



# Confronting Indian Residential School Confabulation and Media Irresponsibility

Responding to Gerbrandt and Carleton's "Debunking the Mass Grave Hoax"

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*This report was revised Oct. 27, 2023, to reflect new information regarding Buffy Sainte-Marie and to include a link to a research paper by UBC Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre issued in June 2021 concerning ‘mass graves.’*

## Preface

Canada is in the grip of a ‘mass grave/missing children’ psychosis related to Indian Residential Schools. The ‘shock and awe’ media campaign that accompanied the statements by the Kamloops First Nation in May of 2021 claiming that clandestinely buried children’s bodies or remains had been found in an orchard thanks to a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) search sent shock waves around the world.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to claims in the Reid Gerbrandt - Sean Carleton report, “*Debunking the “Mass Grave Hoax”: A Report on Media Coverage and Residential School Denialism in Canada*” the media never corrected these stories.

In addition to rebutting the Gerbrandt-Carleton media claims, this report incorporates a number of articles that set the context of some historical events. I also have included a rebuttal to a Sean Carleton paper, regarding the cancel culture that led to the dismissal of Senator Lynn Beyak from the Canadian Senate. Think of this as a plain language media kit on Canadian history relevant to Indian Residential Schools.

In this document, I make scant reference to the mistreatment or abuse of former Indian Residential School students, simply because the Canadian government has spent >\$60 million and about 8 years documenting those statements, and we are spending >\$60 billion in compensation and reconciliatory programs on a population of less than 1.8 million Indigenous people – not all of whom ever went to Indian Residential School of any kind, and so many Indigenous do not qualify for compensation – creating inequity. Despite this huge compensation, most Indigenous people will still live in poverty, with no fresh water and lack of housing while the media continue their focus on witch hunts of elderly Catholic Sisters, Brothers, and Fathers, and those of other Christian denominations who dedicated their lives to the service of their students, many of whom were orphans.

I am looking for media accuracy, inclusion of historical context in Indian Residential School reporting, and rational reconciliation. I do not ascribe to a ‘settler historian’ view of the world and do not support a grievance industry.

*Notice when you are holding onto a grievance. How many minor and major irritations and grievances occupy your thinking throughout the day? What do we sacrifice when our attention is centered on grievances? Heed Hayek’s warning: A “decent society” cannot survive when a critical mass of people is focused on grievances. Living for grievances means risking our humanity and liberty.*

<https://www.aier.org/article/to-live-for-grievances-risks-liberty/>

### Historic Catholic Church in Alberta First Nation community burned to ground in suspicious fire

JOY SPEARCHEIF-MORRIS >  
PUBLISHED AUGUST 25, 2022  
UPDATED AUGUST 26, 2022

This article was published more than 1 year ago. Some information may no longer be current.



The old Fort Chipewyan church burns down in a fire the RCMP believes is suspicious.  
CRYSTAL MERCREDI/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/alberta/article-historic-catholic-church-in-alberta-first-nation-community-burned-to/>

<sup>1</sup> <https://cfictoday.com/2021/05/27/tkemplups-confirms-bodies-of-215-children-buried-at-former-kamloops-indian-residential-school-site/>

# CONFRONTING INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL CONFABULATION

## RESPONDING TO GERBRANDT AND CARLETON'S "DEBUNKING THE MASS GRAVE HOAX"

By Michelle Stirling ©2023

Two scholars, Reid Gerbrandt and Sean Carleton, from the University of Manitoba have [issued a report via the Centre for Human Rights Research](#) which claims to debunk Indian Residential School 'denialism' (aka *factualism*) and the specific aspect of the 'mass grave hoax.' Some of the people who are criticized in the report have used what I believe to be inadvisable language. A key word in question is 'hoax' – applied to naming the phenomenon of believing and promoting the myth that there are hundreds or thousands of unmarked graves of clandestinely buried children at Indian Residential Schools, some of whom allegedly killed by nefarious priests or nuns, and that this 'has been known' by Indigenous communities or that there is a 'knowing' in such communities for decades.

In other words, **serious criminal accusations have been made against thousands of disciples of Christ and the relevant churches and related government institutions, and this defamatory blood libel has been widely reported as fact by thousands of mainstream television and radio media outlets as well as newspapers in Canada and around the world.** This reporting has relied on claims about the findings of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) searches (which can only detect subsurface disturbances, not graves or bodies) and hearsay evidence from anonymous elders or Knowledge Keepers whose word has been accepted as fact, without a shred of evidence.

The Gerbrandt-Carleton report asks you to focus on the cherry-picked journalistic misreporting of five aspects of the genocidal theme of Indian Residential Schools:

- 1) "Mass grave hoax"
- 2) "Remains found"
- 3) "Indigenous cover-up"
- 4) "Misrepresenting GPR"
- 5) "Truth seekers"

In this rebuttal, ask you to see the bigger picture.

If you believe there are children buried in the former apple orchard at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, and if you care about what happened to those children, why haven't you asked:

- 1 Who were the children?
- 2 Who are their families?
- 3 How did they die?
- 4 When did parents or guardians report them missing?
- 5 Why are the RCMP not investigating?

If you don't believe, that's probably why you're not asking.

If you are questioning, but still care, you should ask:

- 1 Why haven't we been told who the children were?
- 2 Why haven't we been told who their families are?
- 3 Why haven't we been told how they died?
- 4 Why haven't we been told about parents or guardians reporting missing children?
- 5 Why are the RCMP not investigating?

Why do I care? I researched and wrote a series of documentaries and historical docu-dramas over the course of a decade under the supervision of or in consultation with Dr. Hugh Dempsey, then curator of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. I personally interviewed hundreds of pioneers and their descendants including the last living Mountie of the era of the great trek west, descendants of the signing of Treaty 7, descendants of Colonel Macleod, pioneer and historian Grant MacEwan (born in 1902) and I travelled to these many small communities and historic sites to see for myself with our crew. I carry forward the knowledge these people entrusted to me. They were the people who built the foundation of the province of Alberta and the country of Canada. I will not stand by silent and see their legacy destroyed by half-truths, opportunists, and historical illiteracy.

THE TWEET THAT SHOOK THE WORLD WAS FALSE AND REMAINS ONLINE



CFJC reporter James Peters was secretly given a scoop by the Kamloops Band (or whoever phoned him on the Band's behalf). The fact that that's never been publicized by anyone except Nina Green (on her website) allowed Kimberly Murray to claim in her interim report this year that the Kamloops Band didn't intend to publicize the GPR 'discovery', and that someone else leaked it to the media!

*The news became public through a leak to the media. There was no communications plan yet in place. Many members of the community learned about the results from outside sources, which was traumatizing for Survivors, families, and community members.<sup>2</sup>*

Diligent researcher Nina Green **did** alert media at the time: (published with Nina Green's permission)

**From:** Nina Green <>

**Subject: Re: Open letter to Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Band Council and all Band Members**

**Date:** September 25, 2021 at 8:42:06 AM PDT

I just spoke to James Peters at CFJC, who broke the story on May 27th. He advised that CFJC was given the story about mid-afternoon on May 27th and was told it would be released by the Band later that afternoon. He wrote up the story below under his byline, and tweeted on social media with a link to his story:

<https://cfjctoday.com/2021/05/27/tkemplups-confirms-bodies-of-215-children-buried-at-former-kamloops-indian-residential-school-site/>

I've attached a screenshot of the tweet with the link.

The screenshot is from this video, which someone drew my attention to yesterday:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=Go6Fpp03Voc&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR0srsXVzdRygyJVLUMIDVFj35ijQdRTaFhII6BHvkbEgloxf-g4f4dXKnU>

I had originally thought that the story broke in a completely different way. I thought Chief Casimir held a press conference on May 27th at which she took reporters' questions and handed out the attached press release. Turns out that's entirely wrong. CFJC was given the story in advance, wrote up its story, put out a tweet with a link to the story, and then later that day the Band emailed the story to other news outlets.

Unfortunate scenario. Had Chief Casimir held a press conference and answered reporters' questions on May 27th, the claim that a 'mass grave' had been found would not have gone viral around the world. But unfortunately without clarifying details, the words 'remains', 'bodies' and '215 children' turned it into a 'mass grave' story. When Chief Casimir eventually clarified that it was not a 'mass grave', it was too late for corrections. The New York Times was still repeating it as a 'mass grave' story on July 30th, and that's still how it's perceived (and will continue to be perceived) by most of the world, and in fact by most Canadians.

The site needs to be excavated to determine what's really been found.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://osi-bis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/OSI\\_InterimReport\\_June-2023\\_WEB.pdf](https://osi-bis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/OSI_InterimReport_June-2023_WEB.pdf)

Consequently, Gerbrandt and Carleton’s claim that **no one intended misinformation be distributed to the media appears to be completely false**. Further, media people immediately notified by sharp-eyed researcher Nina Green of the problematic and false public communication, and **no corrections were issued**. To this day (Oct. 22, 2023) the misinformation remains on line.

