Introduction

Designed to fit into teachers' practice, this resource kit provides links, activity suggestions, primary source handouts and worksheets to assist you and your students in applying, inquiring, and understanding Canada between 1945 and 1982.

Topic

- Youth and Ethnic Conflict in 1960s Toronto

Themes that can be addressed

- Racial discrimination
- The civil rights movement
- Social welfare programs
- Immigration
- Urbanization
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Assignment & Activity Ideas

Read for comprehension

- This resource kit provides one four-page primary source article about ‘rising tension’ in urban centres because of perceived ethnic conflict. Have students read this article for comprehension either individually or in groups.
- Following reading, have a discussion in the class to ensure students understood the article and invite them to ask questions for clarification.

Perspectives – first-person response or rewrite

- Have students take the perspective of an individual affected by the issues raised in this article and write a response to this article from their point of view.
- Encourage students to communicate these perspectives either to the class or in small groups through presentations, a gallery walk, or through new media.

Research other sources to complement

- This article was written by and for professionals in the field of human rights law. Have students think about what other primary sources could complement this article. For example, what other perspectives could be uncovered in a diary entry or a photograph?
- As a class, create a wish list of primary sources students would like to investigate to complement this article, and encourage them to find these sources or sources like them to create a fuller picture of this topic.

Today and then – Continuity and change

- The issues explored in this article are not issues that have been completely resolved. Use this article to discuss issues of continuity and change regarding multiculturalism, immigration, and urban centres.

Inquiry into the OHRC and other work

- This primary source article was published in Human Relations, a publication by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC). The OHRC was directed by Daniel G. Hill and this publication was found in his archived collection. Use the introduction handout to Daniel G. Hill found in this resource kit as a way to introduce the role OHRC played in this case.
- Invite students to develop questions about the OHRC and the other work that they have done and have them bring one example to share with the class. The OHRC has a great Facebook page as a way to get started: Ontario Human Rights Commission Facebook page
Handouts & Worksheets

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A primary source is a document or object from the past created by people who lived during that time. Primary sources provide a view into an event or experience that only people living during that time could have experienced.

Archives collect and preserve primary sources so that students can learn history from the experiences of people who were there. At archives, primary sources are called records. At museums, primary sources are called artefacts.

Have you ever used a primary source before?

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What are some other examples of primary and secondary sources?

Can sources be both primary and secondary?
Rising Tension and Conflict in the City Streets

by ALBERT WARSON

Prejudice and hostility . . . . lack of understanding and reasonable opportunities . . . exploitation . . . frustrated hopes and aspirations. These are the grievances observed and experienced by racial and ethnic minorities in downtown Toronto.

These are the grievances they share against a society that seems insensitive to their needs.

Angered and thwarted in this way, they are in substantial and sometimes violent tension and conflict — especially among the youth.

This is the essential finding of a report submitted to the Ontario Human Rights Commission recently. The author of the detailed study is George A. Brown, who was at the University of Toronto School of Social Work last spring when the Commission invited him to do the survey. He has since been appointed to the Commission staff.

The subject of his assignment: community tensions and conflicts among youths of different ethnic and racial backgrounds in downtown Toronto.

The boundaries of his study: St. Clair Avenue West, the Lakefront, Yonge Street and Dovercourt Road.

He interviewed some 30 social workers, police officers, priests, probation officers, community centre directors and others familiar with the problem during a six-week period last summer.

For another three weeks, he observed the youth in these neighborhoods; in dance halls, pool halls, restaurants, corner stores, on street corners and elsewhere. At times he watched them fighting. And he talked with many of them.

He found a common and substantial level of grievance against the dominant society and its agencies among these youths and their parents.

These common grievances were also turned inward, to produce tensions and conflicts between one minority and another and between parents and their children.

The most tensional relationships, Mr. Brown discovered, were between Protestant Anglo-Saxons, Italians, Portuguese, Negroes, Jews, Poles and to a lesser degree, Chinese.

Mr. Warson is a public relations consultant and freelance writer. He was formerly a staff reporter for the Globe and Mail.

Findings

In his report, Mr. Brown notes that these groups aspire to social and economic improvement; they long for opportunities to share contemporary goals and benefits.

The more they are denied this, the more unyielding their interactions will become, the more aggravated the problem.

Thus, he reasons, "where these groups coexist in mutual frustration in the same neighborhood, under more or less deprived conditions, tensions and conflicts seem inevitable."

