BC CLA BRITISH COLUMBIA CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION

16th ANNUAL

RIGHTS TALK

Youth and Civil Liberties Conference

February 22 - February 25, 2021
Online Event





The BCCLA's 16th annual Rights Talk: Youth and Civil Liberties Conference brings together high school students to learn about emerging civil liberties and human rights issues. This year's theme is "Youth in Resistance", exploring issues affecting youth directly and providing them with the right tools to be effective advocates for human rights and civil liberties.

Spanning a week, this year's conference will be taking place virtually. It will be an opportunity for youth to connect with each other and engage in a dialogue with local advocates, lawyers, educators, and community organizations.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON THE CONFERENCE FORMAT

This year's conference will be taking place virtually over Zoom. We have committed to creating a flexible conference schedule for our attendees. This will allow you to choose a structure that suites your schedule and needs.

We will be featuring a keynote address, 2 panels, 4 workshops, and a closing address.

The keynote and closing addresses are open to all conference attendees.

Students will be able to choose 1 panel and 1 workshop to attend. Panels are limited to 60 attendees each. Workshops are limited to 30 attendees each.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

ASL interpretation will be available by request for all sessions. Please let us know when you register if you require sign language interpretation.

Please also note if you have any accessibility needs we should be aware of.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

DAY 1

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021

11 am - 12:15 pm PT

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: VANESSA GRAY

Speakers: Vanessa Gray, Cecilia Point
Moderated by: Sambriddhi Nepal

1 pm - 2:30 pm PT

WORKSHOP

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Facilitated by Kari Michaels & James Coccola, BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)

Do you feel powerless at work? Do you have questions about what your boss can and cannot do? In this workshop we will go over basic employment rights under the Employment Standards Act. We will explore common workplace issues and the limitations of the system to protect your rights at work. We'll discuss how collective action can make a difference and what it means to form a union at work.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021

DAY 2

11 am - 12:30 pm PT

WORKSHOP

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS - YOUTH ACTING IN RESISTANCE

Facilitated by Carly Teillet, Community Lawyer - BCCLA

Do you know what your rights are at a protest? What about in school? The BCCLA's Know Your Rights workshop empowers youth to take action and fight back against injustice by making sure you know what your rights and civil liberties are. From street checks to online surveillance, there are many situations you can find yourself in that threaten your rights. BCCLA Community Lawyer, Carly Teillet will take you through various scenarios and provide information on what your rights actually are and what you can do if you believe they have been violated.

1 pm - 2:15 pm PT

PANEL

INTERROGATING THE LAW: YOUTH AND CRIMINALIZATION

Speakers: Shae Perkins, Jada Carvery, Adriana Laurent Seibt

Moderated by Meghan McDermott, BCCLA

This panel will unpack how youth are treated by the criminal legal system, and how they are criminalized across institutions such as government care, schools, borders, and prisons. Speakers will discuss what criminalization is and how it affects the lives of youth across the country. They will also look at ways that youth are standing in resistance by advocating for themselves and fighting for more just futures.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

DAY 3

11 am - 12:15 pm PT

PANEL

DEFYING OPPRESSION: YOUTH ORGANIZING AND ADVOCACY

Speakers: Jahmira Lovemore, Tanvi Bhatia, Veronica Martisius

Moderated by Carly Teillet, BCCLA

This panel will look at how youth can fight injustice to advocate for a more just society. Speakers will share various forms of organizing and advocacy they have used as young activists. We will explore why it is important for youth to speak up and get involved in social and political change in their communities.

1:30 pm - 3 pm PT

WORKSHOP

CURFEWS, COPS AND QUARANTINE: HOW HAS COVID-19 IMPACTED OUR RIGHTS?

Facilitated by Meghan McDermott, Sonia Khan, and Cameron Fox - BCCLA

Government responses to the health pandemic have altered our liberties and freedoms in unprecedented ways. This workshop will use the COVID-19 emergency health crisis as a lens to explore how our fundamental rights and freedoms work. Bring your questions and insights to this interactive forum led by BCCLA lawyer Meghan and law students Sonia Khan and Cameron Fox, who will provide context and connections between the various measures and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Issues for exploration at this workshop are wide ranging and could include everything from protest rights during the COVID-19 pandemic to discrimination against youth and others suspected of being COVID-19 super spreaders.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021

DAY 4

11 am - 12:30 pm PT

WORKERS' RIGHTS

WORKSHOP

Facilitated by Kari Michaels & James Coccola, BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)

Do you feel powerless at work? Do you have questions about what your boss can and cannot do? In this workshop we will go over basic employment rights under the Employment Standards Act. We will explore common workplace issues and the limitations of the system to protect your rights at work. We'll discuss how collective action can make a difference and what it means to form a union at work.