Recall Gerbrandt and Carleton’s debunking points? Seems the uncorrected original scoop tweet by CFJC meets 4 of the 5 criteria that Gerbrandt and Carleton claim to debunk. It is odd that they cherry-picked their sources, never seeking out the origin of the story.

- 1) “Mass grave hoax”
- 2) “Remains found”
- 3) “Indigenous cover-up”
- 4) “Misrepresenting GPR”
- 5) “Truth seekers”

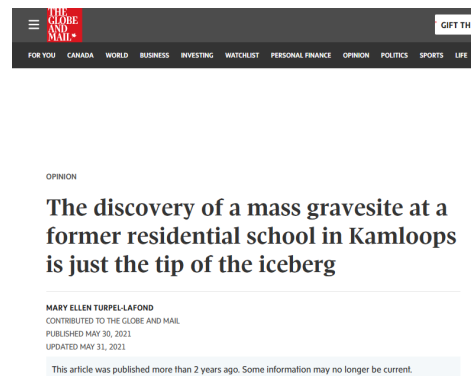
Though Gerbrandt and Carleton claim these early media reports have been corrected, a quick scan of a few shows this is not true. Simply stating ‘this information is 2 years old and may no longer be accurate’ is not sufficient in light of such egregious errors in reporting.

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- 4) “Misrepresenting GPR”
- 5) “Truth seekers”



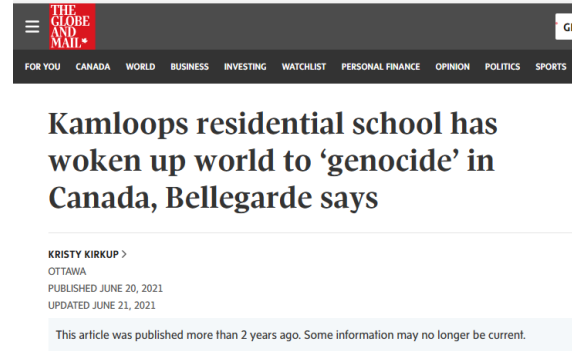
[Discovery of Kamloops mass grave compels our collective action \(thestar.com\)](https://www.thestar.com)

- 1) “Mass grave hoax”
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- 5) “Truth seekers”



[Opinion: The discovery of a mass gravesite at a former residential school in Kamloops is just the tip of the iceberg - The Globe and Mail](https://www.theglobeandmail.com)

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[Kamloops residential school has woken up world to 'genocide' in Canada, Bellegarde says - The Globe and Mail](#)

- 1) "Mass grave hoax"
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['Horrible History': Mass Grave of Indigenous Children Reported in Canada - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

- 1) "Mass grave hoax"
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[Discovery of Indigenous children's bodies reminder of Canada's genocide: experts \(thestar.com\)](#)

It should also be noted that a number of these stories were labelled as: "This story was produced with the financial assistance of the Facebook and Canadian Press News Fellowship."

Facebook has a partnership with Poynter Institute<sup>3</sup> and the International Fact-checking Network.<sup>4</sup> Somehow they failed on this file.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.poynter.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.poynter.org/ifcn/>



WORLD

### More Graves Found At New Site, Canadian Indigenous Group Says

July 1, 2021 - 8:15 AM ET  
By The Associated Press



A memorial is seen outside the Residential School last month in Kamloops, British Columbia. Jonathan Hayward/The Canadian Press via AP

Chief Jason Louie of the Lower Kootenay Band called the discovery "deeply personal" since he had relatives attend the school.

"Let's call this for what it is," Louie told CBC radio in an interview. "It's a mass murder of Indigenous people."

"The Nazis were held accountable for their war crimes. I see no difference in locating the priests and nuns and the brothers who are responsible for this mass murder to be held accountable for their part in this attempt of genocide of an Indigenous people."

<https://www.npr.org/2021/07/01/1012100926/graves-found-at-new-site-canadian-indigenous-group-says>



### Canada: remains of 215 children found at Indigenous residential school site

- Officials make grim discovery near Kamloops, British Columbia
- First Nation chief says causes and timings of deaths not known

Tracey Lindeman in Ottawa

Fri 28 May 2021 16:27 BST



The Kamloops Indian residential school was established in 1890 under the Roman Catholic church, and closed in 1978. Former attendees described harsh conditions. Photograph: Canadian Press/Rev/Shutterstock

Unmarked graves containing the remains of 215 Indigenous children have been discovered on the grounds of a former residential school in the interior of southern British Columbia.

The grim discovery at the former school near the town of Kamloops was announced late on Thursday by the Tk'emlups te Secwépemc people after the site was examined by a team using ground-penetrating radar.

- This article was amended on 31 May and 1 June 2021. An earlier version erroneously quoted the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission as describing a "culture of genocide", rather than "cultural genocide" targeting Canada's Indigenous people. Also, references to a "mass grave" at the former school in Kamloops were changed to "unmarked graves", which more accurately describes the discovery.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/28/canada-remains-indigenous-children-mass-graves>

Of the newspapers randomly sampled above, only The Guardian appears to have made corrections and issued a statement delineating what corrections were made and why.

This seems to prove that Gerbrandt and Carleton cherry-picked the samples used in their research paper. Naturally international papers and media like the New York Times, NPR and The Guardian reach millions more people than their Canadian counterparts. Canadian media did not revise their stories and often still repeat these false claims.

Not only do Canadian parliamentarians stand to honor a real Nazi<sup>5</sup> who was part of an actual genocide – the Holocaust – but they also stand to honor non-existent remains. All thanks to shoddy media reporting that Gerbrandt and Carleton defend.



<sup>5</sup> <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/canada-needs-to-denounce-ukrainian-nazi-unit-not-honour-it-says-uottawa-professor-who-uncovered-veterans-ss-links>

The final category of the Gerbrandt and Carleton report *“Debunking the “Mass Grave Hoax”: A Report on Media Coverage and Residential School Denialism in Canada”* refers to “Truth seekers.” Since none of the foregoing mainstream media reports contained the truth, the box was not ticked in any instances above. They write:

*“This report shows how many of those promoting the “mass grave hoax” narrative are not truth-seekers, but rather truth distorters; they are cherry-picking and misrepresenting evidence to bolster backlash claims as a way of attacking and undermining Survivor testimony and shaking public trust in the truth and reconciliation process.”*

Clearly, based on the evidence, this report, *“Confronting Indian Residential School Confabulation and Media Irresponsibility: Responding to Gerbrandt and Carleton’s “Debunking the Mass Grave Hoax”* shows that Canadians and those with dissenting views on Indian Residential Schools are quite right to question the ‘mass grave/genocide’ narrative promoted in the taxpayer-subsidized media, in taxpayer-funded museums and universities, and by ‘Canadian genocide’ activists, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. The Truth and Reconciliation process was deeply flawed and was very expensive. Adding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to this mix, an intention to have all Canadian laws aligned with UNDRIP<sup>6</sup> and an equally flawed report about Canada by the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights,<sup>7</sup> it is a recipe for disaster for Canada. Worse, it will result in on-going harms to ordinary Indigenous people, most of whom will not be cashing in like the bevy of media journo and pundits, lawyers and consultants, feeding at the public trough.

## CANADIAN JOURNOS AND THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS

According to data journalist David McKie, reporting on information from Statistics Canada, there are about 5,123 journalists working in Canada (though this is a broad labour market category); about 1,600 of them are members of the Canadian Association of Journalists.<sup>8</sup> *Full disclosure: I am now a former member of the Canadian Association of Journalists, by choice, since the release of the Gerbrandt-Carleton report.*

It is informative to glance at the Canadian Association of Journalist’s Code of Ethics.<sup>9</sup> Some *highlights* include:

- **Accuracy:** We are disciplined in our efforts to verify all facts. Accuracy is the moral imperative of journalists and news organizations, and should not be compromised, even by pressing deadlines of the 24-hour news cycle....
- We seek documentation to support the reliability of those sources and their stories, and we are careful to distinguish between assertions and fact. The onus is on us to verify all information, even when it emerges on deadline.

