



EMBODIMENT AS CRITICAL REFLECTION: IMAGES AND ART IN THE LAW SCHOOL CLASSROOM

Queen's Law Virtual Symposium
Reflective Practice for Legal Professionals

Professor Gillian Calder

UVic Law

June 24, 2026

LEGAL RESEARCH
AND WRITING
LAW110/LAW112I





LRW: 2025-2026



AGENDA

Talk about

talk about the way that the course was reimagined to, amongst other things, enable students to put their bodies into the learning of law;

Share

share the reasoning behind situating Critical Reflection as one of the five competency pillars of the course;

Offer

offer some of the ways that reflective practice was integrated into the course;

Provide

provide detail on one of those examples – the visual gallery – and;

Conclude

conclude with some reflections on the magic that happened.

ANIMATING ARGUMENT

My contribution to this important symposium on Reflective Practice for Legal Professionals, is to offer some thoughts on things tried, to argue that embodied and arts-based practices are examples of critical reflection; and important tools in the toolkits of legal educators seeking to integrate the competence of critical reflection into the law school classroom.

② Indigenous Legal Research

- language
- Ind. legal order
- analysis
- Cultural competencies
- land-based learning

③

[ILU method.]
[stories/briefs]

⑥ AI and Ethics

- ethics of legal commun.

④

⑦ Rhetorics, Reflection, and Persuasion

④

- audience
- critical problem-solving
- arguments
- good writing
- improvisation
- deliberation

[poetry workshop]

[film?]

[values?]

[recitation?]

① Research Questions and Reflection

④

- Intro to law/power
- legal discourse
- nature of language → thread
- hard work of law
- Can legal system review
- court structure
- research plan
- land-based learning
- reflective practice

[tools?]

[3 questions?]

hierarchies

[pulling the weeds]

[learning style?]

⑤ Empathy and Oral Communication

- language
- interpersonal communication
- facts
- client consultation
- courtroom advocacy
- answering questions
- allyship
- relationship building
- collaboration

[handshake]
[film]

③ Finding Tools and Sources

⑥

- legal research: what is it?
- superpower
- identifying sources
- reading, briefing, analyzing
- citation
- research plan
- working with legislation
 - ↳ bill → law
 - ↳ regulations
- cases
- hierarchies
- library

[research videos]

④ Telling a story

⑤

- marginalization
- context / audience
- facts
- memo writing
- good writing
- narratives

[theory?]

[analysis]

[what is application?]

[poetry writing?]

[reasoning]

[archives?]

[stand on client]

3A Analysis

③ IRAC?

- application
- synthesis
- analogies/distinctions
- obiter
- reasoning

[Cinderella chart]

[legislative reasoning]

⑧ Advanced Research and Citation

④

- what is a research plan
- international
- policy analysis
- Hansard
- theory/frameworks
- jurisdictional work

[Archives]

[hearing?]

LRW Competencies

Legal Research

- Characterizing issues
- Using secondary sources to contextualize issues
- Tracking Research
- Locating primary sources
- Researching Indigenous laws
- Using AI search tools
- Citing Sources

Legal Analysis

- Purposeful reading
- Conceptual Skills
- Logical Reasoning
- Evaluating arguments

Communication

- Writing clearly and grammatically
- Oral communication
- Adapting communication for the audience
- Identifying and employing persuasive tactics

Reflective practice

- Self assessment/ metacognition
- Developing personal values & sense of justice
- Creative thinking
- Critical reflection/ Rhetorical awareness (In other words, an awareness of how our communicative choices shape our social reality)

[Rhetorical]

Interpersonal skills

- Empathy
- Cultural competency
- Collaboration

**Course Outline: Legal Research and Writing
The Promise and Problems of Legal Discourse
2025-2026**

I. Course Description

Legal Research and Writing (LRW) is a mandatory, first year course. The learning that you will be introduced to in this course is foundational to all the other courses that you will take throughout your time as a law student and into legal practice. The course is structured around five umbrella competencies: legal research, legal analysis, communication, critical reflection and interpersonal engagement; and evaluated by offering you several opportunities to put those competencies into practice. It is also a course about power. By introducing you to the problems and promise of legal discourse LRW will enable you to develop lasting, transferable skills for navigating legal problems mindfully while also offering concrete means to understand “the social, political, and economic implications of this form of discourse.”¹

The course has eight checkpoints:

1. What is legal research and writing and why does it matter to the practice of law?
2. Indigenous legal research and reflective practice;
3. Deepening the research: tools and sources;
4. Telling a story: research, reasoning and analysis;
5. Interrogation across difference;
6. Empathy and oral communications;
7. Advanced perspective on research: policy and creativity; and
8. Storytelling as persuasive practice.

¹ Lorne Sossin, “Discourse Politics: Legal Research and Writing’s Search for a Pedagogy of its Own” (1994) 29 *New England Law Review* 883-913 at 901.