1:30 pm - 3 pm PT

CLOSING ADDRESS

RESISTANCE JOURNEYS: INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITIES

Speakers: Lily Shinde, Harsha Walia, Udokam Iroegbu, and Veronica Martisius

Moderated by Iman Baobeid, BCCLA

Our closing address will feature 4 speakers who are at different stages in their activism journey. What do organizing and advocacy look like across generations? You'll get the opportunity to engage in a discussion with speakers, share and learn from each other's experiences in advocacy and changemaking!

MEET THE SPEAKERS & FACILITATORS

VANESSA GREY
Keynote Speaker



Vanessa Gray is an Anishnaabe kwe from Aamjiwnaang First Nation, located in Canada's Chemical Valley, Sarnia Ontario. As a grassroots organizer, land defender, and educator, Vanessa works to decolonize environmental justice research by linking scholarly findings to traditional teachings. She continues to take part in a diversity of tactics such as direct action, classroom lectures, co-hosting Toxic Tours, and Water Gatherings. Vanessa is also the co-lead on the Technoscience Research Unit's environmental data justice project, The Land and the Refinery: Past, Present, Future.

CECILIA POINT
Territorial Welcome - Keynote Address



A member of the Musqueam Nation, Cecilia Point is a political activist who stood for 200 plus days protecting her nation's ancestral burial site from development in 2012. Since then she has taken part in countless political actions advocating for human rights and the environment. Cecilia has also dedicated many years to cultural preservation in the field of Indigenous cultural and eco tourism. She currently holds the position of Director of Finance and Administration for the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada. She is a facilitator for reconciliation workshops with the Bright New Day organization, and has been designated a public speaker for her nation. She holds a Certificate in Business from UBC, supplemented with courses in First Nations studies, including həńq̓əmińəm̓ (the Musqueam language).

SAMBRIDDHI NEPAL

Moderator - Keynote Address



Sambriddhi Nepal is a fundraising and communications professional with almost a decade of experience in the non-profit sector. She is the Director of Engagement and Development at the BCCLA. Prior to working at the BCCLA, she worked at WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre. Sambriddhi is a settler on Coast Salish Territories. She was born in Nepal and lived in 6 different developing countries before immigrating to Canada in 2009.

ADRIANA LAURENT SEIBT

Panelist - Interrogating the Law: Youth and Criminalization



Photo credit: Joy Gyamfi

Adriana (she/her) is originally from Honduras, in Central America and is a queer, mixed race (half Black/half white) immigrant who is passionate about social justice, climate change, migration and food security. She's been on the unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh (Vancouver, Canada) for about 6 years now. She’s been an active member of the climate, youth and racial justice organizing community at the University of British Columbia and Vancouver for several years. She was a member of the City of Vancouver Climate and Equity working group, a participant at the Youth Level Policy Programme by the Vancouver Foundation and is currently a member of the Climate Solutions Council for the Government of British Columbia. She's also an organizer with Black Lives Matter Vancouver. She’s a co-founder of the UBC Climate Hub and currently works as their Projects Administrator and graduated last year from the Faculty of Land and Food Systems with honours.

JADA CARVERY

Panelist - Interrogating the Law: Youth and Criminalization



Hi my name is Jada Carvery, I am 22 years old. I have an 11 month old son named Kayleo and he is my whole world. I plan to take a course in May to become an eyelash technician so I can achieve the dream I always had to open up my own business.

SHAE PERKINS

Panelist - Interrogating the Law: Youth and Criminalization

MEGHAN MCDERMOTT

Facilitator - Curfews, Cops and Quarantine: How has COVID impacted our rights?

Moderator - Defying Oppression: Youth Organizing and Advocacy



Meghan McDermott (she/her/hers) works as a lawyer for the BCCLA and loves to collaborate with others to reduce injustice and suffering. When she isn't working, Meghan is usually hanging out with plants and animals.

JAHMIRA LOVEMORE

Panelist - Defying Oppression: Youth Organizing and Advocacy



Jahmira Lovemore White is a co-founder of Black Mutual Aid BC, an organiser in Black Lives Matter Vancouver and a volunteer for the Hogan's Alley Society. She has a passion for environmental justice and water protection. She works as an actor and writer on unceded Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

As an African-Caribbean woman of both Jamaican and Montserratian heritage, Jahmira is deeply invested in Black Queer Liberation and solidarity with First Nations. She believes that dismantling white supremacy is only the first step on our long climb to racial equity and restoration of the people's relationship with this land.

TANVI BHATIA

Panelist - Defying Oppression: Youth Organizing and Advocacy



Tanvi Bhatia is a writer, facilitator, and community organizer living on the unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səl̓ilwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Both her organizing and creative work are centred around migrant justice and anti-oppression. She is currently pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing at UBC and is Prose Editor at PRISM international.

