

Access Guide

SEPTEMBER 14, 2019 TO MARCH 1, 2020

Bodies in Translation and the
Guelph Civic Museum present:

Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario

Guelph Civic Museum
52 Norfolk St, Guelph

Curated by: Mona Stonefish,
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BODIES IN
TRANSLATION:
ACTIVIST ART,
TECHNOLOGY, AND
ACCESS TO LIFE



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Introduction

The co-creators of *Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario* prepared this access guide and it reflects their views as a curatorial collective. The access guide is for people coming to this exhibition between September 14, 2019 and March 1, 2020. Inside, you will find information about the space in which the exhibition and a public conversation with the co-curators will be held and about other things you might want to know before coming to the event.

We hope you have a meaningful learning experience!

What is an exhibition?

An exhibition is a public display of objects and artworks, often presented in an art gallery or museum. People visit an exhibition to learn about history, experiences, and ideas.

What is a public conversation with the co-curators?



A guided public conversation with the co-curators will involve the co-curators gathering to discuss the topic of the exhibition with other people from the public who are interested. A person will guide the discussion and ask questions. The public conversation with the co-curators will take place in the programming room on the second floor of the museum. There is an elevator from the first floor to the second floor. You will exit the elevator and turn right. The programming room is at the end of the hallway.

What is Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario?

Into the Light is a five-month exhibition at Guelph Civic Museum. Visitors of the exhibition will experience historical, artistic, and sensory objects that reveal local histories, legacies of eugenics, as well as stories of resistance and survival.

What is a Land Acknowledgement?

Land acknowledgements assert the land rights of Indigenous peoples to what is now called North America. It is often given at the start of an event. They call attention to First Nations and other Original Peoples unique relationship to their ancestral territories and on-going governances as treaty signing independent nations. Land acknowledgements disrupt the routine unthought occupation of indigenous lands by settlers. These land recognitions point to the need for reparation and force us to think about what changes are needed in settler societies in order to make that happen.

We honour and respect the Original Peoples, the Anishinaabeg, and the Three Fires Confederacy between the Ojibwe, Adawa (Ottawa), and Potawatomi. We acknowledge that we live and work on their ancestral lands and that they continue to be dispossessed to the benefit of all settlers.

What does the Guelph Civic Museum look like?



Image description: A photo of the front of Guelph Civic Museum from Norfolk Street. The Guelph Civic Museum sits at the top of a hill overlooking downtown Guelph. Its main building is made of stone, with a modern glass entranceway. "Guelph Civic Museum" is written in black block letters on a stone wall in front.

Address

52 Norfolk St, Guelph, ON N1H 4H8



Entrance

To get into the Guelph Civic Museum building, you will find a wheelchair accessible main entrance at the north-west side of the building, next to the parking lot (off of Cork Street West). The doors are power-automated. Parking is free. If you are walking, the hill from the main road up to the entrance is steep.

Image Description: A picture of the Guelph Civic Museum with its modern glass main entrance.

Getting around

You can get to the exhibition Gallery from the main entrance. When you enter, head towards the information desk. Beside the information desk, there is a hallway that leads to the Gallery room.

The Washrooms



There are accessible and gender-neutral washrooms on the first floor of the building, across from the information desk, and the second floor, across from the Families Gallery. There is also a women's washroom on the main floor, across from the info desk, and a men's washroom on the second floor, across from the Families Gallery.

Image description: A picture of accessible and gender-neutral washrooms on the first floor of the building, across from the information desk. The hallway leads to the Gallery room.

Elevator



There is an elevator located near the main entrance. The elevator will take you to other exhibitions happening at the Guelph Civic Museum.

What is the cost of admission?

Admission costs \$6.00 for Adults, Seniors (65+), Students (15 years old to College/University), and Children (4 to 14 years old). It costs \$18.00 for a

Family of 2 adults and 4 children maximum. Children under 4 are free. Every fourth Friday of each month, admission is free from 5 PM to 9 PM.

When is the Museum open?

The Museum is open every Tuesday through Sunday from 10 AM to 5 PM. The Museum is closed on Mondays. Every fourth Friday of each month, the Guelph Civic Museum is open until 9:00 PM with free admission from 5 PM to 9 PM.


WIFI

There is free WIFI in the building.


How will Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario be accessible to me?

Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario is a multi-sensory exhibition. The content of the exhibition can be accessed at times through the following senses:

 sound,

 smell,

 touch,

 and sight.

Captioning and Transcripts

You will find captioning and/or transcripts for all audio media. These captions will be visible on or next to the media.

Narrative Audio Description

You will find narrative audio descriptions of visual elements. Headsets are available throughout the exhibition.

American Sign Language



You will find ASL interpreters at the conversation with co-curators on October 26, 2019. They will be wearing a badge that says "ASL Interpreter."