This situation is put into perspective by a section in the report which traces the shifts in minority composition in downtown Toronto and the marked increase in immigration to the city each year.

The difficulty arises in the lagging quality of services tailored to the newcomers' structural needs. These services also fail to answer the demands of life in an urban industrial society.

Mr. Brown concludes: "The wider the gaps between the demands of this industrial order and the structural handicaps of immigrants, together with their aspirations, the more potentially explosive the situation will become."

Mr. Brown urges the governments and voluntary social agencies to take another look at the nature and effectiveness of traditional services, planning for new ones, and respective responsibilities to newcomers.

He advocates a broader, more dynamic role for the Commission, making it more accessible to the residents in these neighborhoods.

These steps must consider both parents and youth, he suggests, because they are enmeshed in frustration, bitterness, helplessness and despair engendered by unemployment, job insecurity, underemployment, lack of education and skills and "felt discrimination."

Apart from these mutual problems, the tensions and conflicts among the youth are mainly attributed to:

- Frustrations in school and/or financial difficulties producing a high percentage of "drop-outs" and "push-outs" and for some, a lack of relevance of the school system in terms of their needs and problems.
- Unemployment because of lack of education and skills.
- Prejudice experienced from teachers, employers, police, pool hall managers and restaurant proprietors.
- Irrelevant programs conducted by social agencies and settlement houses in the area, leading to a street corner culture and a constant search for action.
- A tendency of social agencies and other organizations dealing with youths who are "different" to aggravate their frustrations and alienation.
- "Black Power" as it is interpreted by most of the Negro youths in this area.
- Exchanges of racial slurs and insults among all the youth.
- Rivalry among Italians, Portuguese, Anglo-Saxons and Negroes for social status — usually measured in terms of fighting skill.
- Creation of "clusters" and gangs, the ensuing competition and their tendency to react, instantly and physically, to racial insults.

Mr. Brown reported the greatest concern about tensions between Italians and Jews, Portuguese and Jews, Negroes and Portuguese and Negroes and Anglo-Saxons.

Tensions between the latter two groups have in fact come to be regarded as a "Negro problem" because it has jeopardized programs at Bathurst Street United Church Community Centre and St. Christopher House.

Mr. Brown was informed that tensions and conflicts among other minority groups are more sporadic, and attributed more to clashing parties or "party busting" by unruly youths of different ethnic backgrounds.

"Italian and Portuguese parents forbid young girls to be outside their homes unescorted at night," Mr. Brown noted. "Consequently, Italian and Portuguese boys are constantly grievous to one another or girls among other racial and ethnic groups."

Similar tensions exist between the Italian and Jewish communities, according to a representative of the Jewish Family and Child Service. Jewish parents won't allow their children to date Italians and are apprehensive about their children being influenced by Italians whom they regard to be less motivated than educational goals.
Albert Warson, “Rising Tensions and Conflict in the City Streets” Human Relations, vol. 9 no. 17, Apr-May 1969, pp. 3-6

Daniel G. Hill fonds; Reference Code: F 2130-2-1, Archives of Ontario
“Rising Tensions and Conflict in the City Streets” part 3

Some Immigrants, Mr. Brown reported, like the East Indians who speak English fluently, are advised that they are “over qualified” for many jobs. Qualified immigrants, in fact, can only find menial jobs and are therefore subjected to tremendous economical as well as psychological pressures.

"The reduction in relative status as far as their present level of employment is concerned, drives some of them to mental institutions," Mr. Brown reported.

One International Institute representative said that Canada Manpower is unable to cope with the problems of most non-English speaking immigrants.

They are forced to seek employment in their own communities, where exploitation, particularly of those who are sponsored immigrants, is well-entrenched.

A representative of the Italian Immigrant Aid Society is deeply concerned about the high unemployment rate among sponsored, unskilled immigrants and troubled by the poor economic circumstances of many of the sponsors. (Sponsors are legally responsible for the economic well-being of the ones they sponsor for five years).

She is also painfully aware, Mr. Brown notes, that sponsored immigrants are very vulnerable to the exploitations of unscrupulous Italian sub-contractors.

"They never obtain a chance to learn the English language. They become morally and psychologically defeated through the pressure of fear and insecurity, which is applied by the exploiters. They remain completely maladjusted in this society. Therefore, a kind of vicious circle is created, where ignorance, tensions and conflicts flourish."

There were criticisms of apprenticeship training programmes and the difficulties non-English speaking immigrants experienced in becoming licensed and certified in order to utilize their skills.