FALL PORTFOLIO

Critical Reflection

Creative Writing

Scaffolding in Legal Research

Legal Memorandum



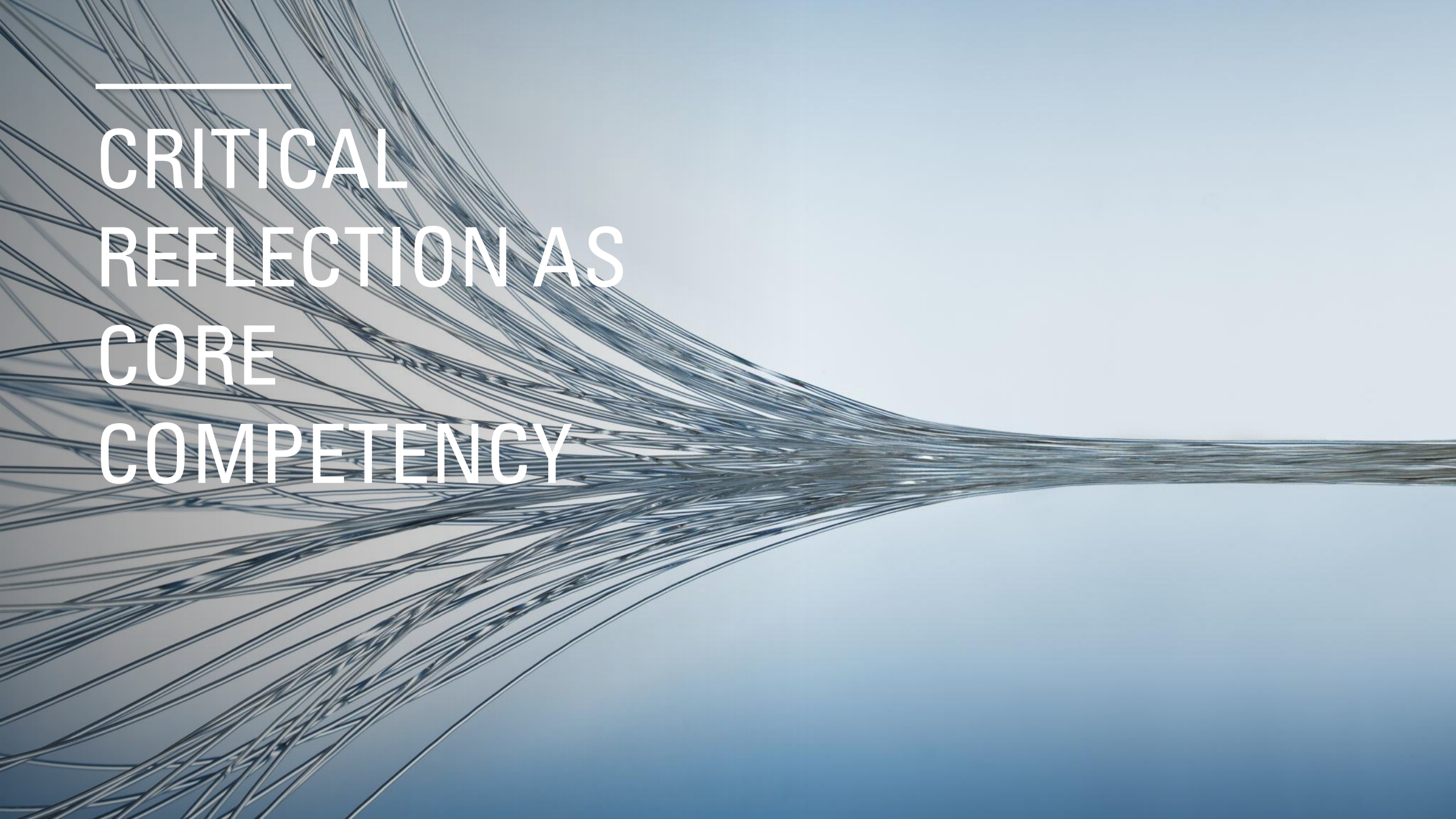
SPRING PORTFOLIO

1. Case Comment
 2. Client Consultation
 3. Opinion Letter
 4. Visual Project
 5. Factum
-

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING



CRITICAL REFLECTION AS CORE COMPETENCY

The background of the slide features a series of thin, dark blue and grey lines that originate from the left side and curve towards the right, creating a sense of motion and depth. The lines are more densely packed on the left and become more sparse as they converge towards the right. The overall color palette is a mix of light blue, grey, and white.

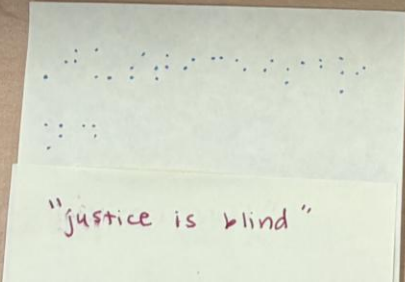




The whole body thinks, not just the brain

- Augusto Boal, 2002

The slides that follow are examples of the visual gallery work submitted by students in LRW in the 2025-2025 academic year. The images are used with permission and are not to be reproduced or shared. Thank you to: Sneha Ananth, Caitlyn Brook, Emily Carson-Epstein, Evan Hesketh, Jordan Ho, Oona Iverson, Sam Jamieson, Isabella Gonzalez Kaminski, Omar Gutierrez, Kassandra Harrison, Kenneth Jiang, Breane Mahlitz (with Rayven Glazebrooke), Keaton Mazurek, Beatrice McIntosh, Shannon McMillan, Megan Maxwell, Alessandra Morrison-Orme, Emmajean Neal, Sophia Olim, Priscilla Omulo, Claire Padley, Tegan Parsons, Noah Rother, Tanager, Mikayla Turnbrook, Caitlyn Waterhouse, Rachel Wehrmann, and Teanna Zwicker. And special thanks to Claire van Roggen.



