



Colonialism, Slavery & African Canadians in Nova Scotia

Migration and Identity

Melanie C. Smith

Early African Canadians

- The enslaved
- Free coloreds
- Black Loyalist
- Maroons



Transatlantic
Slave Trade

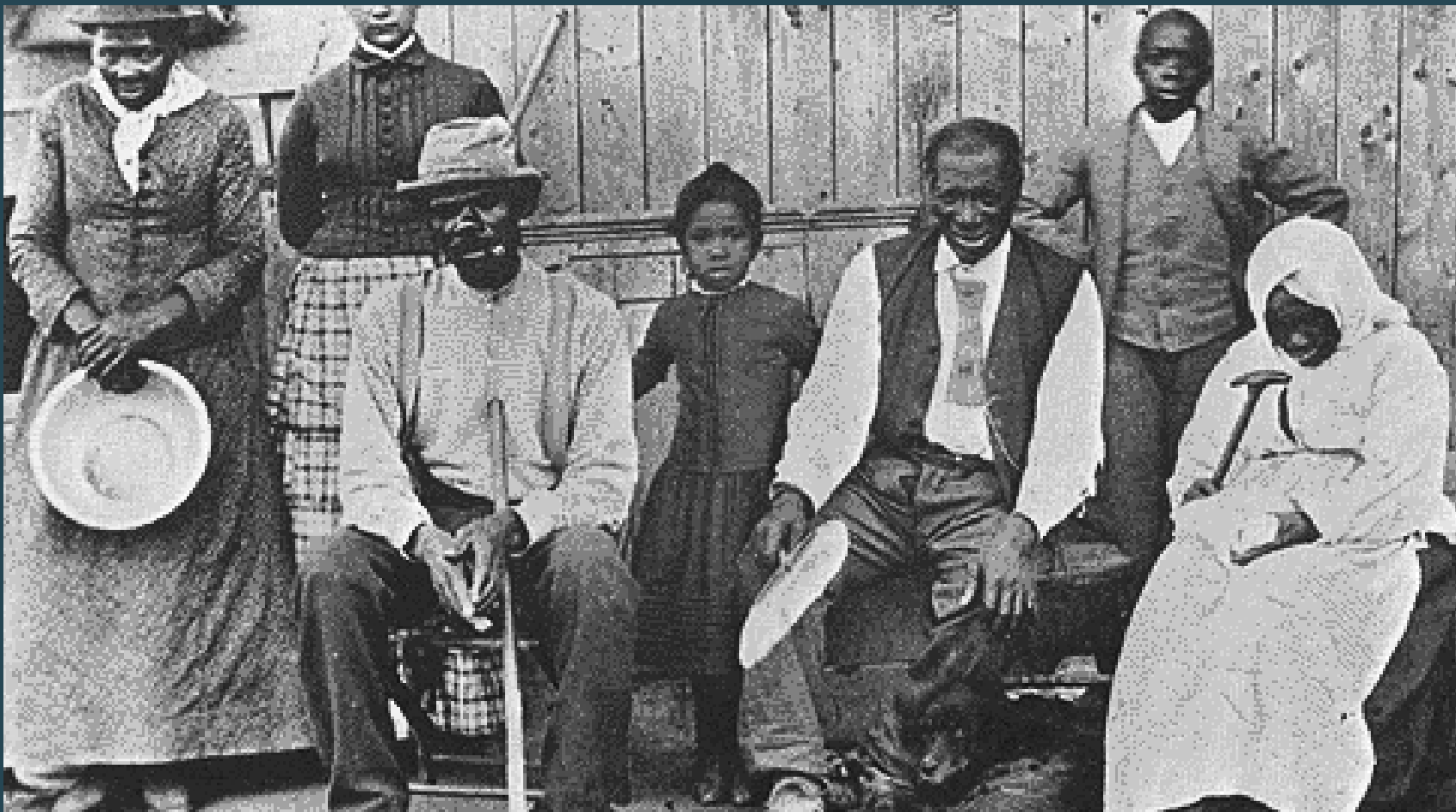


Caribbean
Immigration



African
Immigrants
and
Refugees

Slavery & Abolition



legal and common until 1834

Black Loyalists

- Approx. 3,000 African Americans repatriated to Canada (1782- 1785)
 - supporters of the British during the American Revolution
 - fighting for their own freedom, and abolition of slavery
- Faced Vulnerabilities
 - neither land nor political or civil rights granted as promised.
 - Talks of imprisonment, re-enslavement, etc.
 - source of cheap labour
 - Struggled for survival
- Sierra Leone Company – free passage approx. 1,200 black Nova Scotian



Free Colored

- Since mid-18th century
- 1793- Act to Limit Slavery
 - Any enslaved person reaching upper Canada became free upon arrival
- Underground Railroad
- Sir James Douglas “The Father of British Columbia”
- invited free black men from California to BC
 - promise of becoming British subjects

