



# Factum

## Four in ten Canadians Unfamiliar with Historic Achievements of Many of Canada's Most Notable Women

### Lack of Awareness Leads to Shared Wish to Improve Teaching of Women's History in Canada

**Toronto, ON, March 7, 2018** — In the lead-up to International Women's Day, Canadians confess their knowledge of notable Canadian women's achievements has significant room for improvement, and express disappointment on the current state of importance placed on women's history in Canada.

A new Ipsos survey conducted for Historica Canada finds only three in ten say that Canada is doing 'excellent' or 'good' in informing Canadian youth about women's history (30%). The perception that the education system fails to teach young people about important female figures is borne out by the fact that Canadians are largely unfamiliar with the achievements of notable women throughout Canadian history. As a measure of that lack of awareness, only a minority of respondents say they could identify the achievements of such accomplished Canadian women as artist Emily Carr (37%), author Lucy Maud Montgomery (27%), and suffragette Nellie McClung (16%). Four in ten say they are **not familiar** with the achievements of **any** of the 15 women listed (40%). Awareness of these women and their accomplishments is higher within the regions they are from.

The celebration of important women throughout history (e.g. statues, building names) also has room for improvement; only 38% think Canada is doing well on this issue (provided a rating of 'excellent' or 'good'); women are more likely than men to be critical of Canada's commemoration of notable women - 34% say Canada is doing 'excellent' or 'good' in this respect while over four in ten men (42%) feel the same. Canadians are about equally critical of the inclusion of diverse perspectives throughout women's history (34% 'excellent' or 'good'.)

Regarding Canadians' knowledge of the issues facing Indigenous women specifically, Canadians are more likely say Canada is doing 'poor' or 'very poor' than 'excellent' or 'good' on this topic (35% and 28%, respectively). This lack of knowledge is further supported by the extremely low levels of awareness of important Indigenous women such as Mary (Molly) Brant, or Konwatsi'tsiaienni (3%), Daphne Odjig (2%), and Kenojuak Ashevak (1%).

Nearly six in ten say that Canada is doing well protecting and promoting women's rights (56% 'excellent' or 'good'); men are more likely than women to feel this way (60% vs 53%, respectively). About half of both men (51%) and women (45%) think good progress is being made on making women feel safe from sexual harassment within the Canadian workplace and society.

Further on the topic of sexual harassment, sentiments are split when it comes to the #metoo movement; Canadians are equally likely to feel that the movement is achieving its purpose (22%), that it is too early to tell (22%), or that it has gone too far (19%) – only one in ten say it has not gone far enough (11%). Unsurprisingly, men are more likely to feel that #metoo movement has gone too far (24% vs 16% women) whereas women are more likely to hold the reverse position (14% vs 9% men). There are also clear divisions by age. Those 55+ are more likely to say the movement has gone too far (24%) compared to those aged 18-34 (14%).

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## Press Release – continued –



<u>Notable Canadian woman</u>	<u>Canadians who say they're familiar with their achievements</u>
Emily Carr	37%
Lucy Maud Montgomery	27%
Nellie McClung	16%
Gabrielle Roy	14%
Viola Desmond	13%
Thérèse Casgrain	10%
Rosemary Brown	8%
Agnes Macphail	7%
Emily Stowe	7%
Mary (Molly) Brant, or <i>Konwatsi'tsiaiénmi</i>	3%
Bertha Wilson	3%
Daphne Odjig	2%
Mary Ann Shadd Cary	2%
Kenojuak Ashevak	1%
Bobbie Rosenfeld	1%
None of the Above	40%

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## Press Release – continued –



### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between February 23 and 26, 2018, on behalf of Historica Canada. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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## Press Release – continued –



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