"justice is blind"

Song Title	Artist	Origin
Fuck Tha Police	N.W.A.	Ice Cube wrote this song as a mock trial where Judge Dr. Dre presides as prosecutors Ice Cube, MC Ren and Eazy-E accuse cops of racist searches, frisks and home invasions. Dr. Dre's ruling: "Fuck tha Police".
C'mon x Brighter Days	Burners x Cajmere	Transition song
Pummarola Black	Spaccanapoli	Spaccanapoli was formed by socialist factory workers in Naples. This song is about the inequitable pay for black North African workers compared to other Europeans.
How Long Jah	Misty in Roots	How Long Jah is a protest against the colonial powers and oppression of Babylon's materialistic system.
Sauna	Renato Cohen	Transition song
Resistencia	Los de Abajo	Los de Abajo are from Mexico City. They support the libertarian socialist Zapatista Army of National Liberation, which defies political classification and supports indigenous Mayan traditions and indigenous land rights.
End of Line	Daft Punk	Transition song
The Revolution Will Not Be Televised	Gil Scott Heron	Written in 1970, Gil Scott Heron's message in this poem/song is clear: one cannot sit passively and watch the revolution from the comfort of one's own home.
I Play the Kora (feat. Rokia Koné, Mamani Keïta, Nneka & Kandia Kouyaté)	Les Amazones d'Afrique	Written by an all-female collective of West African musicians to campaign for gender equality and end violence against females. The kora is a West African instrument that, traditionally, only men were allowed to play.
Patria y Vida	Yotuel , Gente de Zona, Decemer Bueno, Maykel Osorbo , El Funky	This song was the soundtrack of the Cuban uprising of 2021. It became a rallying cry in the streets of Cube to protest the lack of food and vaccines.
Chaka	Sebjak, Fahlberg	Transition song

The Law's Quiet Imagination: Imagery in Legal Principles and Doctrines,

Drawn from Constitutional, Contract, Property, Tort, and Criminal Law, each image here reflects a legal doctrine or principle — including several concepts we have become all too familiar with. Regardless of how technically dense (or poorly written) some legal judgments may be, the law is never truly devoid of imagination. Metaphor, imagery, texture and storytelling can serve to anchor even the most complex legal principles in something tangible and human. Impactful legal writing usually tells a compelling story, and these doctrines are proof that the law, at its best, is fluent in the language of imagination.

Before flipping each label to reveal the doctrine, take a moment to guess: What legal principle might this image be hiding?

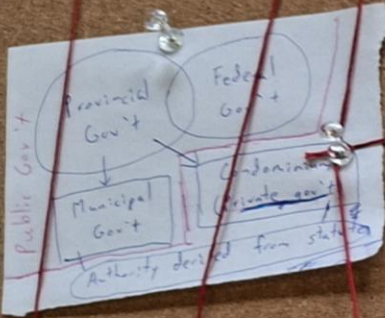
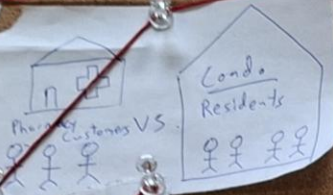


Syndicat Northeast v. Ansalem, 2004 SCC 47

Douglas C. Harris, "Condominium Government and the Right to Live in the City" (Pursuing in 2003) 34/3 CJSLS 371
Omnicare Pharmacy Ltd. v. The Owners, Strata Plan LMS 2854
2017 BCSC 256 (Omnicare Pharmacy)
Photo taken by Jordan He



DOES NOT APPLY - PRIVATE AND CONTRACTUAL NATURE??
H. 19



DESPITE PRIVATE NATURE, STILL AFFECT SURROUNDING AREA



Torts



LOW INCOME COMMUNITY OR AREA FOR REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALISATION?

Matthew T. Rader
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gentrification#/media/File:Gentrification_-_with_an_old_and_new_home_side-by-side_in_West_East_Dallas.jpg

Contracts Property

Constitutional Law

UWIC



Criminal Law

Legislation, and Policy

Legal Research & Writing



Community groups and advocates rallied in Vancouver Sept. 29, 2024, to share their concerns about involuntary care in the province. (David Nadalini / CityNews Image)



ray of legal services to low-income women.

ith the following matters:

- nt claim forms)
- ment benefit supplements)
- Employment Standards Branch complaints)
- intake@atira.bc.ca, call 604.331.1407 x.114 or in-
- ve messages at
- (s) you are looking to get help with
- nail back list to reach out and book an appointment to
- mine how we can help.

How to apply:

Please contact us at the email address' below, drop in at 101 E Cordova (8:30 am - 5 pm Monday-Friday), or call our legal intake desk at 604.331.1407 ext. 114.

Sheila Goojha, Criminal Defense Lawyer, She/her,
E: sheila.goojha@atira.bc.ca M: 604.809.9211

Taylor Clarke, Community Justice Legal Advocate, She/her,
E: taylor.clarke@atira.bc.ca M: 604.992.1660

Location and Mailing Address
Attn: Early Resolution Program (Legal)
101 E Cordova Street, Vancouver, BC, V6A 1K7