<sup>6</sup> <https://justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/ap-pa/ah/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> UN 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/regular-sessions/session54/list-reports> Report on Canada <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G23/139/12/PDF/G2313912.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.davidmckie.com/the-number-of-journalists-working-in-canada/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://caj.ca/wp-content/uploads/Ethics-Guidelines.pdf>

- When we make a mistake, whether in fact or in context, and regardless of the platform, we correct\* it promptly and in a transparent manner, acknowledging the nature of the error. We publish or broadcast all corrections, clarifications or apologies in a consistent way.
- **Fairness:** We respect the rights of people involved in the news. We give people, companies or organizations that are publicly accused or criticized an opportunity to respond before we publish those criticisms or accusations. We make a genuine and reasonable effort to contact them, and if they decline to comment, we say so.
- We do not allow our own biases to impede fair and accurate reporting.
- We respect each person's right to a fair trial.
- **Right to Privacy:** The public has a right to know about its institutions and the people who are elected or hired to serve its interests. People also have a right to privacy, and those accused of crimes have a right to a fair trial.
- However, there are inevitable conflicts between the right to privacy, and the rights of all citizens to be informed about matters of public interest. Each situation should be judged in light of common sense, humanity and relevance.
- We do not manipulate people who are thrust into the spotlight because they are victims of crime or are associated with a tragedy. Nor do we do voyeuristic stories about them. When we contact them, we are sensitive to their situations, and report only information in which the public has a legitimate interest.
- **Independence:** We serve democracy and the public interest by reporting the truth. This sometimes conflicts with various public and private interests, including those of sources, governments, advertisers and, on occasion, with our duty and obligation to an employer.
- Defending the public's interest includes promoting the free flow of information, exposing crime or wrongdoing, protecting public health and safety, and preventing the public from being misled.
- Conflict of Interest: As fair and impartial observers, we must be free to comment on the activities of any publicly elected body or special interest group. But we cannot do this without an apparent conflict of interest if we are active members of an organization.
- We independently corroborate facts if we get them from a source we do not name.
- We do not allow anonymous sources to take cheap shots at individuals or organizations. (See FAIRNESS, above.)
- **Accountability:** We are accountable to the public for the fairness and reliability of our reporting.
- We serve the public interest, and put the needs of our audience – readers, listeners or viewers – at the forefront of our newsgathering decisions.

In Canada, most mainstream media are funded to a greater or lesser degree by the federal government for some \$600 million a year. The national broadcaster, CBC (in all its iterations, radio, TV, French, English, International, documentary production) is funded for ~\$1.4 billion a year.

Consequently, we have seen the mainstream media, contrary to the claims of the Gerbrandt-Carleton report, to violate virtually all of the “Ethical Guidelines” excerpts listed above in order to keep repeating the party line about the ‘missing children’ in ‘unmarked graves’ or ‘mass graves’ and the ‘phantom genocide’ that the federal government appears to have adopted without evidence.

Like much of the nation of Canada, the mainstream media slavish adhere to the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions ‘94 calls for action’ without ever asking **who wrote these sweeping demands and why should anyone abide by them?**

There were no questions about ‘what a coincidence’ that just a month prior the Kamloops Indian Residential School GPR search allegedly found ‘human remains’ of 215 children with GPR on May 27, 2021,<sup>10</sup> and suddenly on June 24, 2023, the Cowessess First Nation finds a breathtaking number of 751 formerly marked graves.

The timing is interesting as the UN Declaration of Indigenous People’s Rights (UNDRIP) received Royal Assent on June 21, 2021.<sup>11</sup> The day after that, China accused Canada of committing genocide against its Indigenous people in the UN.<sup>12</sup> Obviously, the error-filled Canadian news media reporting supports China’s case!

The only journalist who reported on this odd coincidence is Terry Glavin.<sup>13</sup>

It is only in the so-called ‘alternative’ or independent media that any criticism or questions about the ‘mass graves’ and the phantom genocide will be found. It is rare to find in any mainstream media story about Indian Residential Schools any historical context related to the US Indian Wars, which threatened to spill over the border in the West in the early days. Nor will you find more than a single word mention ...sometimes...of the Tuberculosis (TB) plague that crippled and decimated society until 1950. In this report, I am providing such context to help balance the narrative.

“Facts” about the discovery of unmarked graves are breathlessly reported by the Canadian Association of Journalists themselves, for example (see below).<sup>14</sup> It is unclear why these journos would choose the word ‘horrific’ to describe the discovery of a known community graveyard that had simply lost or had its grave markers removed over time. People die. If they are buried in graveyards, this means that someone cared enough about them to provide final rites and a dignified resting place.

It is curious that no effort seems to have been put in by any media to find the names of students who attended these schools and then cross reference the name with provincial death records.

Independent researcher Nina Green has done so for the Indian Residential Schools in British Columbia. With few exceptions the details of the person’s passing are known, signed off by recognized authorities, and the body of the child typically shipped to the family reserve for burial. In most cases the children were buried on reserve – and then forgotten. These records are posted here.<sup>15</sup>

The Marieval graveyard, described as ‘horrific’ news by the CAJ in a communique (that follows), was an abandoned community graveyard. Chief Delorme of the Cowessess First Nation correctly stated: "This is not a mass grave site. These are unmarked graves," Delorme said.

<sup>10</sup> <https://cfjctoday.com/2021/05/27/tkemplups-confirms-bodies-of-215-children-buried-at-former-kamloops-indian-residential-school-site/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2023/03/implementing-united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples-act-next-phase-of-co-development.html>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-canada-un-calls-investigation-crimes-indigenous-uyghurs-1.6075025>

<sup>13</sup> <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/the-year-of-the-graves-how-the-worlds-media-got-it-wrong-on-residential-school-graves>

<sup>14</sup> <https://caj.ca/caj-reaffirms-the-trcs-calls-to-action-for-media/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://michellestirling.com/2023/09/19/canadian-government-is-funding-its-own-indian-residential-school-genocide-claim/>

**He then went on to say it should be treated as a crime scene. No journalist asked any questions as to why? The people are long dead. If it is a crime scene, why are the RCMP not investigating?**

Why are the RCMP not investigating the crime scene in Kamloops where it is said that living witnesses buried their classmates in clandestine shallow graves in the middle of the night?? The witnesses are elderly and may pass on soon. Surely if deaths or murders occurred and these anonymous Knowledge Keepers either witnessed atrocities or were forced to bury their classmates' bodies, surely the RCMP should be interviewing them for names, dates and details to pursue charges. Has justice been obstructed?<sup>16</sup> If so, by whom?

No journalist asked of Chief Delorme, why, if these deceased people are so important today, and your band knew this was a community graveyard, why did the Band not maintain this place of final rest, and maintain the name markers when that information had been visible for decades?

#### **CAJ Press Release:**

"With the horrific news that 751 unmarked graves have been found at Marieval Indian Residential School, the Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) urges Canadian newsrooms to carefully report on the tragedy without doing further harm to survivors.

Please heed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action for media.

*"The media has a role to play in ensuring that public information both for and about Aboriginal peoples reflects their cultural diversity and provides fair and non-discriminatory reporting on Aboriginal issues." (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, 2015)*

The TRC created calls to action specifically for the media as "sweeping generalizations and stereotypes" along with misinformation about Indigenous people by the media for decades have caused significant harm and violence.

*"In many countries where violence and injustice has occurred on a large scale, the media has had the potential to either fuel conflict or facilitate conflict resolution and peace building. The media play a crucial role in educating the public, and through public scrutiny can hold the state accountable for its actions. In the Canadian context, the media can shape public memory and influence societal attitudes towards reconciliation." (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, 2015)*

Newsrooms should make educating their reporters on how to cover Indigenous communities with care and respect their largest priority as these graves continue to be uncovered.

It is long overdue and shameful that it has not happened.

*"Media outlets and journalists will greatly influence whether or not reconciliation ultimately transforms the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. To ensure that the colonial press truly becomes a thing of the past in twenty-first-century Canada, the media must engage in its own acts of reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples. The media has a role to play in ensuring that public information both for and about Aboriginal peoples reflects their cultural diversity and provides fair and nondiscriminatory reporting on Aboriginal issues." (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, 2015)*

TRC #86 called on journalism schools to require education for all students on "the history of Aboriginal peoples" including residential schools.

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<sup>16</sup> [https://open.substack.com/pub/wokewatchcanada/p/has-justice-been-obstructed-at-kamloops?r=f96qu&utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=email](https://open.substack.com/pub/wokewatchcanada/p/has-justice-been-obstructed-at-kamloops?r=f96qu&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email)

We have not seen that happen.

*"We call upon Canadian journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations." (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, 2015)*

Reporters covering the horrific findings today, please refer to guides on how to cover Indigenous communities. Please refer to this one by Duncan Mccue: <https://riic.ca/the-guide/>.

For additional help today please call The Indian Residential School Survivors Society toll-free 1 (800) 721-0066 or 24hr Crisis Line 1 (866) 925-4419 if you require further assistance.