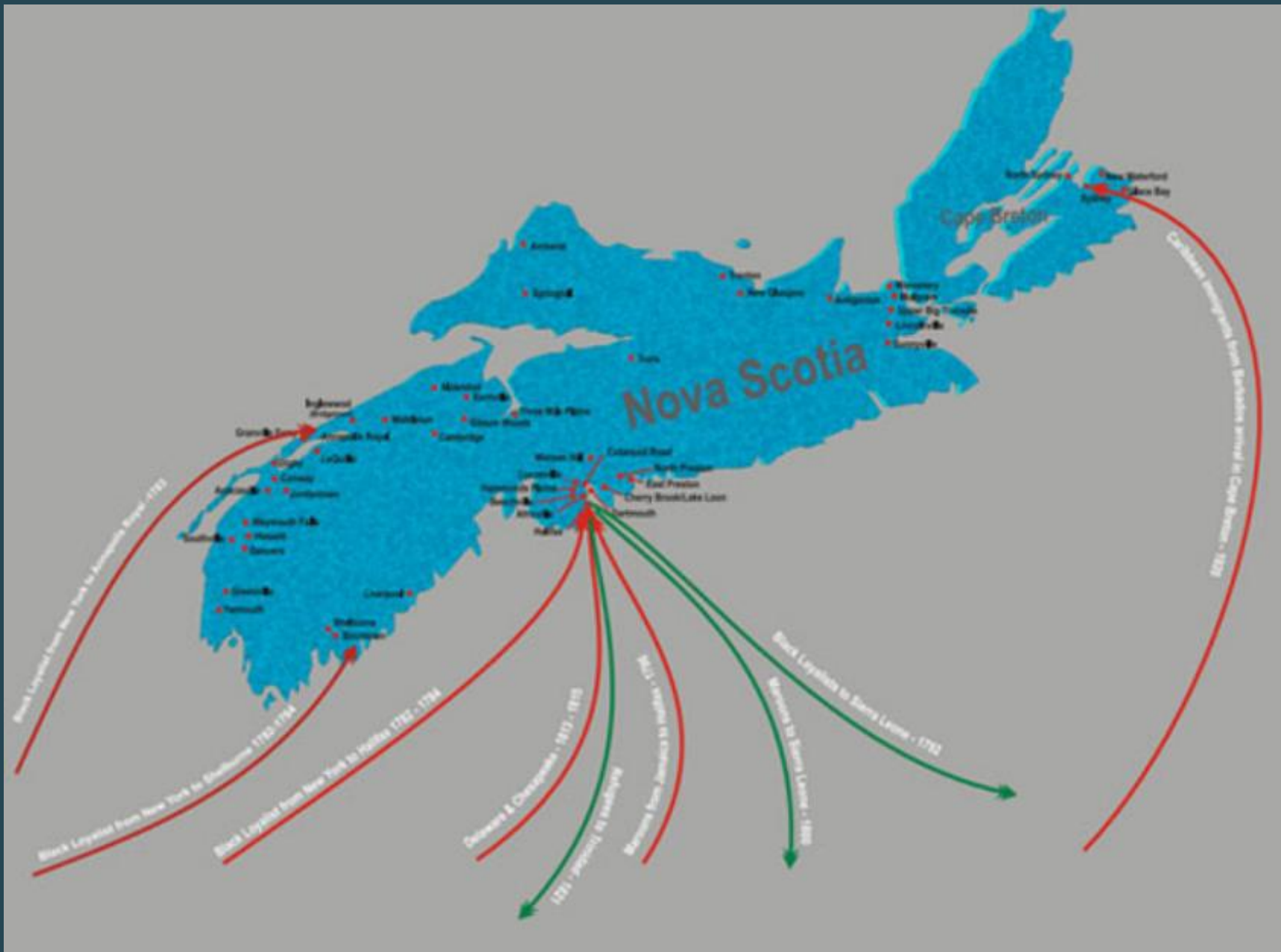


Maroons



- **Jamaican (Trelawney) Maroons 1796-1800.**
- **freedom fighters**
- **543 men, women and children arrived in Halifax in late June 1796.**
- **Joined Nova Scotia militia units**
- **Public charge**
- **Sierra Leone departure (1800)**

The Nova Scotia settlements 1792-1920's



Black loyalist settlements Nova Scotia 1792-1920's



- largely unsettled province Prior to abolition
- Canada largest settlement of free blacks outside Africa
- N.S. largest concentration of black residents in Canada

Settlement & Segregation

Black Loyalists—promised same rights, privileges and freedom as white counterparts

low-paid physical labour.

limited access to social services

1850- The Separate Schools Act (1850- 1960's)

1920's- KKK throughout Canada (119 chapters)

1924- City Commission of Edmonton bans

Resistance and resilience

- **Established their own sense of community**
- **Social and cultural organization**
- **Religious and community-based organizations (ie. Charitable, fraternal orgs., newspapers, etc.)**