Relaxing Space



There are two areas of rest and relief in the museum.

The first is a public space located on the second floor, next to the programming room. It is an open space with a big window that looks onto the east patio of the museum. There are comfortable chairs in the space and some artwork. The space is viewable from the entrance to/from the programming room. To find this space, take the elevator from the first floor to the second floor. Exit the elevator and turn right. The relaxing space is at the end of the hallway and to the left.

The second space is located on the main floor of the museum, near to the exhibition Gallery. It is a meeting room with a table and chairs, with windows that look onto the east patio of the museum, and two doors that can be closed.

How can I help make the public conversation with co-curators space safer and more inclusive?

We ask that you help us create a safer, non-judgmental and inclusive space for everyone at the public conversation with co-curators on October 26th, 2019 for ***Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario***. Here are some suggestions for how we can do this:



Set computers and phones to vibrate so as not to disrupt the conversation.

Wait for people to finish what they want to say before speaking.

Please use plain language so that everyone can understand. It is more accessible (For example: Don't use big words and acronyms unless they are defined).

Give the talking space to those who might not be participating as much as you.

Always talk into the microphone. This will help others hear you.

Please respect people's pronouns.

Please help us make this space as scent-free as possible.

Please do not bring oranges or peanuts into the space.

Please warn people if you are going to speak about difficult things. For example, let us know if your comment or story may be upsetting to others. Does it have any ideas about violence or hate that could make someone in the room feel bad?

What will happen at the exhibition?

The exhibition will run for five months between September 14, 2019 to March 1, 2020. The exhibition will take place in the Gallery space and the hall space directly outside of the Gallery. In the hall space, you will hear the voice of Elder and co-curator Mona Stonefish speaking in Anishinaabemowin (the Original Language). On a wall in the hall space is an image with some text that provides context to the content of the exhibition. Inside the Gallery, you will experience challenging content related to past and present eugenics ideas and practices.

Guided Tours and Q&A sessions

Guided tours with Dr. Evadne Kelly (*Into the Light* co-curator) are available most Mondays and Thursdays by request. Guided tours with Dawn Owen, Curator of Guelph Museums may be available on other days by request. Tours and Q&A sessions are approximately 1-hour long however this timeframe can be adapted for your group. Please contact Museum Bookings at museum.bookings@guelph.ca to make arrangements in advance of your group visit to the exhibition and visit the [Guelph Civic Museum Education Program](#) page for more information on booking group tours.

What will happen at the conversation with co-curators?

The conversation with co-curators/co-creators will be a guided conversation between the exhibition co-creators and the public. The event is free. People will be invited to sit in a circle together. It will be on October 26th, 2019 at 2 PM and will be ASL interpreted. There will be Communications Access Real Time Translation (CART) services during the conversation. The live captions will be projected.

Who can I contact for assistance?

If you have any questions, contact the museum information desk at 519-836-1221. For a list of contacts, please visit the Guelph Civic Museum's online [Contact](#) page.

What are some of the words that will be used?

Ableism

Ableism means intentional or unintentional prejudice against disabled people.

Activism

Activism is the creative process of making change in society and politics. Activism is led by groups of people who need change in order to create better living conditions for themselves and others. There are many kinds of activism, including rallies and protests, research and policy change work, writing and art-making, and even posting on social media about personal experiences in order to create awareness and change people's perceptions.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics refers to our sense of what is beautiful, interesting, and fulfilling. Aesthetics also refers to how art makes you feel. In this exhibition we use an aesthetic of discomfort as a teaching and learning tool.

Assimilation

Assimilation is a process by which groups are absorbed into values, behaviors, and beliefs of another dominant group.

Betterment thinking

In Canada, efforts to improve the Euro-Canadian race in the early 20th century came from concerns about perceived social problems and race decline. Leaders in government and institutions hoped to solve a wide range of social problems by controlling who reproduced and making moral interventions into people's lives to re-educate and re-socialize those who threatened the race and class ideals of Euro-Canadian settlers. Sciences dealing with improving human biological and heredity (such as eugenics and genetics) and human environment (such as domestic science, hygiene, education, nutrition, and medicine) informed their betterment ideas and actions.

Citation

A citation is a reference to the source of an idea, a book, a document, an author, or work of art. In this exhibition, we use citations to give people resources for where to find out more about something. We also use citations

to acknowledge authorship and to provide context. Sometimes citations are used to create authority, validity, and believability.

Colonization

Colonization refers to the steps taken to gain control over the Indigenous people of a different nation or territory. Colonial domination involves theft of lands and resources as well as exerting power over indigenous peoples' way of life, thoughts, and bodies by such interventions as the Canadian Indian Residential School systems. The European invasion of the Americas is a prime example of settler colonialism, which seeks to eradicate Indigenous populations in order to establish colonies for settlers.