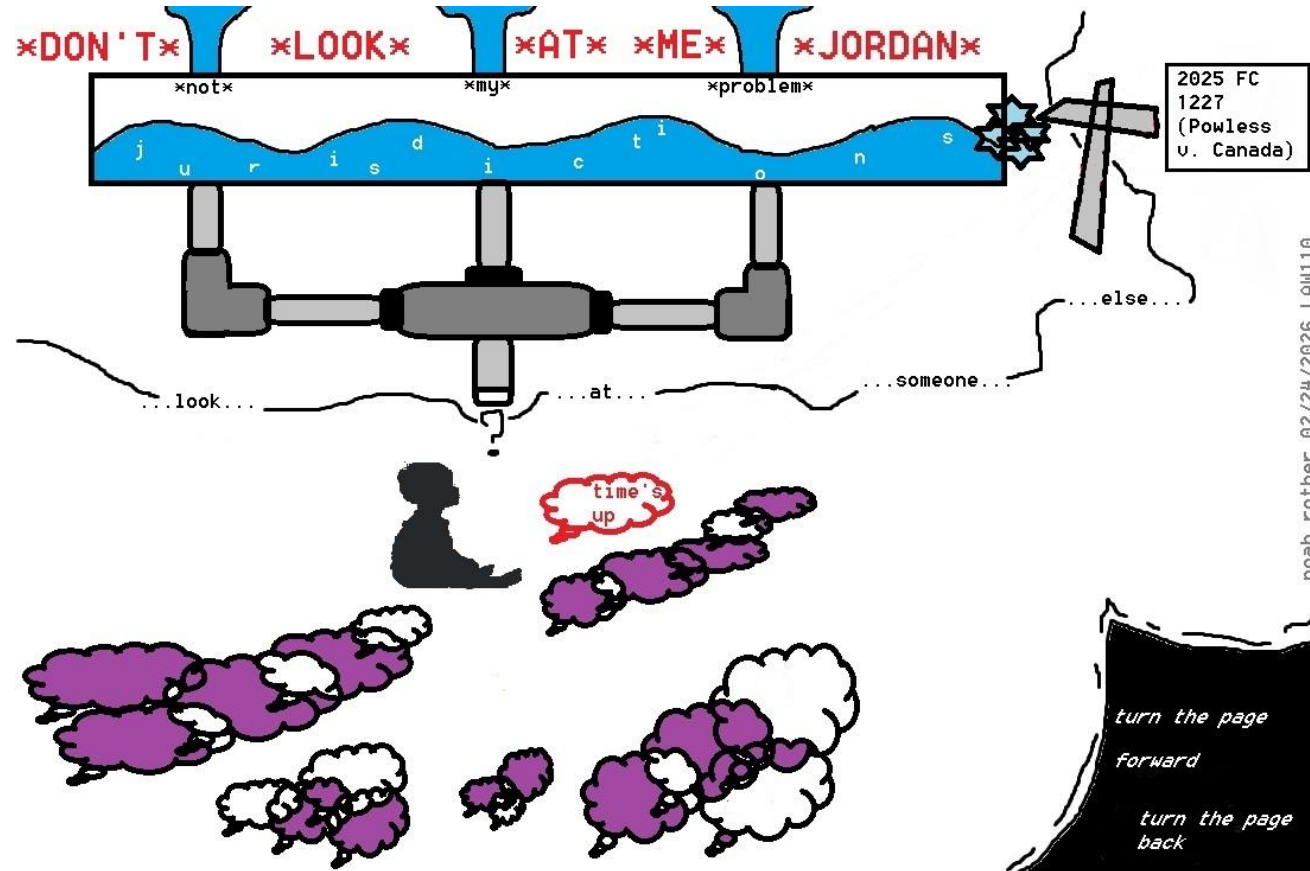
Unceded and occupied Musqueam (x'məḱ'əyám), Tsleil Waututh (Səlilwataʔ/Selilwuth) and Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw) Territories











meanwhile in Ontario...

www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/tribunal-first-nations-education-funding-9.7039685

"The federal government has drastically cut funding for First Nations kids in Ontario seeking educational support under Jordan's Principle — from \$122.1 million to just \$1.2 million over the same time periods in 2024 versus 2025 — a tribunal hearing revealed this week."

"It always seems like we take a step ahead and we get knocked two steps back"

"It's not anything adequate or equivalent to what off-reserve school systems have and so, for example, if we have special needs, our kids have to go off-reserve"

NDA's have been blamed for keeping victims ^{quiet.} This Vancouver violinist is **breaking** hers

Globe and Mail - December 17, 2025

Esther Hwang

Victims no longer silenced as landmark legislation takes effect on P.E.I.
CBC News - May 17, 2022

Can't Buy Silence Act, 2025
Second Reading, Senate of Canada

Non-disclosure Agreements Act, 2022
First Reading, Nova Scotia

Stopping the Misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements Act, 2023
First Reading, Ontario

In British Columbia:
Staff are currently exploring both legislative and non-legislative options aimed at:

- Improving public awareness of existing legal rights and remedies, including the fact that some existing NDAs may already be unenforceable, and
- Preventing the misuse of NDAs, while still allowing their use when a survivor makes an informed and voluntary decision to sign one.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/about-bca-justice-system/legislation-policy/active-reviews/non-disclosure-agreements>

"The use of NDAs to silence victims is wrong. It causes enormous harm to survivors, protects perpetrators, and enables future abuse... The BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association has called on the BC government to prohibit NDAs related to claims of harassment and discrimination."
<https://katherineneedlemanoboist.substack.com/p/esther-hwang>

"Teachers and principal players in the orchestral world are predominantly straight men... This has unfortunately created a male-dominated culture that leaves little room for women and queer people to feel safe or heard"
Musicians of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra - December 19, 2025

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra to end use of NDAs for sexual misconduct cases
CBC News - January 7, 2026

8 Symphonies Sever Ties With Conductor Charles Dutoit Following Claims of Sexual Misconduct
Associated Press - December 22, 2017

Assaults in dressing rooms. Groping during lessons. Classical musicians reveal a profession rife with harassment
Washington Post August 23, 2018

Cleveland Orchestra fires concertmaster, top musician after sex harassment investigation
Washington Post - October 24, 2018

Plácido Domingo sexual harassment allegations are credible, L.A. Opera says
LA Times - March 10, 2020

University of Manitoba music prof charged in historical sexual assault of teen student
CBC News - August 8, 2025

even the hell

Petty Trespass Act

CHAPTER 32

MALL

"any person who trespasses upon land...
is guilty of an offence."

"the owner of the shopping centre
had sufficient control"

"A fundamental freedom, the
right of the individual to the
enjoyment of property"

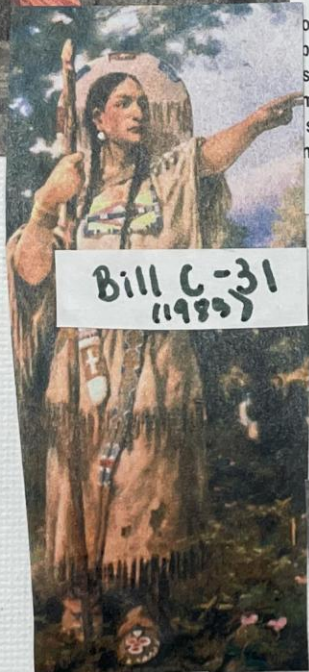
NO
TRESPASSING



R. v. Morgentaler (1988)



Dunmore v. Hnralian (2025)



Bill C-31 (1985)

(2017)
R. v. N.S.