Africville

Grazing and relocation (1964)

- Symbol of racism & discrimination
- Marginalization
- Lack of services
- Dispossession and displacement
- Violation of Human rights

Reclaiming African Nova Scotian identity

- African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office
- 1969- Africville Action Committee
- 1980- Africville Genealogy Society
- 2012- Africville Museum





Colonialism, Migration & African Diaspora

- Africa is a vast continent
- Multiple ethnic identities
- Colonialism and black heritage
 - Linguistic diversity
 - Religious diversity
 - Diversity of countries/regions of origin

Settler colonialism debates

- Enslaved and settlers
- Migrants vs. forced displacement
- Survival- Perpetual migrations

INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR
PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

— 2 0 1 5 ▶ 2 0 2 4 —

RECOGNITION · JUSTICE · DEVELOPMENT



#AFRICANDESCENT

WWW.UN.ORG/EN/EVENTS/AFRICANDESCENTDECADE



Afro-identity debates

black as identity

- Term "Black" reference

- African descent

- rooted in racism.

- reflects identity, resistance and shared historical experience

- Diversity of 'blacks'

- Black Nova Scotians

- Afro-indigenous identity

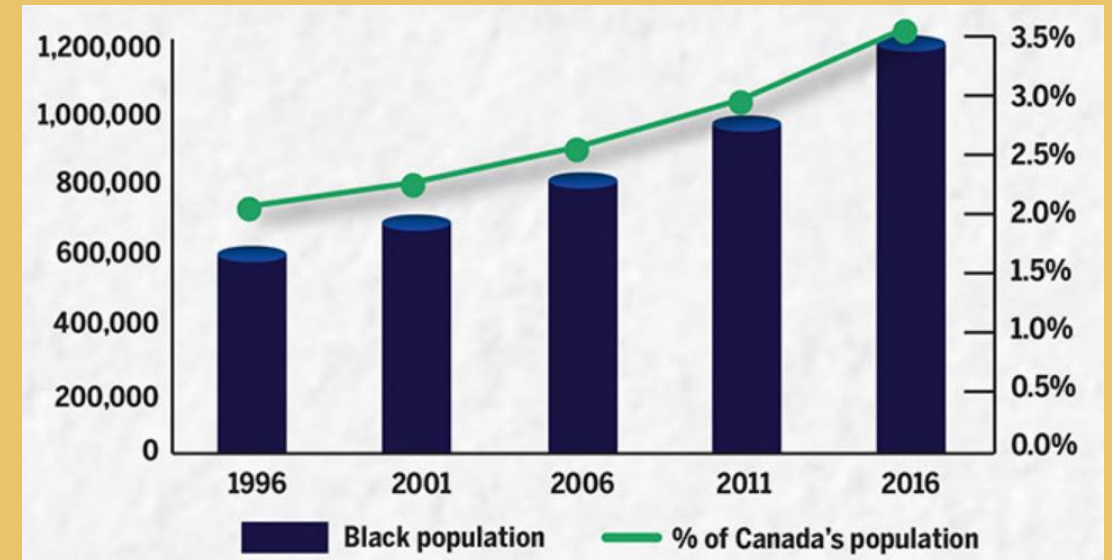
- African newcomers

- Afro-descent newcomers



African & Afro descent Newcomers

- Caribbean immigration-British commonwealth citizens
- Black European immigration- i.e. U.K., France, Spain
- Africa- 2nd immigrant-sending region
- primarily Sub-Saharan (Black) African immigrants and refugees
- Most from ex-colonies
- In 2016, 3.5% of Canada's population



More than 4 in 10 Black people were born in Canada

FIRST GENERATION

Persons who were born outside Canada



SECOND GENERATION

Persons who were born in Canada and had at least one parent born outside Canada



THIRD GENERATION OR MORE

Persons who were born in Canada with both parents born in Canada



In Nova Scotia,
71.8%
of the Black population
was third generation
or more.

- Population doubled from 1996 (573,860 persons) to 2016 (1,198,540 persons).
- Alberta- fastest growing and the third largest population of Black Canadians

The logo for Canada's Black Justice Strategy is positioned in the top right corner. It features the text "Canada's" in a black serif font, followed by "BLACK JUSTICE" in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. A small red maple leaf is placed above the letter "E" in "JUSTICE". Below "BLACK JUSTICE" is the word "Strategy" in a black serif font. The logo is set against a yellow background with a subtle, repeating geometric pattern of interlocking lines.

Canada's
BLACK JUSTICE
Strategy

- address systemic racism and discrimination
- reducing Disparities
- Foster trust and confidence in the Canadian institutions and its agents
- Promoting Equity and Inclusion
- Community Engagement and Empowerment
- Education and Awareness
- 2022 National Black Canadians Summit
 - *Halifax Declaration for the Eradication of Racial Discrimination*