Decolonization

Decolonization is the undoing of colonialism. It involves working towards restoring freedom and self-determination to Indigenous peoples, while moving away from ways of thinking that give white people (settlers) unjust rights and privilege over people of colour and Indigenous peoples.

Dehumanize

To dehumanize means to try to take away human qualities, personality, or dignity from someone. To expose someone to conditions or treatment that are inhuman or degrading. To speak to or describe someone in a way that reduces that person's humanity or sense of self.

Education

The process of sharing, receiving, or giving knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Education can be generous and evenly shared. It can also be violent and oppressive (for example, in the teaching of eugenics).

Elder

An Elder is an older Indigenous person who is recognized as a leader in their community. Elders may have different roles based on which communities or Nations they belong to.

Essentialism

The belief that groups of people have a true nature that does not change. The stereotype that men are strong, and women are weak are examples of this thinking.

Ethnocentrism

Judging other cultures based on standards and norms from one's own cultural perspective. An example of this is the idea that all food should be eaten with a knife and a fork. This is an example of ethnocentrism from a European perspective, or Eurocentrism.

Eugenics

The idea that human society can be improved by applying the science of evolution to human populations. Eugenicists thought that social problems were caused by the existence of deviant and inferior people, instead of understanding that social problems are caused by social, political and economic circumstances. Eugenicists believed they could solve social problems and make the human race better by preventing certain kinds of people from being born and allowing some kinds of people to die. To achieve this goal in Canada, the government used methods such as sterilization, birth control and institutionalization, primarily targeting Indigenous, disabled, black and poor people (negative eugenics). Eugenics also advocated controlled selective breeding of human populations with the aim of improving the population's genetic composition (positive eugenics).

Euthenics

The idea of improving the human species or a human population through their environment, behaviour, and their mental habits. An example of euthenics in education is someone learning about effective nutrition.

Evolution

A well accepted scientific theory by Charles Darwin that forms of life change and adapt over time through what he terms 'natural selection.' This is also known as survival of the fittest. His nephew Francis Galton, later applied evolution to human society, founding the eugenics movement. Eugenicists interpreted evolution through ableist and racist ideas, seeking to eliminate the kinds of people they thought were 'unfit.'

Feeble-Minded

Eugenicists used the word "feeble-minded" in the early 20th century to mean people who did not comply with the social, moral, physical, and intellectual norms (values and behaviours) established by White, able-bodied, settlers. People who did not comply with norms were also referred to as "deviant", "abnormal", "subnormal", and "defective" to make them seem less than human. Eugenicists also used the word to rank a person's ability to make money, work efficiency, and be self-reliant.

Hierarchy

In this exhibition, we use the term hierarchy to mean the social and economic ladder that allows only a few groups of people to rise to the top to enjoy greater wealth, power, and prestige. Most of the population are at the lower levels of the ladder.

Home Economics/Domestic Science

A set of ideas and practices that deals with the relationship between individuals, families, communities, and the environment in which they live. At Macdonald Institute, students learned household management, including cooking, dietetics, cleaning, and sewing. Students also learned child study, mothercraft (the knowledge and skill of caring for children), psychology, physiology, and eugenics (between 1915 and 1948).

Imperialism

Imperialism is an idea and a policy of expanding an empire by using military force or gaining political and economic control over another area.

Indigenous Peoples

This term refers to the original inhabitants of a specific territory. They might be First Nations of what is now called Canada, or from somewhere else in the world, such as Africa or Australia. Whenever possible, we use the name that native groups use to identify themselves, such as Anishinaabe (Original People). However, the term Indigenous is sometimes also broadly used to speak about these groups collectively, or in relation to discussions of colonialism.

Intersectionality

A critical race scholar named Kimberlé Crenshaw created the word intersectionality to describe overlapping systems of oppression. It means that not everyone experiences disability or exclusion the same way. For example, some of us experience disability in a way that is shaped by our experiences of race, gender, and sexuality.

Institutionalization

Institutionalization is the state of being placed or kept in a residential institution. Institutionalization is a process designed to regulate social behaviour within organizations or entire societies.

Natural Selection

Scientist Charles Darwin developed the idea of natural selection as part of his theory of evolution. Natural selection is the idea that organisms that adapt best to their environments tend to survive and produce more offspring. This means that the varieties of a species that are most suited to survive an environment are also the most likely to have offspring and pass on these traits. It is an unpredictable process.

Normative

The word normative means the actions, behaviours, or outcomes that are considered good, desirable, or allowed. It makes it seem like these are

normal, and that people should be the same. It also suggests that other ways of being are undesirable and deviant.

Policies

A deliberate system of ideas to guide decisions and practices and achieve specific outcomes. A policy is a statement of intent that is, furthermore, put into action as a procedure or protocol.