Many Italian tradesmen, Mr. Brown was told, are unable to join unions to be paid wages consistent with their skills. The electrical union was cited as an example of this tight-door policy.

There was a consensus among the interview subjects that unions generally demand grade 12 education from immigrants seeking membership. The Department of Labour on the other hand, requires only a grade 10 minimum for apprenticeship status.

"Thus, even though an immigrant may complete his apprenticeship training, he can still be excluded from unions and certain jobs with closed-shop arrangements." Mr. Brown reported a conviction among his interview subjects that government has placed too much responsibility on ethnic organizations which lack the resources and authority to correct or alleviate the varied problems faced by immigrants in the city.

They feel that most government programmes aimed at helping immigrants with jobs and upgrading skills are too selective and rigid to do a proper job.

"Above all, ethnic organizations are powerless to do anything about theexclusive policies of trade unions and professional and technical associations which often relegate immigrants of certain ethnic backgrounds to chronic under-employment," Mr. Brown observed.

The Commission

Many among the groups under study are apparently unaware of the Commission’s existence. Some feel it is doing a worthy job; others are cynical about its operation.

Mr. Brown noted it became evident that “to a large extent, the Ontario Human Rights Commission was neither physically or psychologically visible to a very large number of people in the areas who are very much in need of its services.”

Many of them are even unaware of their rights under the Code, especially Indians and Chinese. Others fear reprisals from employers and landlords should they make formal complaints.

Like Italians and Portuguese, some are afraid of government agencies and prefer to take their grievances to their priest and heads of their ethnic organizations in whom they have more confidence.

Some spokesmen for these groups, however, maintain that most of the injustices complained about are not matters the Commission normally deals with. Moreover, they say these kinds of injustices are very difficult to document and prove.

Others, especially among the Afro-American Progressive Association, felt that the Commission compels victims of discrimination to prove something it knows to exist.

If this were a “racist free” society, they argue, there would be no need for a Commission in the first place.
Yet, it insists that the victims prove their case, thus always putting them on the defensive.

They feel that the artful, subtle and polite discriminator, with his battery of expert people, just sits back and waits for the victim to go through the painful process of trying to prove that injury and injustice have taken place.

They feel the Commission should be more positively inclined towards investigations or inquiries, taking the onus off victims who cannot afford the time or loss of wages to attempt a document of "the polite but insidious kind of discrimination which pervades Canadian society."

Mr. Brown stated that the more cynical critics of the Commission felt it should concentrate more on equal opportunities and less on rights. They have the rights, they say, but this society is asking them to be satisfied with paternalistic tokenism in terms of jobs, etc.

Many others said the Commission was bringing justice to oppressed minorities in Toronto, although it was not able to reach those who through apathy, ignorance or complete helplessness, were not taking advantage of their rights under the Code.

**Recommendations**

The grievance level could well rise, Mr. Brown concluded. It is therefore in the interest of all concerned to examine the factors nurting further tensions and conflicts among different groups in this society.

"Human rights in its social, political and economic, no less than in its legal sense, should mean the equality of opportunities for all members of the society in a functional or real sense."

As minority groups feel increasingly denied these opportunities they will more and more assert their rights to negotiate with the power structure.

"Thus, a framework for developing effective institutional means for dealing with the grievances and aspirations of minority groups in Toronto and indeed Ontario, should be given early and constructive consideration," Mr. Brown stated.

Mr. Brown recommended that the Commission consider:

- Exercising stronger moral force and leadership in the community to combat discriminatory practices; remove artificial barriers to equal opportunities for all and promote intercultural education.

"It is also conceivable that this office could assume the posture of negotiator, if not moral arbiter, in group conflicts and tensions situations in the area."

Mr. Brown suggested that the amount of the unemployment and under-employment in these areas be investigated as soon as possible.

"Solving there problems may require an investment based on long-term economic, social, political and psychological criteria — of social capital by the government alone or in conjunction with private business and industry."

He further suggested that:

- The Department of Labour consider establishing an office in the area and working closely with settlement houses, schools, and other social and ethnic organizations with good contacts among the youth.

- The minimum requirements for apprenticeship training be flexible enough to meet the different levels of education reached by these youth.

- There ought to be closer co-ordination between the apprenticeship programs and particularly those vocational schools which do not give grades.

- More research must be done on the academic requirements for certain jobs and the demand which industry makes upon job applicants.