Douglass's memoir (above) was published in 1845. Right: Douglass is the most photographed man in America during the 19th century. He saw dignified men challenge the rule of the white man.

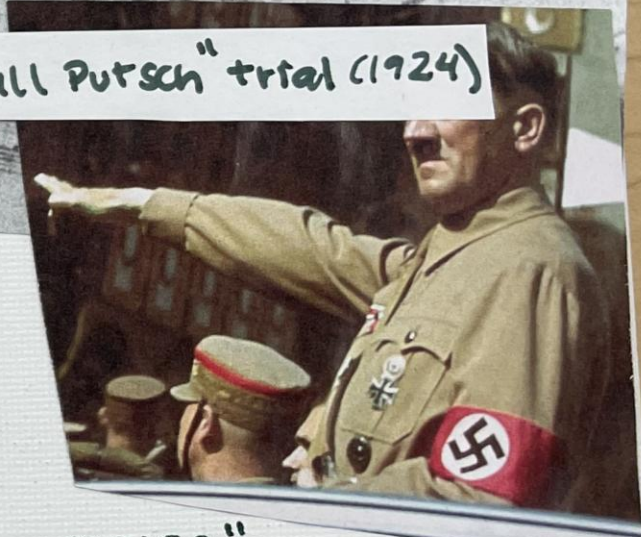
FREDERICK DOUGLASS
AN
AMERICAN SLAVE
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF
BOSTON:
PUBLISHED AT THE ANTI-SLAVERY OFFICE,
No. 25 CORNHILL.
1845.



(2016)
Naruto v Slater



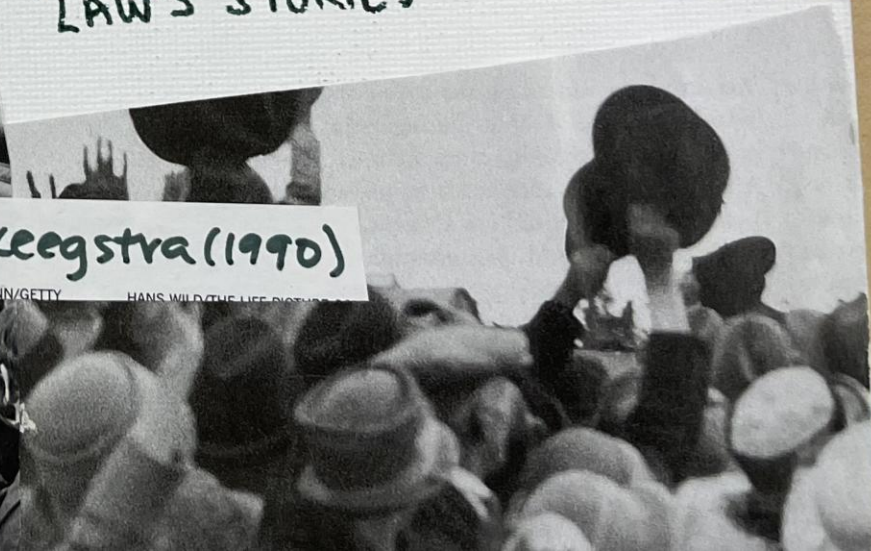
"Beer Hall Putsch" trial (1924)



"LAW'S STORIES"



R. v. Keegstra (1990)





"THE WORK
DONE BY ANY
RANCH WIFE"

MURDOCH V. MURDOCH, 1973 CANL
193 (SCC), 019751 SCR 123 AT 425

NDAs have been blamed for
keeping victims from
Vancouver violinist is
breaking here

FIRST NA

COM

NITIES

COAST SALISH COM

NON-COAST SALISH

TREATY SETTLE

DOUGLAS TRE

STEVENS TREA

MAJOR WATER

28. We Call upon law school
law students to take a
and the law, which include
residential schools, the
on Rights of Indigenous
Aboriginal rights, Indig
Crown relations. This
training in intercultural
resolution, human r

to require all
original people
and legacy of
Declaration
ties and
Aboriginal-
-based
conflict
racism.²

AMN FINAL
REEMENT
(2016)

TIA'AMIA

Kwiskah

K'AMIA

K'AMIA

K'AMIA

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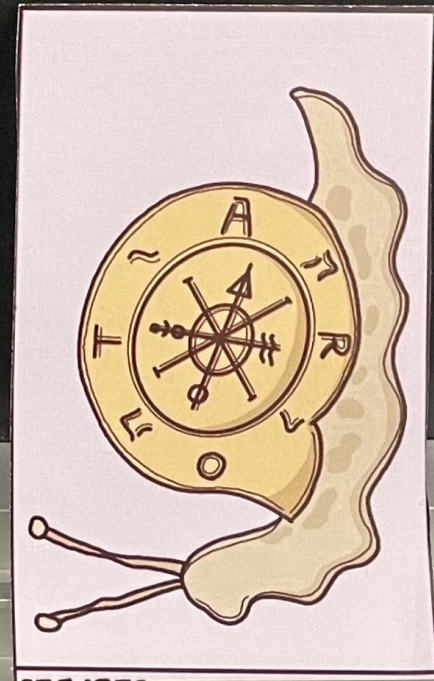
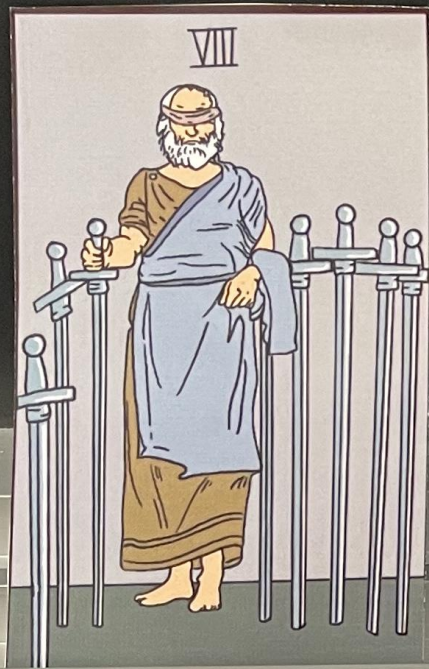
K'AMIA