VERONICA MARTISIUS

Panelist - Defying Oppression: Youth Organizing and Advocacy;

Resistance Journeys: Intergenerational Solidarities



Veronica joined the BCCLA team in September 2019, after completing her JD at the University of Victoria. She was born and raised in Brantford, ON within the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. Veronica comes from a strong line of Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk) women and is the descendent of Tayendanegea (Joseph Brant). Not a day goes by that she does not reflect and give thanks for the immense privilege and responsibility to live as an uninvited visitor on the unceded homelands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh & səlilw̓ətaʔɬ. At UVic, Veronica was an active member of the Indigenous Law Students Association (ILSA) and did not shy away from calling attention to issues at the law school and beyond.

In particular, Veronica and ILSA organized a sit-in protest and campus-wide walkout in response to the acquittals of Gerald Stanley and Raymond Cormier for killing two Indigenous young people, Colten Boushie and Tina Fontaine. Aside from her work with the BCCLA, Veronica is involved in a legal battle to save the Arrowdale lands from being sold by the City of Brantford and subsequently developed.

CARLY TEILLET

Facilitator - Know Your Rights - Youth Acting in Resistance

Moderator - Defying Oppression: Youth Organizing and Advocacy



Carly Teillet is Métis from the Red River Métis community (Winnipeg). She is the Community Lawyer at the BC Civil Liberties Association. Carly acted as counsel for the Vancouver Sex Workers Rights Collective and the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, two parties with standing in the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls. She has represented Indigenous clients in child protection and criminal matters, worked as the inaugural Gladue Lawyer for Legal Services Society of BC, and written Gladue Reports for Provincial and Supreme Courts of British Columbia matters. She is a board member of Wish Drop In Centre Society and Vice President of the Rise Women's Legal Center board.

KARI MICHAELS

Facilitator - Workers' Rights



In June 2017, Kari Michaels was elected as Executive Vice President of the BCGEU. Kari joined the BCGEU as a member when she and her co-workers at Kwantlen Student Association formed a union at their worksite. She quickly became active, first as shop steward and subsequently stepping up as a bargaining committee member. Kari is a passionate advocate for social justice and believes in building workers' capacity to take action to improve their working conditions through education and training

JAMES COCCOLA

Facilitator - Workers' Rights



James was elected to his first term as executive vice president (EVP) at the BCGEU's 2017 convention. Prior to becoming an EVP, he was a member of Local 1201, a steward, a member of his local and component executives, and an executive member of the Victoria Labour Council. His work background is as a research and data analyst for the B.C. government. He also worked for an environmental non-profit and was the chairperson of the University of Victoria students' society.

LILY SHINDE

Closing Address Panelist - Resistance Journeys: Intergenerational Solidarities



Lily Yuriko Shinde (she/her) is a 72-year old queer Japanese Canadian activist, storyteller, and anti-racist educator living in Vancouver, Canada. She grew up in a small town called Greenwood, where her family and over 1,200 Japanese Canadians were interned during the Second World War. After nearly 50 years of activism and community work, Lily is now a community elder, and actively supports younger Asian-identified and LGBTQ+ young people to learn their histories and continue to create change.

HARSHA WALIA

Closing Address Panelist - Resistance Journeys: Intergenerational Solidarities



Harsha Walia is the author of the upcoming book Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism. She is also the award-winning author of Undoing Border Imperialism, co-author of Never Home: Legislating Discrimination in Canadian Immigration as well as Red Women Rising: Indigenous Women Survivors in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Harsha has organized in grassroots migrant justice, anti capitalist, feminist, abolitionist, and anti-imperialist movements for two decades. She is the past Project Coordinator of the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre and current Executive Director of the BC Civil Liberties Association.

UDOKAM IROEGBU

Closing Address Panelist - Resistance Journeys: Intergenerational Solidarities



Udokam Iroegbu is a Nigerian born and raised cis-gendered woman/femme, living and working on unceded, stolen, traditional and ancestral lands of the Coast Salish peoples. This reality is one that Udokam uses to inform her anti-oppression, anti-colonial, Black feminist, queer, social justice work as a community organizer and educator.

With a degree in civil engineering and an aspiring mobility justice engineer, Udokam re-imagines the role of transportation and movement as an integral part of our humanity and seeks to improve its function by embedding Equity and decolonizing, and anti-racism principles into transportation project development process - from inception to execution. As an organizer with Black Lives Matter Vancouver, Udokam advocates for the rights and lives of Black people, while standing in solidarity with the Indigenous people of Coast Salish Territory. In this capacity, Udokam is able to centre the intersecting needs of Black people, where our population is low, and freedom often negotiated. She gathers, marches, strategizes, educates, fundraises, celebrates, dances, collaborates, and sings for our collective liberation.

IMAN BAOBEID

Closing Address Moderator - Resistance Journeys: Intergenerational Solidarities



Iman Baobeid is a Yemeni artist, researcher, and communications specialist. She is the Communications and Outreach Manager at the BCCLA. Iman holds an MA in Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice and a BA in Sociology and Law from the University of British Columbia, where she examined post-conflict nation-state transformation, Islamic legal history, and gender relations in Yemen. Iman is a board member of West Coast Legal Education & Action Fund.

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