- There should be critical evaluation of the examination procedures associated with the licensing and registration of immigrant tradesmen, especially those with language difficulties.

- Occupational training courses should be expanded to include more immigrants and other disadvantaged groups with language and other difficulties.

In the conclusion of the report, Mr. Brown summed it up succinctly:

"The provisions of adequate educational training and retraining facilities, together with the development of other auxiliary services, is crucial for the process of social mobility in any industrial society. Without these, the society will never realize its potential industrial growth and stability. A given racial or ethnic group in a heterogeneous society can acquire appropriate particular roles, while designating the less preferred ones to other ethnic and racial groups. Actions like these lay the foundations for discontentment, frustrations, tensions and conflicts among groups."

Albert Warson, “Rising Tensions and Conflict in the City Streets” page 6

*Human Relations*, vol. 9 no. 17, Apr-May 1969, pp. 3-6

Daniel G. Hill fonds; Reference Code: F 2130-2-1, Archives of Ontario
Who is Daniel G. Hill?

Daniel G. Hill, human rights specialist, historian, and public servant, was prominent in the movement to overturn racial discrimination in Canada. He came to this country for graduate studies but committed himself to the quest for justice.

As an activist in the 1950s, Hill used public awareness as a tool to combat prejudice. With a PhD in sociology from the University of Toronto and a decade of experience with social causes, he became the first director of the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1962, a position he held until 1971. Under his management, the commission evolved innovative tactics, widely copied in Canada and other countries. In 1971, he became the first full-time chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and, in 1973, he established a consulting firm in human rights with an international clientele.

In 1978, Daniel Hill, Donna Hill, Wilson Brooks and other educators co-founded the Ontario Black History Society. It became the first major public organization in Canada focused on the history of people of African descent in the country. He headed the organization for six years.

As Provincial Ombudsman from 1984 to 1989, Hill strove to make that office reflect the "new Ontario," with a forceful outreach program aimed at traditionally excluded groups, particularly Canada's Aboriginal people. Following his retirement, he became a member of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

Source: Historic Canada's Black History Canada
What were Daniel G. Hill’s responsibilities as the first director of the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)?

As Director of the OHRC in 1962, Hill travelled across Ontario in his Volkswagen Beetle, setting up regional offices and striving to make the Commission and its services available to ordinary Ontarians.

He also travelled across Canada and to conferences in various countries (including Iran) to promote human rights and to build the effectiveness of the Commission.

See also: Archives of Ontario’s The Freedom Seeker: The life and times of Daniel G. Hill online exhibition.
STATEMENT TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ON APRIL 3, 1962, BY THE HONOURABLE
JOHN P. ROBARTS, PRIME MINISTER OF
ONTARIO, IN CONNECTION WITH THE
ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

I take great pleasure in announcing to the House the appointment of Dr. Daniel G. Hill, well-known sociologist and lecturer at the University of Toronto, to the new post of Director of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Dr. Hill will take up his duties later in the spring.

The Government is deeply gratified by his decision to accept this task. We feel that Dr. Hill's background and training, together with his rich experience in the field of human relations, make him admirably suited for the post.

Dr. Hill's appointment means that the Human Rights Commission, whose responsibilities have been greatly enlarged by the House through the passage of The Ontario Human Rights Code Act, will now have full-time, expert staff to carry out its various programs. Dr. Hill will, of course, be responsible to the Commission whose Chairman is Mr. Louis Fine and Members, Miss Joyce Applebaum, Mr. T.M. Eberlee, Mr. Gordon L. Greenaway and Mr. J.F. Nutland.

Dr. Hill is a graduate of Howard University, Washington, D.C., from which he received his B.A. in 1948. He later studied at the University of Oslo in Norway and received his Master's Degree in Sociology from the University of Toronto in 1951 and his Ph.D. from the same University in 1960.
He was for a time Assistant Warden of St. Andrews Memorial House in Toronto, an educational institution established by and for New Canadians. From 1955 to 1957, he was Research Director of the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto and later became Executive Secretary of the North Toronto Area Planning Council, which involved community organization and the planning of health, welfare and recreation services. Shortly thereafter he became a lecturer in the Sociology and Extension Departments of the University of Toronto.

Dr. Hill is now concluding his part in a special research project for the Department of the Attorney-General in association with the Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Research Foundation. He is the author of a number of volumes on community organization.

I am sure that all Members will welcome this appointment and that the Commission and Dr. Hill will have the full co-operation of everyone within and outside this House in advancing the aims of The Human Rights Code.

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