K'AMIA

K'AMIA

K'AMIA

K'AMIA





"differing priorities"



CHOOSE THIS IF YOU
ARE:
PLANT-BASED



"Butter" tarts
Made by Oona Iverson

CHOOSE THIS IF YOU
ARE:
GLUTEN
INTOLERANT*



Gluten-free butter tarts
Made by Oona Iverson
*but maybe not celiac? I did my best

CHOOSE THIS IF YOU:
ENJOY
PECANS*



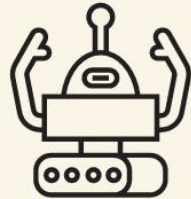
Pecan Butter Tarts
Made by Oona Iverson
*I don't understand you, but I support
your choices

CHOOSE THIS IF YOU:
ENJOY RAISINS*



Raisin Butter Tarts
Made by Oona Iverson
*justice for raisins!

CHOOSE THESE IF
YOU:
TRUST AI



LLM-generated butter tarts
Recipe by Chat-GPT

REGIONAL VARIATION:
ONTARIO



For the purists! Just butter &
sugar.
Made by Oona Iverson

REGIONAL VARIATION:
QUEBEC (RAISINS)



Maple raisin butter tarts
Made by Oona Iverson

CHOOSE THESE IF
YOU:
ARE A FAMILY OF SIX



GST-free butter tarts
Made by Oona Iverson

REGIONAL
VARIATION:
QUEBEC (PLAIN)



Maple syrup butter tarts
Made by Oona Iverson

REGIONAL VARIATION:
ONTARIO



For the purists! Just butter &
sugar.
Made by Oona Iverson

REGIONAL VARIATION:
QUEBEC (RAISINS)



Maple raisin butter tarts
Made by Oona Iverson

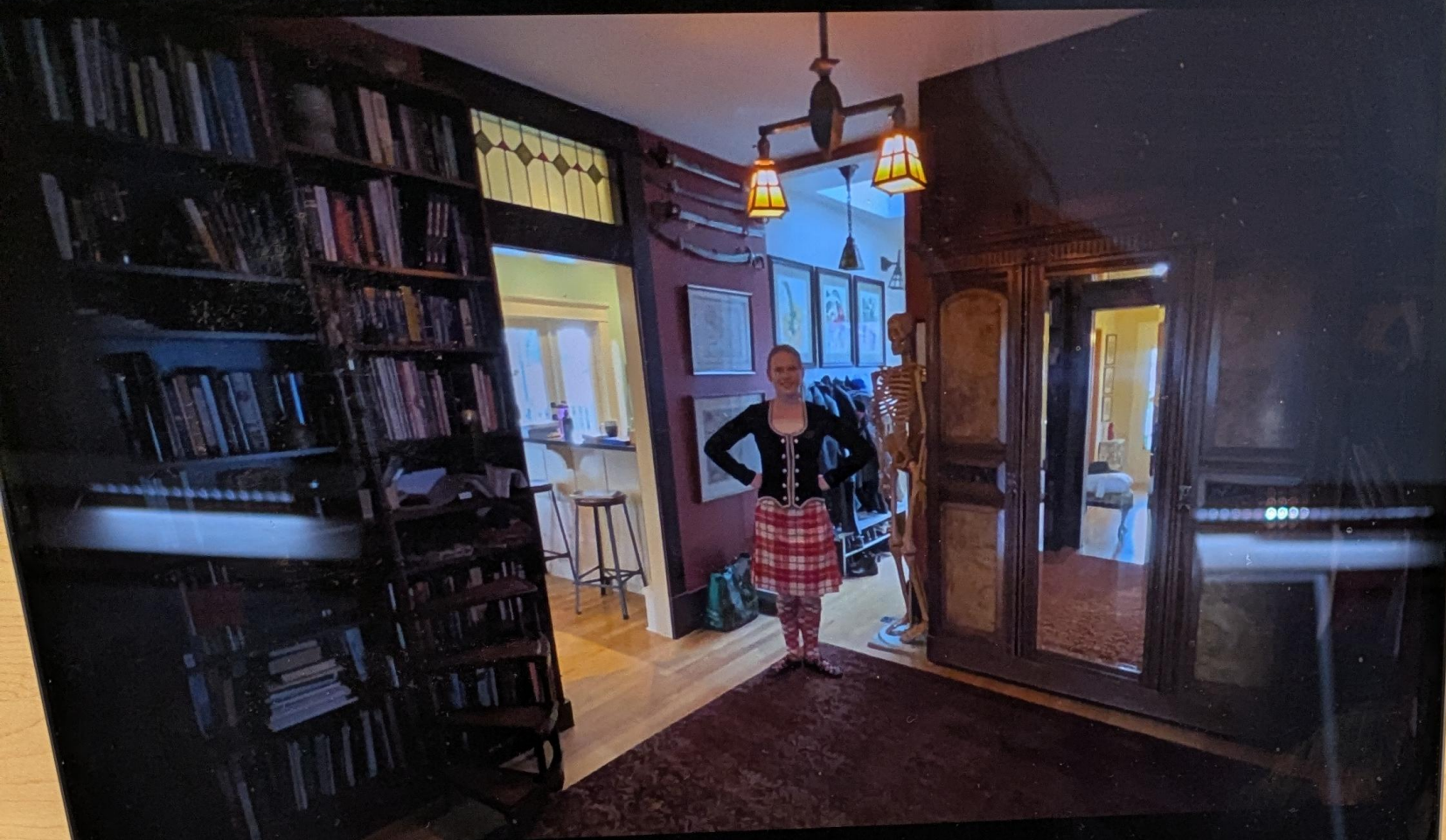
CHOOSE THESE IF
YOU:
ARE A FAMILY OF SIX



