

THE THREE RS: RESISTANCE, RESILIENCE, AND RECONCILIATION
IN CANADA AND IRELAND

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Resistance, resilience, and reconciliation are three under-recognized themes in response to British colonization's global imprint. Britain developed its methods of colonization in Ireland, and used further refined methods in Canada such as the Indian Residential Schools (IRSs). Colonization and repeated trauma continue intergenerationally for Indigenous peoples in multiple ways, as do also resistance and resilience that can lead to reconciliation through the generations with stories, family life, and spirituality. The Three Rs (resistance, resilience and reconciliation) are identified as Indigenous contributions to peacebuilding in Ireland and Canada. This study addresses the long-term social legacy of colonialism in conflict, in relation with potential positive peacebuilding within Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS).

“We’re still here” is an anthem of Indigenous peoples in Ireland¹ and Canada.² After centuries of direct, structural and cultural violence including forced assimilation, there have been and still are multiple acts of resistance, resilience and reconciliation (the Three Rs) in response to the actions of the British Empire. These inherent strengths within the Indigenous peoples of Ireland and Canada³ are sources of Indigenous peacebuilding.

Colonization is a dominant part of Britain's history and resulting wealth,⁴ yet it is more than a political or economic act; it is also a combination of social and cultural processes that continue into the twenty-first century. Colonization even leads to disparity over the definitions of Indigenous.