

Defining Moments Canada Announces: The Bryce Report@100 - A Story of a National Crime

We will commemorate the centennial of the publication of Dr. Bryce's landmark research, continuing our commitment to curation, telling stories, and education.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, March 10, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Defining Moments Canada/Moments Déterminants Canada](#), a heritage education organization, in partnership with the Government of Canada (through the Ministry of Canadian Heritage) announces a national commemorative project entitled:



Bilingual logo for Defining Moments Canada

The Bryce Report@100: The Story of a National Crime.

"I believe the conditions are being deliberately created in our residential schools to spread infectious diseases [...] The mortality rate in the schools often exceeds fifty percent. This is a national crime." - Dr. Peter Bryce, 1922

Over a century ago, settler Canadian Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, in his capacity as Chief Medical Officer for the federal Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), investigated conditions at 35 Indian Residential Schools in Canada. Bryce found that Indigenous children institutionalized at these 'schools' suffered from an extremely high death rate, largely due to tuberculosis. He attributed the elevated rates of disease and death to poor ventilation and unsanitary conditions within these institutions, as well as the extreme overcrowding of Indigenous children. Bryce communicated these atrocities to the DIA, members of parliament, and Christian churches in 1907, in what is commonly referred to as the "Bryce Report." Although the findings detailed in Dr. Bryce's report received national attention even then, the DIA and church organizations did nothing to improve school conditions and the lives of the thousands of Indigenous children institutionalized in these carceral spaces.

In 1922, Dr. Bryce self-published *The Story of a National Crime: An Appeal for Justice to the Indians of Canada*, once again pointing to the horrific conditions at residential schools and the peril of Indigenous children who were institutionalized in them - this time, circulating the information throughout the general population. Again, neither the federal government nor the churches took action to rectify this situation.

“The mistreatment of Indigenous children who were subjected to the residential school system has impacts that are still felt today. By supporting projects like this one, we are able to shed light on this tragedy and ask Canadians to better understand these enduring legacies. We must never forget the children lost to this devastating system. This must be a part of our collective commitment towards reconciliation.”

—The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, Minister of Canadian Heritage

Defining Moments Canada will develop a bilingual national digital commemoration for the centennial of the publication of *The Story of a National Crime*. Commemorating Dr. Bryce's landmark research will continue the Defining Moments Canada commitment to curation, telling stories, and teaching at the intersection of Public Health and Public Education. Defining Moments Canada will use accessible digital platforms and our trademarked '[Curatorial Thinking](#)' pedagogy to create lesson plans, historical articles, multimedia content and storymaps to inspire teachers and learners to engage with this story.

Utilizing the "[Two-Eyed Seeing Approach](#)" pioneered by Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall, our partners will help shape a learning journey of reconciliation for the general Canadian public, but primarily youth audiences, using the centennial of the Bryce publication as a platform to acknowledge this dark chapter in our shared histories and address 21st century issues. We are developing and executing this project in conversation with a number of Indigenous, education, and community organizations, including: McMaster Children and Youth University, Indspire, Huron University Community History Centre, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, Esri Canada, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, the Archives of Ontario, Library and Archives Canada, and the Mi'kmaw Moons Project. We are also working in close collaboration with Dr. Carmen Rodriguez de France (Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic), Naomi Pierrard (Etuaptmumk Consultant, Mi'kmaw Services Branch, NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development), and Garfield Gini-Newman (Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning at OISE, U of T).

“In his long career, Dr Bryce was a Canadian leader among a generation of progressive Public Health champions. He was committed to the use of scientific research to direct health policy. The fact that his Reports into the living conditions for children in government care at Indian Residential Schools were consistently ignored, is a story of national shame, yet one deserving of national commemoration. We are both humbled and proud to lead this project, hoping that it can serve as one step on a path of reconciliation for all Canadians.”

- Neil Orford, President, Defining Moments Canada

“Peter Hendersen Bryce stands as a hallmark of the moral conviction and courage it requires to enact the Hippocratic Oath and to transition reconciliation from an ideology to a reality.”

-Dr. Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada

Almost 90 years before The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Canadians were alerted to the devastating impact of government policy on Indigenous Peoples through the Reserve and Residential School systems by the work of Dr Peter Bryce. The 1922 Report he published, revealed the inescapable truth that ‘a national crime’ was being perpetrated by the Department of Indian Affairs - a defining moment for ALL Canadians.

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Defining Moments Canada/Moments Déterminants Canada is a digital heritage and education company, leading innovative educational engagement and the commemoration of Canada's history using twenty-first century tools and storytelling skills. It has previously carried out the national commemorations surrounding the 1918-1920 Influenza Pandemic in Canada, the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, the 100th Anniversary of the Discovery of Insulin, and the 75th anniversary of VEDay.. In 2021, Defining Moments Canada launched ‘Herzberg50’ to honour Dr. Gerhard Herzberg's 1971 Nobel Prize award in Chemistry, a project which will transition into the ‘NobelCanadian’ commemorative project in 2022.

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