GST-free butter tarts
Made by Oona Iverson

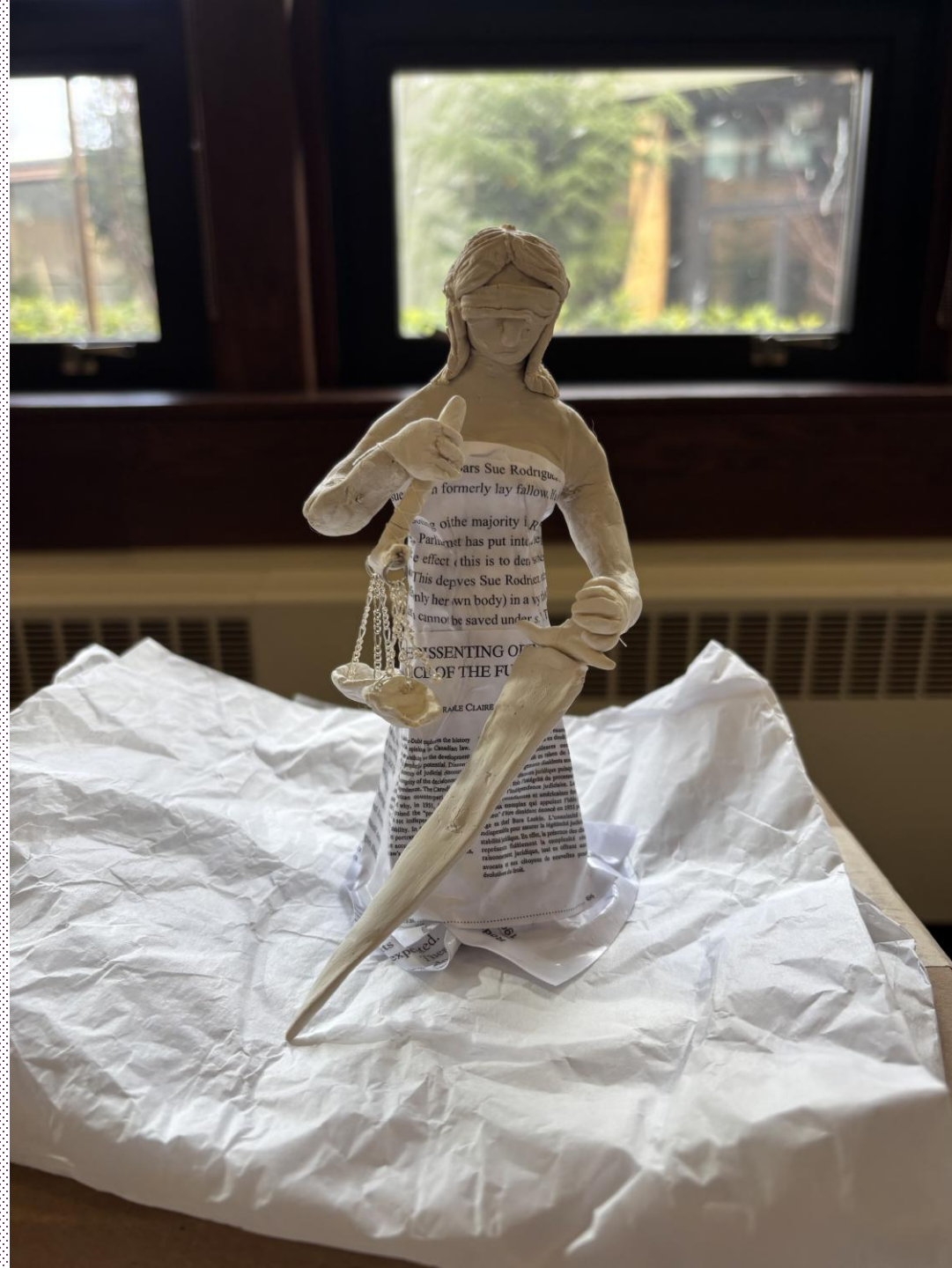






This dance is called the Sean Tribuhas. It's a law passed in the wake of the 1795 Ba

