

4<sup>th</sup> Black Canadian Studies Association Conference  
**Reparations Start with a Formal Apology for Slavery & Antiracism:  
Demanding National and Institutional Accountability**  
University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan  
May 26-June 1, 2018

The fourth meeting of the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA) will take place May 26-June 1, 2018 at the University of Regina Saskatchewan, our first annual conference as part of the national Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences. Entitled *Reparations Start with a Formal Apology for Slavery & Antiracism: Demanding National and Institutional Accountability*, our conference draws inspiration from the Congress theme “Gathering Diversities,” as well as from a United Nations working group report that, among other findings, recommends that the federal government of Canada should apologize for slavery and consider reparations for Canada’s implication in antiracism.

Canada was established through settler colonialism, the dispossession of Indigenous land and through the trans-Atlantic trade economy based on chattel slavery. African people were brought to this land beginning in the seventeenth century as slaves within this context. Following the formal abolition of slavery in Canadian society, African people racialized as Black continued to be dehumanized and subjected to social, economic, and political exclusion and marginalization. Furthermore, Canadian immigration policies have been used by the state to deny Black people entry into Canada in some eras and access to Canadian citizenship in others. Rooted in these histories, anti-Black racism remains embedded in all state institutions of Canada, particularly but not limited to education and legal systems. Black people in Canada today—both newly arrived and multiple-generation Canadians—continue to face pervasive systemic racism interlocking with other forms of oppression.

To date, there have been two apologies given to the Blacks in Canada. These are, the 2010 apology given by the City of Halifax to the descendants of Africville for the bulldozing of that Black community, and the apology given to the Black community in 2016 by the Royal Ontario Museum for the pain the Museum caused by showcasing the 1989-1990 “Into the Heart of Africa” exhibit. Neither of these were comprehensive, nor recognized the pervasiveness of antiracism.

This conference asks participants to consider the role and potential of formal government apologies and reparations in addressing this long legacy of antiracism in Canada. What constitutes an appropriate apology for slavery? How do we ensure that an apology for slavery does not suggest that antiracism is a thing of the past? Should apologies and reparations also be made for other forms of racial discrimination and marginalization? What are the implications of state apologies for contemporary Black life? How should Canada repay Black people for

centuries of abuse and oppression? What form/s should reparations take? What are the relationships between apologies, reparations and ongoing antiblackracisms?

With such questions in mind, the Black Canadian Studies Association is seeking individual papers, round tables and posters, from a wide range of disciplines that focus on Black Canadians/Blacks in Canada. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Canada's participation in the slave trade/ trans-Atlantic slave economy
- Conditions and characteristics of the enslavement of Black persons in Canada
- Denials and acknowledgements of slavery and anti-black racism in Canada
- Refuting Canadian nation-state mythologies
- The implications of the 1911 Order-in-Council for Black life in and outside of Canada
- The politics of apologies
- Apologies for slavery from Britain and France
- Who is the audience for state apologies?
- Apologies, reparations, and spirituality
- Apologies, reparations, and interest convergence
- Reparations demands throughout the Black Atlantic
- Implications of reparations for Canadian slavery within the Canadian settler-colonial nation state
- Mobilizing Black communities to demand reparations in Canada
- Reparations *as* apology
- Are reparations and reconciliation the same?
- Immigration discrimination, deportation, and reparations
- Africville and the dispossession of land in historically Black communities
- Reparations, land, and Indigenous land dispossession
- Solidarities and alliances in the demand for apologies and reparations
- Canadian post-racialism
- Monuments and memorials to colonizers and slave owners
- The value and limits of symbolic gestures

We welcome presentations in either French or English from academics (including graduate and undergraduate students), activist-scholars, organizers, artists, politicians, professionals, cultural workers and community scholars.

Participants should submit a 250-word abstract proposal by December 24, 2017 to [blackcanadastudies@gmail.com](mailto:blackcanadastudies@gmail.com) Kindly include your name and affiliation. Those proposing panels (3 - 4 papers) should submit a brief description of the panel, as well as abstracts for the constituent papers, and the names and affiliations of the presenters. You are not required to be a

member of the BCSCA to submit a proposal, however upon acceptance of your proposal, you will be required to pay BCSCA and Congress fees in order to present.