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Academic Achievements:

Doctor of Philosophy: Social Work/Welfare, University of Toronto

Master of Social Work: University of Toronto

Bachelor of Social Work: York University

Bachelor of Arts: York University

Academic Honours:

National Health and Welfare Fellow 1987-1991

Ontario Scholar 1986

Community Honours:

Woman of Distinction Award 2005

In the Category . . . Community Development and Social Activism: City of Hamilton Status of Women Committee & YWCA Hamilton

Twenty-fifth Anniversary Foundation Award 2005

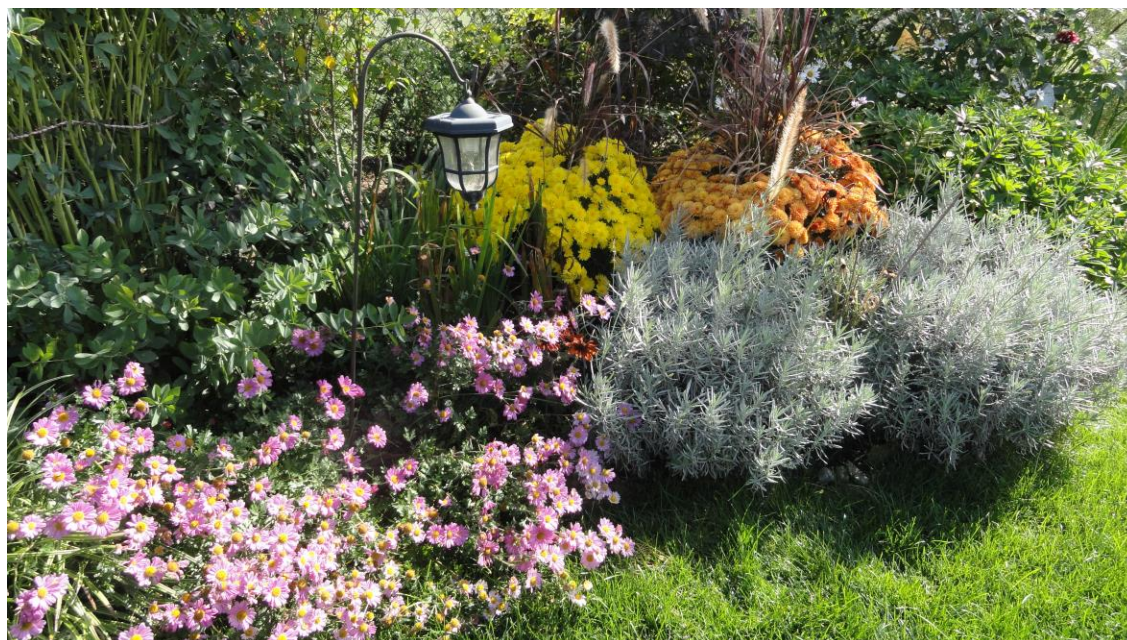
Canadian Alliance of Black Educators

Rev. John C. Holland Award 2000

In the Category . . . Professional Achievement

Distinguished Alumni Award 1992

York University, Atkinson College School of Social Work



Civil Society Engagement

Edited by
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‘ . . . This is Canada, and in Canada better is always possible’¹

Those were the optimistic words of the current Prime Minister of Canada, and with him at the helm, we celebrated 150 years since confederation. Our celebration was sprinkled with unpleasant reminders of what many would love to forget or disclaim. It has been much longer than 150 years since European settlers encroached on the Indigenous Populations who first inhabited this land later named ‘Canada’. Since the coming together of European settlers and the host Indigenous Peoples, things haven’t always gone ‘better’ for the Indigenous populations. And, there would be other shameful episodes! The long-overdue *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* released in 2015 is Canada’s best example of the endurance and effectiveness of civil society determination to re-educate masses, alter institutional relations and move forward with just intent.

Civil Society Activism is therefore important to Canada’s continued development and my newest book examines the work of Civil Society in Canada. An impressive list of legislated rights and protections are showcased in Canadian political discourse, but the articulation of rights is not automatically synonymous with rights-attainment. The daily enactment of access to some rights by segments of the Canadian population is complex, situational and contentious. Social cohesion in Canada is therefore challenged by the disjuncture between what politics promises to all and what governance denies to some. However, Canada’s democratic framework enables political space for situational negotiation and dissent². And in addition, Canadian political and legal rights are not understood by all in the same way. That which is perceived to be unequal distributional outcome within the context of a nation espousing just laws as the

¹ (Prime Minister) Justin Trudeau said this as part of an October 2015 federal campaign speech in Toronto. Televised on assorted networks.

² Notwithstanding the right to protest or assembly, citizen protesters were arrested during the G20 summit in Toronto, Canada, in 2010. Some citizens were later compensated for these wrongful arrests and detentions.

framework for its redistributive functions, frequently leads to demands and protests from segments of the population for an altered agenda.

Our focus then is on the activism which slowly and painstakingly legitimates democracy in Canada. We examine the contentious issues . . . issues which unsettle and lead to fractious inter-relationships between those who would prefer to retain and perhaps intensify the old colonial privileges examined in Chapter 1, and those examined in other Chapters who reject exploitation, racism and marginalization of any kind. We explore the disjuncture between Canada's reliance of a steady stream of immigrants, refugees and others to stabilize labour market and other gaps, and the resistance to perfecting integration policies and workable settlement practices.

But not all activism examined in the volume is aimed at the misfit between our historical reliance on newcomers and the often untenable policies directed at post-migration adaptation. Some older issues are just as resilient. Racism has been an historical feature of Canadian society and in 2017 the Prime Minister of Canada spoke clearly on the international stage about our 'shameful' history and cited long-standing issues. In this collection we examine some aspects of persistent racism and look closely at the activism directed at redressing and circumventing racial annoyances.

This newly published volume contributes to the exploration of our work-in-progress at perfecting our nationhood. But much remains untold. Groups all across Canada are engaged in activism which challenge assorted injustices and their work is often silent to invisible but changing lives for the better. Their work should be documented because we can only showcase our political maturity with integrity if we acknowledge the church-basement social group work and the kitchen-table social activism which 'aims at achieving better' for those who would otherwise remain invisible in alienation.

Garden photo (attached) here please. Reduce size to fit.

Civil Society Engagement

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