The CAJ is also here to do whatever we can to help. If you need assistance of any kind, please send email CAJ president Brent Jolly: [brent@caj.ca](mailto:brent@caj.ca)

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Even the CJ's recommended resource "*Decolonizing Journalism*" by Duncan MacCue<sup>17</sup> states incorrect information in the opening Time Line:

*"The discovery of 200 unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School in B.C. draws widespread attention to the thousands of deaths of children at residential schools. Hundreds of unmarked graves are subsequently confirmed at former residential school sites across Canada."*

**The Truth and Reconciliation Commission found that 423 children died at Indian Residential Schools, out of 150,000 students over 113 years.** MacCue also incorrectly states that the Truth and Reconciliation "*examined the experiences of 150,000 students and Survivors*" – the Commission only gathered recollections from about 6,000 former students, or 4% of all those who attended.

**If you have come this far in the discussion, then ask yourself these questions again, the questions no journo wants to touch.**

If you believe there are children buried in the former apple orchard at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, and if you care about what happened to those children, why haven't you asked:

- 1 Who were the children?
- 2 Who are their families?
- 3 How did they die?
- 4 When did parents or guardians report them missing?
- 5 Why are the RCMP not investigating?

If you don't believe, that's probably why you're not asking.

If you are questioning, but still care, you should ask:

- 1 Why haven't we been told who the children were?
- 2 Why haven't we been told who their families are?
- 3 Why haven't we been told how they died?
- 4 Why haven't we been told about parents or guardians reporting missing children?
- 5 Why are the RCMP not investigating?

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<sup>17</sup> <https://pages.oup.com/he/can/mccue1ce>

*In total, the sample size of relevant articles published between May 27 and October 15, 2021 was 386: CBC (97); National Post (71); The Globe and Mail (70); Toronto Star (69); The Canadian Press (79). One important note about the sample is that **The Canadian Press, unlike other media outlets, has no business to consumer mandate.** The Canadian Press distributes articles and press releases to Canadian media outlets, including the other four outlets in this study. Outlets that subscribe to The Canadian Press are granted licence rights to their content. This gives The Canadian Press a distinct advantage, as their stories can reach a wide range of Canadians, regardless of which media outlet people normally get their news from. Given the potential for these stories to be seen by and influence readers across the different outlets, we chose to include The Canadian Press in the study. – Gerbrandt and Carleton 2023, Debunking the “Mass Grave Hoax”: A Report on Media Coverage and Residential School Denialism in Canada [bold emphasis added]*

Gerbrandt and Carleton are under the impression that The Canadian Press has no consumer end-user. That used to be the case decades ago. According to Wikipedia:

*Established in 1917 as a vehicle for the time's Canadian newspapers to exchange news and information,<sup>[2]</sup> The Canadian Press has been a private, not-for-profit cooperative owned and operated by its member newspapers for most of its history. In mid-2010, however, it announced plans to become a for-profit business owned by three media companies once certain conditions were met.<sup>[3]</sup>*

*Canadian Press Enterprises Inc. is the entity that was to "take over the operations of the Canadian Press" according to a November 2010 article in the Toronto Star.<sup>[3]</sup> The new board met for the first time on November 29, 2010 to review the operations of The Canadian Press.<sup>[3]</sup> **As of January 2020, Torstar, The Globe and Mail and Montreal's La Presse continued to be the owners of The Canadian Press.**<sup>[15]</sup> [bold emphasis added]*

So, The Canadian Press is jointly owned by some of the highest profile and most influential press media outlets in Canada. The Canadian Press claims to be “Credible and Reliable”- “We stand for first-rate journalism. Clients often use our content “as is” because of our 100-year reputation for being the first to get it right.” In most of their reporting on the Kamloops find, their Editorial Principles were unmet – consider their first principle:

1. *Investigate fully before transmitting any story or identifying any individual in a story where there is the slightest reason for doubt. When in doubt cut it out. But never make this an excuse for ditching an angle without thorough checking. The doubt must be an honest doubt, arrived at after examination of all the facts.*<sup>18</sup>

The Canadian Press has a partnership with Associated Press (AP).<sup>19</sup> AP’s story of May 31, 2021, remains uncorrected,<sup>20</sup> neither has any media challenged the statements of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s unfounded allegations that:

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.thecanadianpress.com/about/our-team-values/our-news-principles/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.thecanadianpress.com/about/partnerships/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/canada-456d8b4077bf2b86b5ed1d608bf97b63>

*“As prime minister, I am appalled by the shameful policy that stole Indigenous children from their communities,” Trudeau said.*

*“Sadly, this is not an exception or an isolated incident,” he said. “We’re not going to hide from that. We have to acknowledge the truth. Residential schools were a reality — a tragedy that existed here, in our country, and we have to own up to it. Kids were taken from their families, returned damaged or not returned at all.”*

If you have read this far in the document, you know that what the Prime Minister said is false. Ironically, The Canadian Press claims to be partners with The Trust Project.<sup>21</sup>

The screenshot shows the website for 'The Trust Project'. The header includes the logo and navigation links: About, FAQs, Resources, Partners, News, Trust Indicators, Contact, and Join. The main heading is 'The 8 Trust Indicators' with a sub-heading 'Los 8 Indicadores de Confianza' and a 'Descargar' link. Below this, a paragraph states: 'We asked people what they look for in trusted media – and from their answers, we created 'Trust Indicators' for the press to build into news sites.' The content is organized into eight columns, each with a title and a list of bullet points:

- Best Practices**
  - Who funds the site? What is its mission?
  - What standards and ethics guide the process of gathering news?
  - What happens if a journalist has ties to the topic covered?
- Journalist Expertise**
  - Who made this?
  - Are there details about the journalist, including contact information, areas of knowledge and other stories they've worked on?
- Type of Work**
  - What is this?
  - Do you see story labels with clear definitions to distinguish opinion, analysis and advertiser (or sponsored) content from news reports?
- Citations and References**
  - What is the source?
  - Does the site tell you where it got its information?
  - For investigative, controversial or in-depth stories, are you given access to the original materials behind the facts and assertions?
- Methods**
  - Why was it a priority?
  - For investigations, in-depth or controversial stories, why did they pursue the topic?
  - How did they go about the process?
- Locally Sourced**
  - Do they know the community?
  - Was the reporting done on the scene?
  - Is there evidence of deep knowledge about the local situation or community?
- Diverse Voices**
  - What are the newsroom's efforts and commitments to bring in diverse perspectives across social and demographic differences?
  - Are some communities or perspectives included only in stereotypical ways, or even completely missing?
- Actionable Feedback**
  - What does the site do to engage your help in setting coverage priorities, asking good questions and finding the answers, holding powerful people and institutions accountable and ensuring accuracy?
  - Can you provide feedback that might provoke, alter or expand a story?

It is appalling that mainstream media and the national broadcaster, CBC, as well as international media, have accepted baffle-gab as fact and while claiming to be factcheckers, in fact, have never checked anything.

The following report by independent researcher Nina Green puts them all to shame and should make every Canadian call for an immediate halt to the implementation of any Indian Residential School compensation or any legal revisions related to UNDRIP. Canadians and the people of the world have been misled.

<sup>21</sup> <https://thetrustproject.org/about/>



KAMLOOPS INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL<sup>22</sup> BY NINA GREEN

(Researched and written by Nina Green - Republished here with permission. [Original story here.](#))

The [media release](#) on 27 May 2021 which stated that ‘the remains of 215 children’ had been found using ground penetrating radar (GPR)<sup>23</sup> at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School shocked the world.

It is well established that GPR cannot locate human remains. It can only locate soil disturbances beneath the ground. Excavation must take place before it can be determined what those soil disturbances are.

On 27 May 2021, the Kamloops Band was well aware that no excavation had taken place, and that a media release stating that human remains had been found would mislead the world. It was thus incumbent on the Kamloops Band to call in the BC Coroner and the Kamloops RCMP (which has a detachment on the Kamloops Reserve only a few yards from the former residential school) to do an immediate preliminary excavation to determine the nature of the soil disturbances.

Unfortunately, that did not happen.



**Red Tipped Stakes**

Red-tipped stakes marking GPR work in apple orchard.

<sup>22</sup> <https://indianresidentialschoolrecords.com/kamloops/>

<sup>23</sup> According to Dr Beaulieu, the GPR machine used in Kamloops ‘was provided by the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund to help complete important work such as this’.

According to Chief Rosanne Casimir, the Kamloops Band did meet with an RCMP officer from the detachment on the Reserve [prior to 28 May 2021](#). It seems the officer visited the site where the GPR work had been done, and must have observed that no excavation had taken place and that no human remains had actually been found, a fact that would have been obvious to anyone visiting the site.<sup>24</sup>

The [RCMP opened a file](#), and questioned Dr Sarah Beaulieu,<sup>25</sup> who had done the GPR work. However the investigation was short-lived.

