

Women and Canadians in Canadian Society (~1900)

Women:

- had very few legal rights and roles were strictly defined
- few rights regarding property and children
 - until 1970 (“Separate Property System”), women and men were considered as largely one entity, a man
 - a women’s work raising children or taking care of the home was not recognized
- were not considered to be ‘persons’ under the law
- almost never had the right to vote, even municipally
- few job opportunities
 - servants, factory labourers, teachers, nurses
 - very few were writers – their public voice was not valued
- no legal right to their own salaries if married
- men were allowed to “confine women” and use a “reasonable” amount of corporal punishment
 - ‘rule of thumb’?
- would all eventually change...

- legal examples:
 - 1859, married women could own property but had to have their husband’s consent to sell it
 - 1872, women in Ontario given the right to their own salaries
 - 1890, women denied entry into the Law Society of Upper Canada (University) because she was not a person
 - 1882, women in Ontario gained the right to vote in municipal elections, but only if they were a spinster or a widow

Canadiens:

- never, ever saw themselves as “loyal British subjects”
- was all a result of 150 years before
- Quebec was ceded to the British as a result of the Seven Years War
- from that point onwards, they were considered ‘British’ but most didn’t even speak the language
- Quebec saw a progression of governors and policies, some of which were directly trying to assimilate them
- denied French language rights in western Canada, for example
 - license plate motto: **Je me souviens**
 - “I remember...”
- lots of tension between the English and the French in Canada

- Canadiens were nationalist
 - preached independence from Britain
 - felt threatened
 - the rights that they “gained” at Confederation were flat out ignored
 - language in schools, etc.