined than white youth, who have a detention rate of 93 per 100,000 (Daniel)
- 80 jails operate on tribal lands, which hold 1,750 men and 620 women, as of 2016 (Daniel)
- This same year, 19,790 Native men and 2,954 Native women were incarcerated in U.S. state and federal prisons (Daniel)
- As of June 2018, 401 per 100,000 Native people were detained in local jails across the country
  - This is almost twice the incarceration rate of white and Hispanic people (Daniel)

# INMATE RACE STATISTICS:

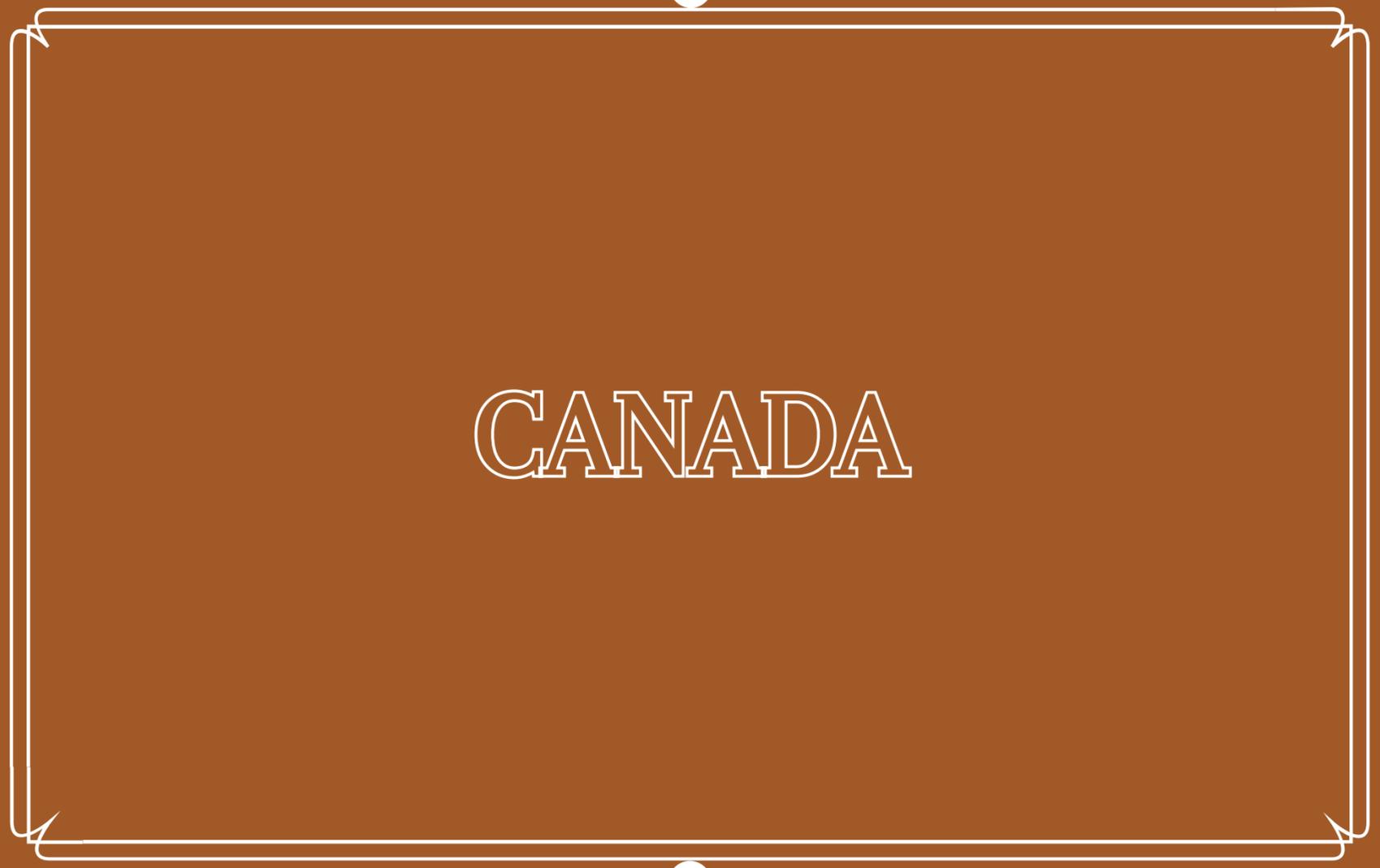
White: 57.6%

Black: 38.6%

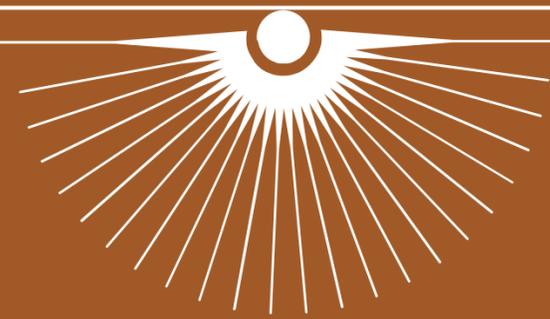
Indigenous: 2.4%

Asian: 1.5%

(Federal Bureau of Prisons)



CANADA





"The notion of police being there to serve and protect in times of need often does not apply to Indigenous, Black or other racialized minorities in Canada. The notion of 'help' more often resembles harm."

— Krista Stelkia, Yellowhead Institute

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND POLICE:

- Between April and June of 2020, six Indigenous people were fatally shot by police, including one woman who was shot and killed during a "wellness check" (Graham)
- From 2007 to 2017, Indigenous people made up more than a third of people fatal shot by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers, though they only make up 5% of the population (Graham)
- One First Nations chief was punched, tackled, and choked during an arrest over an expired license plate (Graham)
- Indigenous women have been forced to undergo "humiliating and degrading" strip searches by RCMP officers (Graham)
- A Native former RCMP officer, Chris Pallan, stated "when you put on that uniform, it represents a lot of things that First Nations people don't agree with"
  - He also recalled a community elder who called police "the people that take our children away" (Graham)



# SYSTEMIC RACISM:

"Policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society or organization, and that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race." (Cambridge Dictionary)

- Also called **structural racism** and **institutional racism**
- Examples include discrimination in the criminal justice system and a little to no access to employment, housing, healthcare, political power, and education.