After [receiving a phone call](#) early on the morning of 3 June 2021, Murray Sinclair addressed a meeting of the [Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs](#) later that day, and accused the RCMP of ‘intimidating people’ and of scaring Dr Beaulieu:

*I understand that in British Columbia.... I got a call early this morning, in fact, saying that the RCMP have now declared that a major investigation is going to occur into the bodies that have been located in Kamloops, and they are now beginning to question those who have made this story available. Unfortunately, in the typical, heavy-handed and ham-handed police way, they are simply intimidating people, rather than helping them. We need to have a discussion with the police about how they're handling it, because they should not be pursuing those who are revealing the information. They should, in fact, be looking at and looking for those records. They should be looking at what we know as opposed to trying to pursue witnesses.*

*The young lady who did the research on the ground-penetrating radar, for example, is quite scared of the approach that the RCMP have taken with her, and I don't blame her. My advice to her—and others—has been to make sure she has legal counsel available to her so that she is not mistreated going forward.*

The next day, 4 June 2021, the RCMP announced that the Kamloops Band was [now in charge of the investigation](#). This was confirmed on 15 July 2021, when the *Globe and Mail* reported Chief Casimir as saying that the RCMP [‘have agreed to await further instruction from the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc’](#). No further investigation by the RCMP has taken place since 4 June 2021, and the Kamloops Band has never retracted the false claim in its 27 May 2021 media release that ‘the remains of 215 children’ had been found.

### **Who authorized the GPR work and how was it paid for?**

How did all this get started?

No information was forthcoming as to who had authorized the GPR work until Ted Gottfriedson, Manager of the Kamloops Band’s Language and Culture Department, and Diena Jules, Administrator of the Kamloops Band’s museum, were interviewed on a [Fifth Estate program](#) aired by the [CBC on 13 January 2022](#).<sup>26</sup> Ted Gottfriedson said he and Diena Jules made the decision to do the GPR work, and to pay for it using a 2019 grant which had been awarded for the upgrading of the Kamloops Band’s Heritage Park adjacent to the museum.<sup>27</sup> According to

<sup>24</sup> The site has been permanently closed since the May 2021 long weekend.

<sup>25</sup> Although the RCMP knew Dr Beaulieu’s identity, the public was not told who had done the GPR work until 15 July 2021.

<sup>26</sup> The *Fifth Estate* program appears to have been filmed in the fall of 2021.

<sup>27</sup> There is disagreement as to whether the grant was awarded by the province of British Columbia or the federal government. In the media release of 27 May 2021 it is said to have been a provincial grant (‘Kukpi7 Rosanne Casimir stated, “We are thankful for the Pathway to Healing grant we received to undertake this important work.”’). However at the 3 June 2021 meeting of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, the Deputy Minister stated that it was a federal grant (‘I’m pleased to be able to report that it was in fact a federal grant. It came from Canadian Heritage. It was part of the celebration and commemoration fund. It was approximately \$40,000. The grant is available

Gottfriedson, he and Diena Jules met, and she said, 'We should look for the kids'. Diena Jules told the Fifth Estate's Gillian Findlay that she wanted the GPR work done for her 'own comfort'. No mention is made in the Fifth Estate program of anyone else being involved in the decision.

### Who hired Dr Sarah Beaulieu to do the GPR work?

At a [media event in Kamloops](#) on 15 July 2021, Dr Sarah Beaulieu gave the first and only [public presentation](#) of her GPR findings. In reply to a [question from Kim Mackrael](#) of the Wall Street Journal as to 'how you became involved in the first place', Dr Beaulieu stated that she had been recommended for the GPR work by Dr Eldon Yellowhorn of Simon Fraser University. Dr Yellowhorn has been asked to confirm this, but has not done so.

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Who hired Dr Beaulieu, and on whose recommendation, thus remains unclear. Moreover her detailed written report, reviewed by 'a designated review team of five archaeologists very experienced in GPR',<sup>28</sup> has never been revealed. Chief Casimir initially assured the media and general public that Dr Beaulieu's full written report would be released in June, but on 15 July 2021, the same day Dr Beaulieu gave her first and only oral presentation, that [promise was revoked](#) by the Kamloops Band's media consultant, Racelle Kooy, as reported by the *Globe and Mail*:

*Racelle Kooy, a spokesperson for the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, said a full copy of Dr. Beaulieu's report would not be released to the public and media, but that "the core of the findings are contained in the release and Dr. Beaulieu gave an extensive presentation today."*

The CBC's *Fifth Estate* program raised the possibility that Dr Beaulieu was involved in the spring of 2021 in a commercial project across the Yellowhead Highway from the former residential school on a site on which the Kamloops Band proposed to build a new grocery store. Throughout the *Fifth Estate* program aerial footage of the future grocery store site is shown, as well as footage of Dr Beaulieu and two unidentified women in hard hats using a GPR machine on the graded site there. It may be that Dr Beaulieu was working at that site prior to the May long weekend in 2021, and it was thus a simple matter for Ted Gottfriedson and Diena Jules to arrange for her to do GPR work in the apple orchard area in the Kamloops Band's Heritage Park on the May long weekend.

In any event, Dr Beaulieu did do GPR work in the apple orchard area in the Heritage Park on the May 21st to 24th long weekend, and according to the *Fifth Estate's* Gillian Findlay, 'Ted and Diena were among the very few who knew the work was happening'. This seems plausible as Canada was in the midst of Covid 19 lockdowns, and the Heritage Park was closed. Ted Gottfriedson said he was not present in the apple orchard while the GPR work was being done. Thus, Diena Jules may have been the only person who was present besides Dr Beaulieu:

*Gillian Findlay: But Diena made a point of going to the orchard to watch the survey and to comfort the children she believes can hear her.*

*Diena Jules: I said, Don't be afraid. They are just here looking for you. They are going to be confirming what our oral history has told us, what I've always known. You know, it's going to be OK. We're here to find you, finally.*

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online. You can find the details of it there.'). Whatever the source of the grant, it does not appear it was awarded for the purpose of undertaking GPR work.

<sup>28</sup> Email 27 July 2021 from Dr Hugo Cardoso, Chairman of the Department of Archaeology at Simon Fraser University: 'The report was also thoroughly reviewed by a designated review team of five archaeologists very experienced in GPR, and all agreed that it was methodologically sound.' Simon Fraser University has refused to provide the names of the five archaeologists.

### Who decided on the next steps after Dr Beaulieu provided the GPR results?

An [interview](#) given by Diena Jules' brother, former Chief Manny Jules, sheds light on events immediately after Dr Beaulieu provided her GPR results to the Kamloops Band. The interviewer, Stephen Dorsey, mentioned that he had seen Manny Jules on the Fifth Estate program, and asked him to [describe the impact](#) the news had on him at the time.

It is significant that Manny Jules did not say that he was initially told that **'the remains of 215 children'** had been found. He stated that his sister, Jeanette Jules, told him that **'215 possible unmarked graves'** had been found, a very significant distinction:

*Uh, I got a phone call uh from my sister [Jeanette Jules] who was on Council. I was having what we called 'cowboy coffee'. So because of covid we were having coffee outside around a campfire. And I, my sister said, 'The Chief and Council want to meet with you and the other former Chiefs'. And I said, 'Well, jeez I'm having cowboy coffee. I'd sooner do this than attend a meeting'. And she said, 'No, it's really important that you come here'. And I said, 'Well, what's the reason?' And she said, 'It's been confirmed. We've got uh 215 possible unmarked graves'. And I knew immediately that this was really important so I dropped what I was doing and went over, met with the Chief and Council.*



#### Peters' Twitter Tweet

Tweet sent out by James Peters 27 May 2021 (click to enlarge)

Who was present at the Kamloops Band Council meeting attended by Manny Jules, and what was decided in terms of next steps, is unknown.<sup>29</sup> In particular, it is not known how '215 possible unmarked graves' became 'the remains of 215 children' in the media release issued by the Kamloops Band a few days later.

What is known is that James Peters of CFJC Today in Kamloops picked up the phone a day or so later and was told he would be given a 'scoop' in which he would have a brief window to put the story out before it would be given to the rest of the media.<sup>30</sup> Peters [put out a tweet](#) at 4:01 PM on 27 May 2021 linking to a news story he had posted two minutes earlier which was [time-stamped May 27, 2021 | 3:59 PM](#). The news story was headlined 'Tk'emlups confirms **bodies** of 215 children buried at former Kamloops Indian Residential School site', and the text referred to the discovery as human **remains**:

<sup>29</sup> It appears the Kamloops Band decided to hire Racelle Kooy as a media consultant at this meeting as her name appeared as the media contact on the 27 May 2021 media release. The decision to hire Don Worme to represent the Band may also have been made at this time. In any event, Don Worme represented the Band at the 15 July 2021 media event, and it appears he may have been the lawyer who contacted the Simon Fraser Archaeology Department in late July 2021 stating that they were not to talk about unmarked graves in Kamloops. Email from Dr George Nicholas 28 July 2021: 'I have been strongly advised by the TTeS legal team not to respond to any queries from the public regarding the search for unmarked graves in Kamloops. Their request extends to Dr. Cardoso and other members of our department.'