Prejudice

Prejudice means having discriminating ideas either against a person or a group of people or in favor of them. It occurs when we assess or pre-judge others according to biased views that are formed from pre-determined stereotypes.

Privilege

Privilege is a word that describes the benefits and advantages that a person receives because they are a part of a group whose position in society is believed to be more important, valuable, or desirable than others. For example, groups that tend to have privilege in our society, include white people, men, able bodied people, and wealthy people.

Race

The term race or racial group refers to categories of humans based on physical and visual traits such as skin colour and hair. Categories of race were first proposed over 200 years ago. Today, many scientists argue that race is a social invention that has no scientific basis.

Racism

Racism is systemic discrimination against certain non-dominant racial groups based on the belief that some races are better than others. In North America, groups that experience racism include Indigenous people, Black people and people of colour (POC), whereas white people are the dominant, ruling group, who are believed to have the most social value. Systemic discrimination means that racist ideas are deeply embedded in social structures and this creates barriers to equality, unjustly influencing access to employment, legal outcomes, and access to medical care and education. Racism is also expressed in peoples' attitudes and individual behavior through acts of discrimination, hostility and violence.

Eugenics is a form of scientific racism, mis-using science to make it seem like racist ideas are based in biological facts. Eugenic scientists measured what they saw as physical characteristics of race, such as skin colour, facial features and hair type, and linked these with moral and intellectual characteristics. They used science to make it seem like social inequality is

natural and that people that experience social problems, that is, racialized people, are inferior, and the people that benefit from social privileges, that is, white people, are superior.

Racialized

Racialized is a process by which the race of nondominant racial groups (Indigenous, black, and people of colour) is always marked and noticed; while the race of dominant groups (white people) seems invisible, natural, and not worth noting.

Residential School

Residential schools were a system of schools in which Indigenous children across Canada were placed by church and government authorities to assimilate them into the dominant White settler culture. In Canada, residential schools have been in operation for over 150 years, finally closing the last school in 1996.

Segregation

Segregation is an action or a state of separating someone or a group of people from other people. Students experience segregation when they are separated and kept apart from other students due to learning challenges. The goal of putting the “feeble-minded” in institutions was to separate the feeble-minded from the rest of society. People can experience racial segregation in communities, countries, and establishments.

Settler/Settler Privilege

Settler is a word used by some people to acknowledge their relation to their ancestors who colonized Indigenous land. The phrase “settler privilege” is used to describe the ways that settlers (non-Indigenous people) today benefit from colonialism.

Social constructionism

The idea that people are the way they are because of their physical, social and cultural environments. In the exhibition, sometimes this idea is called “environmentalism.”

Social Darwinism

Herbert Spencer developed the idea of Social Darwinism in the late nineteenth century. The idea overextended Darwin’s idea of natural selection to social progress. Spencer believed social progress would happen through a process of “survival of the fittest” (the idea that humans compete for survival—the strong survive and dominate in power and the weak disappear). Eugenicists used social Darwinism to justify and rationalize imperialism, colonialism, and subsequent systemic inequalities.

Sterilization

Sterilization is a process or an act that makes a person unable to have a baby, unable to sexually reproduce. Sometimes sterilization is voluntary. Sometimes sterilization is forced. [Forced sterilization](#) happens when a person is sterilized after saying no to the procedure, without a person's knowledge or when a person is not given an opportunity to give permission. People are pressured into sterilization when financial or other rewards, misinformation, or efforts to scare are used to pressure an individual to have the procedure. People with disabilities are especially vulnerable to forced sterilizations performed under the cover of legitimate medical care or the consent of others in their name.

Survival of the Fittest

"Survival of the fittest" is the late nineteenth century idea that humans compete for survival—the strong survive and dominate in power and the weak disappear. (See "Social Darwinism" for more information)

Treaty

A treaty is a formal agreement between nations or countries. Historically and today. First Nations and Inuit leaders understand treaties as living agreements between nations that ensure the well-being of all people, beings, and the land. Colonial leaders have, historically and today, used treaties as agreements that ensure their continued access to power and control over land, animals, and people.

Turtle Island

Turtle Island is the original, pre-colonial name of the land that today we call North America. Turtle Island was and is still the name for the land used by Indigenous people and non-Indigenous allies who are working towards decolonization.

Violence

Violence is when someone attacks someone else, often to get them to do something they do not want to do by making them feel pain or fear. Violence can be anything from verbal acts that hurt someone to a war between many countries that causes millions of deaths. Different people may see different acts as violent. Violence can be:

- verbal: insults, name calling or anything that hurts another's feelings.
- physical: fighting, killing, or hurting another;
- sexual: when a person makes someone else subject to sexual actions they do not want; e.g. rape

- symbolic: Ideas, structures, practices and norms that foster dynamics of power and subordination;
 - racial: when a violent act is motivated by race or nationality.
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