SENDING HIM AWAY. THE MAN FROM THE COUNTRY HAS NOT EXPECTED SUCH DIFFICULTIES: THE LAW SHOULD ALWAYS BE ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE, HE THINKS, BUT AS HE NOW LOOKS MORE CLOSELY AT THE GATEKEEPER IN HIS FUR COAT, AT HIS LARGE POINTED NOSE AND HIS LONG, THIN, BLACK TARTAR'S BEARD, HE DECIDES THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO WAIT UNTIL HE GETS PERMISSION TO GO INSIDE. THE GATEKEEPER GIVES HIM A STOOL AND ALLOWS HIM TO SIT DOWN AT THE SIDE IN FRONT OF THE GATE. THERE HE SITS FOR DAYS AND YEARS. HE MAKES MANY ATTEMPTS TO BE LET IN, AND HE WEARS THE GATEKEEPER OUT WITH HIS REQUESTS. THE GATEKEEPER OFTEN INTERROGATES HIM BRIEFLY, QUESTIONING HIM ABOUT HIS HOMELAND AND MANY OTHER THINGS, BUT THEY ARE INDIFFERENT QUESTIONS, THE KIND GREAT MEN PUT, AND AT THE END HE ALWAYS TELLS HIM ONCE MORE THAT HE CANNOT LET HIM INSIDE YET. THE MAN, WHO HAS EQUIPPED HIMSELF WITH MANY THINGS FOR HIS JOURNEY, SPENDS EVERYTHING, NO MATTER HOW VALUABLE, TO WIN OVER THE GATEKEEPER. THE LATTER TAKES IT ALL BUT, AS HE DOES SO, SAYS, "I AM TAKING THIS ONLY SO THAT YOU DO NOT THINK YOU HAVE FAILED TO DO ANYTHING." DURING THE MANY YEARS THE MAN OBSERVES THE GATEKEEPER ALMOST CONTINUOUSLY. HE FORGETS THE OTHER GATEKEEPERS, AND THIS ONE SEEMS TO HIM THE ONLY OBSTACLE FOR ENTRY INTO THE LAW. HE CURSES THE UNLUCKY CIRCUMSTANCE, IN THE FIRST YEARS THOUGHTLESSLY AND OUT LOUD, LATER, AS HE GROWS OLD, HE STILL MUMBLES TO HIMSELF. HE BECOMES CHILDISH AND, SINCE IN THE LONG YEARS STUDYING THE GATEKEEPER HE HAS COME TO KNOW THE FLEAS IN HIS FUR COLLAR, HE EVEN ASKS THE FLEAS TO HELP HIM



Access to Justice
THE GAME

*It might not be that much fun to play, but well...
neither is the legal system.*

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pick up a cup in each row, if you get an "X", you lose. If you get an "O", move on to the next row.
2. If you make it to the end, you get a cookie.
3. Play again, this time with representation.



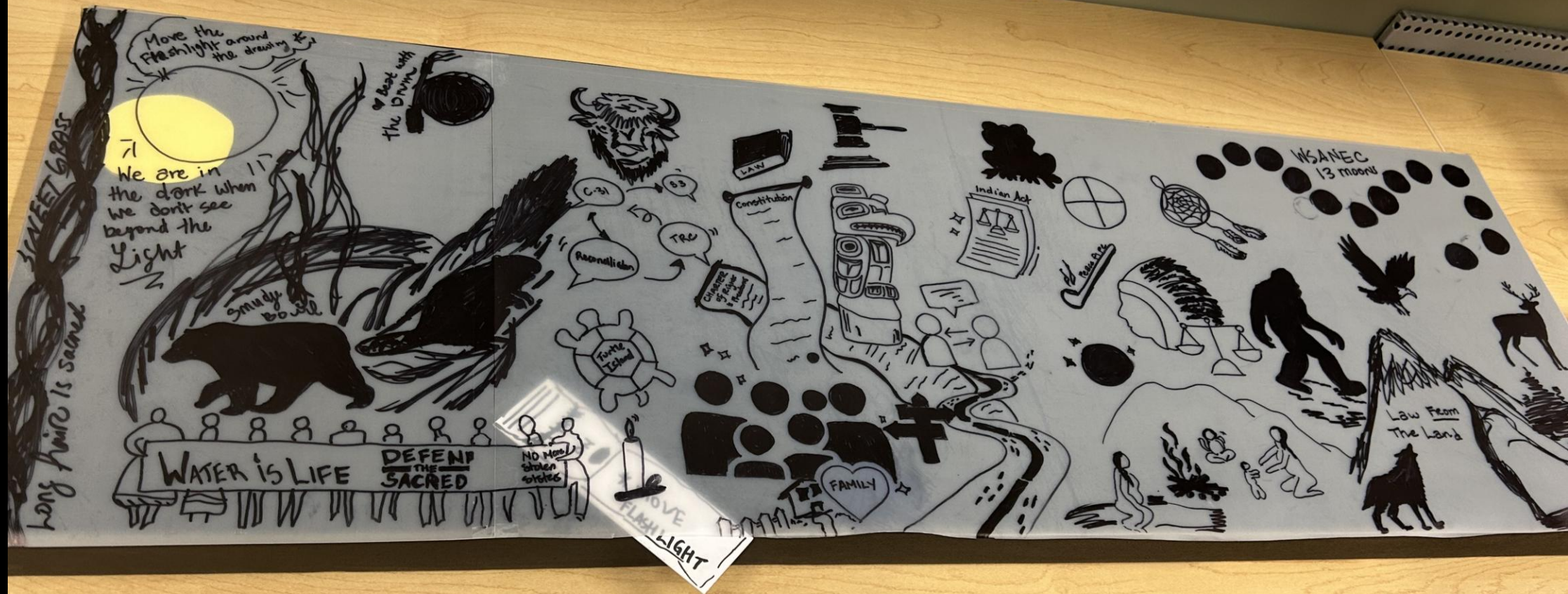
Spirit Bear (Aschahtowi Maskwa (Norway House Cree Dialect))
Beatrice McIntosh

This is Spirit Bear.

Spirit Bear carries the story of Jordan River Anderson, and the important transsystemic legal principle named for him. Jordan, a child from Norway House Cree Nation, spent his entire life in a Winnipeg hospital, far from his family and community, due to a funding conflict between the federal and provincial government. Now, Spirit Bear, one of Jordan's favourite toys, has become a symbol of Jordan's Principle and the dire need for equality for First Nations children. Cindy Blackstock, executive director of First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, keeps Spirit Bear in her office, with Jordan's baby blanket, as a continuous reminder of who and what she is working for. I would like to work in Indigenous child and family law some day, and I intend to keep Spirit Bear, along with my sash, in the same place.



A mural in Victoria's Chinatown







CONCLUSION