<sup>30</sup> Telephone communication with James Peters 25 September 2021.

*TK'EMLUPS TE SECWEPENC — The chief of the Tk'emlups te Secwépenc calls the discovery “unthinkable”.*

*The band confirmed Thursday (May 27) it has found the remains of 215 children buried on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.*

*Chief Rosanne Casimir says the presence of the remains was “a knowing” in the Tk'emlups community, but was confirmed this past weekend with the help of a ground-penetrating radar specialist. The Tk'emlups Heritage Park is now closed to the public as work continues, with the potential crews may find more remains.*

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The wording of Peters' news story conveys the impression that he had interviewed Chief Casimir, but that does not appear to have been the case.

A few hours later a version of the story by an unidentified writer appeared in *The Canadian Press* with the headline: '**Remains** of 215 children found at former residential school in British Columbia'. The Canadian Press story was quickly reprinted by the [Winnipeg Free Press](#) and other outlets, and the false claim that human remains had been found at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School flashed around the world. Most news stories followed the wording 'remains of 215 children' in the media release put out by the Kamloops Band on 27 May 2021 in which Racelle Kooy was listed as the media contact, although a few media outlets erroneously claimed that a 'mass grave' had been found.

Neither the media release put out by the Kamloops Band nor any of the countless news stories which followed in succeeding days provided any information as to who had authorized the GPR work, or who had done it. Although Ted Gottfriedson was not specifically named, the media release did state that the GPR work had been undertaken by the Kamloops Band's Language and Culture Department, and although Dena Jules was not named, she may be referred to obliquely in the phrase 'ceremonial Knowledge Keepers' since (as noted above) she appears to have been the only other person present when the GPR work was done.

In addition to the false claim that human remains had been found, the media release contained another highly misleading statement:

*In undertaking this current investigation, Tk'emlups te Secwépenc Chief and Council would like to acknowledge the preliminary work that was carried out in the early 2000's.*

In fact, no preliminary work had ever been carried out on the Kamloops Reserve – in the early 2000s or at any time – which involved a search for burials of residential school students. The work which was carried out on the Kamloops Reserve in the late 1990s and early 2000s was part of Simon Fraser University's Indigenous Archaeology Program under [Dr George Nicholas](#). On his web page, Dr Nicholas clearly states the program's purposes:

*From 1991–2005, I developed and directed SFU's Indigenous Archaeology Program on the Kamloops Indian Reserve. This community-based archaeology program was directed to (a) pre-5000 BP archaeological landscape, (b) investigating patterns of long-term land use; (c) the history of plant resource utilization in the Interior Plateau; and (d) Secwépenc heritage management needs.*

The innocuous-sounding ‘acknowledgement’ of ‘preliminary work’ in the Kamloops Band’s 27 May 2021 media release thus carries the preposterous implication that in the early 2000s Dr Nicholas and Simon Fraser University were setting the stage for Dr Beaulieu’s GPR search for the burials of residential school children, when in fact Dr Nicholas was carrying out archaeological work focussed on (1) the pre-5000 BP archaeological landscape, (2) patterns of long-term land use, and (3) the history of plant resource utilization.<sup>31</sup>

Why would the Kamloops Band make such a clearly misleading claim in its media release? The answer appears to be that the Kamloops Band realized at the outset that it had to mention the previous well known archaeological work done by Dr Nicholas because, embarrassingly, Dr Beaulieu had only learned of that work after the fact, and 15 of the soil disturbances Dr Beaulieu had originally claimed were burials turned out to be shovel test pits and other excavations done earlier by Dr Nicholas. Because of this embarrassing circumstance, Dr Beaulieu was forced to revise her original claim of 215 burials to 200 burials when she presented her findings on July 15th, as discussed below, and the Kamloops Band was forced to mention Dr Nicholas’ previous archaeological work in its media release, albeit in the form of the preposterous claim that Dr Nicholas’ archaeological excavations were merely preliminary work done in anticipation of a more thorough and comprehensive search for the burials of residential school students.<sup>32</sup>

### Limited media access to information

The highly-anticipated public presentation of the GPR results was repeatedly delayed, and what was essentially a news blackout in terms of access to new information and identification of the person who had done the GPR work continued until mid-July. Only two media events are known to have occurred between the 27 May 2021 media release and Dr Beaulieu’s presentation on 15 July 2021.

On 28 May 2021, at a hastily-organized online event on CPAC moderated by Racelle Kooy, Chief Rosanne Casimir answered questions from a small number of journalists, none of whom were from major media outlets.<sup>33</sup>

On 4 June 2021, Chief Casimir gave a [Zoom press conference](#) which was scheduled to be livestreamed by APTN News, but which Racelle Kooy unexpectedly forbade journalists to livestream:

*There was also a question asked about if you could livestream this event out. Please, no. When we want to livestream we’re going to control the when and where of livestream. We understand you’re going to be recording this or aspects of this for your whatever, your radio or TV or whatever, with um Kukpi Rosanne, but we’re not, you’re, we’re not giving anyone permission to live stream this at this time.*

Journalists participating in the online conference were also warned by Racelle Kooy not to ask probing questions:

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<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that Diena Jules’ brother, John Jules, obtained an archaeology degree from Simon Fraser University, and that he was involved with Dr Nicholas’ work in 2002 (see below).

<sup>32</sup> See Nicholas, George P., *Archaeological Research Reports 7*, Archaeology Department, Secwepemc Culutral Education Society-Simon Fraser University Program, Secwepemc Education Institute, Kamloops, 2002, p. 12: During preliminary STP testing, what were thought to be human remains were recovered from the unit. These included several teeth and bone fragments. Mr. John Jules (Kamloops Indian Band) was contacted, and he requested that additional testing be conducted to determine the nature of the finds. . . . The suspected human **remains** were later examined by Dr. Catherine Carlson (University College of the Cariboo), who concluded that one small tooth was likely human, but the rest were not.’ As noted, the tooth was later tested and found to be non-human as well.

<sup>33</sup> The journalists permitted to ask questions at the CPAC media conference on 28 May 2021 were Marcella Bernardo, Colton Davies, Nicholas Wells, Omar Mosleh, Julio Cesar Rivas, Kyle Muzyka, and Levi Landry.

*This is the very beginning, so again, you're going to want to delve into places that we're not ready to talk about for a multitude of reasons. We are a First Nations community. We are part of the Secwepemc Nation, which means we have ceremonies and protocols to do yet. So you have to understand that there's things that we're not going to disclose until we've had the chance to connect within our own community who is reeling because unfortunately how the story was we knew that we had to push it out the same time to the general public as to our own community here, and so they're still reeling, and they still have the presence of those children in their community, so we just want you to be very aware with what we're dealing with here.*

### **Resolutions involving Kamloops at Assembly of First Nations General Meeting**

While demanding that journalists not 'delve into' the story, the Kamloops Band was moving forward aggressively in attempting to involve the International Criminal Court in what both Chief Rosanne Casimir and Chief RoseAnne Archibald termed a 'crime scene'. The [Assembly of First Nations](#) held its [General Meeting from July 6-8](#), co-chaired by the Kamloops Band's media consultant, Racelle Kooy, at which it passed [two emergency resolutions](#), both moved by Chief Rosanne Casimir. The first resolution termed the Kamloops discovery a 'mass grave' and linked it to genocide. The second called for intervention by the International Criminal Court.

The resolution asking for the involvement of the International Criminal Court and the concomitant exclusion of the RCMP from the investigation were specifically referred to by Chief Archibald at the 15 July 2021 media event a week later in Kamloops:

*These are crime scenes, and so we, we need some kind of independent investigation. We know that, for example, the RCMP are a part of children being taken from their families and communities, and so we need some kind of independent investigator on this process, and we need also international examination uh into these crimes. We did have a recent resolution passed at the AFN AGA on the International Criminal Court being involved in this process, and so there are a number of moving parts that we still have to figure out. An investigation must occur, absolutely, and the federal government, their role is to make sure that records are provided, that they work with First Nation communities on the ground. As Chief Casimir just said, this has to be a community-driven process, and so we would look to the federal government certainly to provide the resources that we need to conduct thorough investigations.*

### **Dr Beaulieu's evidence**

A week after the AFN General Meeting, the world finally learned during a two and a half hour media event at Kamloops [on 15 July 2021](#) that the person who had done the GPR work was Dr Sarah Beaulieu. Dr Beaulieu is [routinely described as an expert](#), and a ground penetrating radar specialist. However although her web page on the [University of the Fraser Valley website implies](#) that she was trained in GPR work in 2016 at Canadian Forces Base Borden, the University has refused to provide proof of her certification.<sup>34</sup>

When Dr Beaulieu presented the evidence for her GPR work she revealed that there had been two startling developments.