- First Nations in Canada are disproportionately overrepresented when compared to other residents of the country (Stelkia)
  - ex. While Indigenous children make up 7.7% of Canada's population, they represent 52% of children in foster care
  - ex. an Indigenous man died of a treatable bladder infection because he waited 32 hours in an emergency room, never receiving treatment (Stelkia)
- Leads to victim blaming, even for their own deaths (Stelkia)

# SYSTEMIC RACISM, CONT.:

The Yellowhead Institute suggests "a way forward" that addresses racism by holding the system accountable, which includes:

- Governmental commitment to address structural racism at all levels
- Development of structural racism indicators and collection of race-based demographic data
- Implementation of recommendations by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and MMIWG

# INDIGENOUS INCARCERATION:

- More than 30% of inmates in Canadian Prisons are Indigenous, yet they only make up 5% of the population (Cecco)
- Indigenous women make up 42% of the female prison population (Bellrichard)
- As of 2020, the highest rates are in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, where Indigenous Peoples make up 54% of the incarcerated population
- There has been a decline in the number of incarcerated people since 2010, but the rate of Indigenous prisoners has grown by 43.4% in the past 10 years (Bellrichard)
  - The lowest is Quebec at 15%, though they are still highly overrepresented (Cecco)
- Indigenous offenders are more likely to be sent to maximum-security facilities, where they are subjected to harm, both self-induced and resulting from "use of force (Cecco)
- The proportion of Indigenous youths in Canada has grown exponentially over time
  - Between 2010 and 2012, 48% of First Nations youths were admitted to custody
  - Between 2014 and 2015, this number grew to 52% (Canadian Department of Justice)
- Legislative Reforms have since been in progress to address the issue of Indigenous Overrepresentation in the Canadian prison system (Canadian Department of Justice)

# INMATE RACE STATISTICS:

White: 54.2%

Indigenous: 25.2%

Black: 7.2%

Other/unknown: 6.9%

Asian: 5.3%

Hispanic: 1.1%

(Statistica)

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