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<sup>34</sup> The University of the Fraser Valley states: 'We have confirmed directly with the accrediting organization, [Sensors and Software](#), that Dr. Sarah Beaulieu participated in a ground penetrating radar training program provided by Sensors and Software in 2016. The program included training on-site at Canadian Forces Base Borden. The program was not administered by the Government of Canada'. Email 1 November 2022.

Firstly, without specifically taking the Kamloops Band to task for its false and unretracted claim that human **remains** had been found, a claim which had horrified the entire world, Dr Beaulieu [reframed her GPR results](#) as 'possible burials' and 'targets of interest' which could not be confirmed without excavation:

*With ground-penetrating radar, we can never say definitely they are human remains until you excavate, which is why we need to pull back a little bit and say they are probable burials, they are targets of interest," Beaulieu said. "They have multiple signatures that present as burials, but because of that, we have to say they are probable until one excavates.*

Secondly, as mentioned above, having belatedly learned of Dr Nicholas' archaeological work in the same apple orchard area, Dr Beaulieu revised the number of her GPR results down to 200:

*From my preliminary findings in May to today's results, reports providing additional information related to disturbances from archaeological impact assessments as well as construction in parts of this area were subsequently provided to me. These reports were reviewed in order to determine which of these locations overlapped with the GPR survey areas. After this review it was determined that there remain 200 targets of interest in these preliminary results.*

A reporter from Kamloops asked about the revision, and whether it was the result of excavation:

*I was just hoping to clarify, has any site been excavated yet, and is the 215 number still accurate?*

Dr Beaulieu replied with the startling admission that she had not known about the earlier excavations by SFU's Dr Nicholas, and that in fact what she had mistaken for 15 of the alleged burials she had 'discovered' were, in fact, 15 soil disturbances caused by the archaeological work done by Dr Nicholas in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and that she had only learned about that earlier archaeological work when she received Dr Nicholas' reports **after** she had done her GPR work on the May long weekend:

*As far as excavation for these burials, nothing has been excavated yet. The number is 200. So once the survey was completed um I received, subsequent to the, the survey, archaeological reports that, that um discussed impact assessments and excavation that had been done in the, in the same area, and so had to rule out where those excavations had taken place in the early, late 90s, early 2000s, and see if they um you know impacted where I had done my survey, which is why I concluded with 200.*

The fact that the Kamloops Band had not told Dr Beaulieu about Dr Nicholas' earlier archaeological work in the very area she was about to survey, and that 15 of the alleged 'remains of children' the Kamloops Band claimed she had discovered turned out to be shovel test pits and other earlier excavations done by Dr Nicholas should have been world-wide news. If 15 of the alleged burials had to be eliminated since they were nothing more than earlier archaeological work done by Dr Nicholas, how reliable were the remaining 200 alleged burials? Obviously the remaining 200 burials were no more reliable than the 15 which had had to be eliminated. However instead of pointing that out, the media reported the revision from 215 down to 200 as though it were an everyday occurrence that 15 soil disturbances claimed to be the 'remains of children' had turned out to be nothing more than shovel test pits and the like.



The other ‘evidence’ provided by Dr Beaulieu during [her presentation](#) on 15 July 2021 in support of her GPR work was equally unreliable.

### **(1) juvenile tooth**

Dr Beaulieu stated as proof that she had found ‘probable burials’ the fact that in the 1990s a juvenile tooth had been ‘excavated from a shovel test pit during an impact assessment conducted by Simon Fraser University’s Archaeology Department’. Not long after Dr Beaulieu made this claim, in reply to a question about the alleged ‘juvenile tooth’, the Chairman of the Department of Archaeology at Simon Fraser University stated that the tooth had in fact been tested – apparently years ago – and was not human.<sup>35</sup> Why both the Kamloops Band, in its 15 July 2021 media release, and Dr Beaulieu, in her oral presentation on the same date, claimed that it was human remains a mystery.

### **(2) juvenile rib bone**

Dr Beaulieu also stated, as proof that she had found ‘probable burials’, the fact that a juvenile rib bone had ‘surfaced’ in the same area and had been brought in to the museum by a tourist in the early 2000s. It seems clear from Dr Beaulieu’s description that the word ‘surfaced’ was misleading, since she provided no evidence that the bone had ever been under the ground. The bone has never been tested,<sup>36</sup> and will likely never be tested since its present whereabouts are unknown. It seems almost certain it was the bone of an animal such as a coyote.

### **(3) oral histories of Knowledge Keepers**

Dr Beaulieu stated that she relied on the ‘oral histories’ of Knowledge Keepers who recalled children as young as six years old being woken in the night to dig holes for burials in the apple orchard. However according to the *Fifth Estate* program, Ted Gottfriedson and Diena Jules were the only persons involved in the GPR work, and they made no mention in the *Fifth Estate* program of six-year-olds digging graves. If there were any Knowledge Keepers involved apart from Ted Gottfriedson and Diena Jules, they should be identified so that they can tell their stories themselves rather than through Dr Beaulieu.

### **(4) thousands of children missing from residential schools**

Dr Beaulieu stated that because thousands of children are alleged to be missing from residential schools according to the National Council for Truth and Reconciliation’s [Memorial Register](#), it follows that 200 of them must be buried at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.

In fact private researchers have located provincial death records for some 600 of the children on the NCTR Memorial Register who are said to be missing. These death records establish that most of the children who died while enrolled at residential schools did not die at the schools. They died in local hospitals under the care of physicians or in accidents on their home reserves. Their death certificates, some of which are signed by their parents, state that they are buried in their own home reserve cemeteries. Moreover the Truth and Reconciliation Commission did not record any instances of a parent searching at the relevant time for a missing child. The Kamloops Band, in particular, has confirmed that it has never been searching for a missing child from its own Band.

On examination, Dr Beaulieu’s ‘evidence’ for ‘probable burials’ is thus found to be completely unreliable.

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<sup>35</sup> Email 27 July 2021 from Dr Hugo Cardoso, Chairman of the Department of Archaeology at Simon Fraser University.

<sup>36</sup> Email 27 July 2021 from Dr Hugo Cardoso, Chairman of the Department of Archaeology at Simon Fraser University.

### What did Dr Beaulieu really find using GPR?

The question thus arises: What did Dr Beaulieu's GPR machine really find beneath the ground in the apple orchard area of the Kamloops Band's Heritage Park?



*Oval Sewage Lagoon 1970's*

*Large oval sewage lagoon in the Heritage Park in the 1970s*

The majority of soil disturbances which registered on Dr Beaulieu's GPR machine are at a depth of .7 and .8 metres, which Dr Beaulieu herself admits is very shallow compared to the 1.8 metre depth of a typical grave. Dr Beaulieu tried to explain this problem away by claiming that the graves were shallow because of the difficulty of digging through frozen ground, and because the gravediggers were six-year-olds. These are not plausible explanations, and it seems obvious that the soil disturbances Dr Beaulieu located using GPR were not burials.

What, then, did she find?

A [website](#) recently set up by a private researcher indicates that the soil disturbances found by Dr Beaulieu in her GPR work primarily consisted of the 2000 lineal feet of trenches filled with clay tiles which comprised the east bed of a septic field installed in 1924 to dispose of the Kamloops Indian Residential School's sewage:

*With construction of a new school building in the mid-to-late 1920s, came installation of a sewage disposal plant. The plant consisted of a septic tank and two underground disposal beds. The east bed was 0.35 acres in size and distributed waste water through 2,000 lineal feet of land tile buried 3.5 feet below grade (Tredcroft 1926). Following the site contours, the east bed extended under much of what would become the upper garden and orchard.*

*By 1928, after nearly 40 years of cultivation and irrigation, the school garden had become deeply furrowed in contrast to surrounding farmland. Countless irrigation ditches were dug and filled in, their locations lost to time.*

*By 1935, the original septic tank and sewage disposal beds were chronically clogged. As a temporary solution, the beds were by-passed and raw sewage was dumped, via open ditch, into a low-lying marshy area south of the school garden. This created very unsanitary conditions as large amounts of effluent collected, breeding flies and causing stench (Warren 1937).*

*A more permanent sewage solution was found in 1938-39 with the installation of a larger septic tank and by-pass pipe that sent waste water to the garden and orchard for irrigation. Septic sludge was diverted via pipe and flume to a 40 x 60 x 3 feet deep sludge drying basin located in the northwest corner of the orchard (Webb 1938 & 1939). It appears that this method of sewage disposal remained in operation for the next two decades.*

*Between 1930 and 1948, an apple orchard of at least 77 trees was planted over much of the school garden. The garden and orchard were also expanded northward up a slight incline and overtop part of the old 1920s septic field.*

*By 1954, much of the site was in a state of decline. While the upper orchard and a garden plot to the southeast remained in use, most of the lower orchard was derelict scrub land, nearly void of trees.*

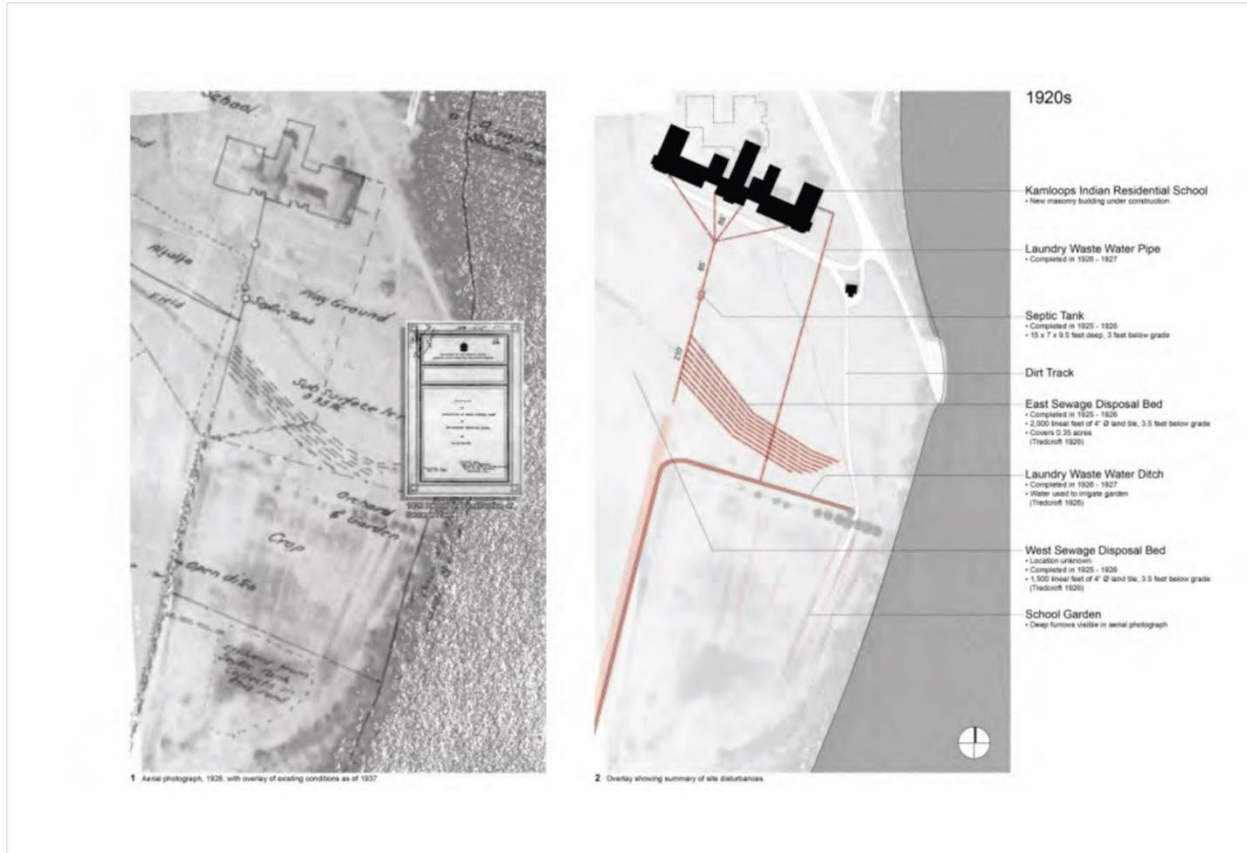
*By 1957, sewage waste water had been flowing to the orchard and garden for nearly twenty years. It was time for a safer and higher capacity solution to waste management.*

*From 1957 to 1958, more than 30% (100,000 square feet) of the orchard was excavated for a sewage lagoon – a pond for the settlement and breakdown of septic waste. A large sewer main was trenched through the orchard from the northwest, bi-passing the 1920s and 30s sewage systems (Ulrich 1958).<sup>15</sup><sup>37</sup>*

It seems clear that Dr Beaulieu failed to do the necessary archival research before conducting her GPR work, and that in particular that she was unaware of the [1926 report by E.H. Tredcroft](#) and the [1937 report by W.C. Warren](#) concerning the sewage disposal systems at the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

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<sup>37</sup> See <https://gravesintheorchard.wordpress.com/>



### 1924 Septic Field

#### Diagrams of the 1924 east sewage disposal bed under the apple orchard

She was thus unaware of the 2000 feet of septic field trenches filled with clay tiles which are still under the apple orchard and the Heritage Park, as well as the many other soil disturbances which had occurred in the area over more than a century of agriculture and development. As a result, she completely misinterpreted her GPR results.

It's difficult to draw conclusions from the [very small number of slides](#) Dr Beaulieu presented on 15 July 2021, but clearly they could represent GPR profiles of septic field trenches. To a GPR machine, a grave filled in after burial would likely be indistinguishable from a septic field trench at that same depth that had been dug, lined with clay tiles, and filled in. Moreover Dr Beaulieu stressed that the 'probably burials' she had found were oriented east-west, and the diagram of the east bed of the 1924 septic field establishes that it ran east-west.

Dr Beaulieu's written report, which has been withheld from the media and the general public, would establish whether she knew about the 1924 septic field trenches. If her written report reveals she *did* know about them, then it is incumbent on her to explain why she did not mention their existence at the 15 July 2021 media event. If she *did not* know about them, then it seems almost certain that what she found was merely the old septic field trenches.

### Excavation and exhumation

Ted Gottfriedson and former Chief Manny Jules told the *Fifth Estate* that there had been a unanimous decision by all the heads of families of the Kamloops Band to *exhume* and *repatriate*:

*Ted Gottfriedson: For our people it's really bad to exhume anyone. You know, their final resting place is actually sacred ground in every sense of the word. They must be left alone. We do have elders who do want those children to stay there, without a doubt, but our committee has discussed it and they have said that they should be exhumed.*

*Manny Jules: I went around the table asking all of the family heads what they felt should happen and every one, every one of the representatives said those little ones uh should be sent home because that's what we would want.*

*Gillian Findlay: Former Tk'emlups Chief Manny Jules heads the committee that made the decision to exhume.*

*Manny Jules: Our number one job is to make sure that they have a safe return home with all of the, the honour and respect that they didn't receive in life that they're given in their afterlife.*

*Gillian Findlay: But identifying remains takes DNA analysis. Determining how someone died requires even more work.*

Ted Gottfriedson and Manny Jules made these statement well over a year ago.<sup>38</sup> There has still been no excavation. Why not? Because the Kamloops Band is playing with words. *Exhumation* is never an issue until the existence of human remains beneath the ground has been definitively confirmed by *excavation*. Dr Beaulieu made the point repeatedly at the 15 July 2021 media event that excavation is the *only* way to confirm that there actually are human remains present in the apple orchard:

*With ground penetrating radar we can never say definitively that they are human remains until you excavate, which is why we need to pull back a little bit and say that they are probable burials, they are targets of interest for sure. They, they have signatures, multiple signatures that present like burials, um but because of that we do need to say that they are probable until one excavates.*

The Kamloops Band does not want to excavate, which is a prerequisite to exhumation. The Kamloops Band wants to distract from excavation by calling in experts to discuss the lengthy, expensive and inconclusive exhumation process, complete with DNA testing of hundreds of people from communities which sent children to the Kamloops Indian Residential many decades ago, a discussion which is completely irrelevant unless and until excavation confirms that there actually are human remains in the apple orchard.

Thus the essential question remains unresolved. Are there human remains in the apple orchard in the Kamloops Band's Heritage Park? Or did Dr Sarah Beaulieu's GPR work merely confirm the existence of a century-old sewage disposal field?

Only excavation can reveal the truth.

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<sup>38</sup> As noted above, the *Fifth Estate* program appears to have been filmed in the fall of 2021, although it did not air until January 2022.

The Gerbrandt-Carleton report was published under the University of Manitoba's Centre for Human Rights Research, which claims as its partners a number of First Nations advocacy groups, the Canadian Human Rights Museum and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.<sup>39</sup>

Centre for Human Rights Research claims as its vision:

*"The CHRR uses an intersectional lens to research and advocate for human rights and Indigenous sovereignty and resurgence. We work with researchers and communities inside and outside of the University of Manitoba to develop and foster a wide variety of research that is informed by social justice."*

The following key principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are absent in the work of Gerbrandt and Carleton in their accusations and assertions against those who dispute the unvalidated claims about mass graves or missing children related to Indian Residential Schools. **Despite the Gerbrandt and Carleton report proving that mainstream media in fact promulgated absolute lies** in many cases in the reporting of the Kamloops Indian Residential School Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) reports, Gerbrandt and Carleton continue to denounce those people holding dissenting views as guilty of being 'denialists.' In doing so, Gerbrandt and Carleton breach the following tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>40</sup>

#### **Article 10**

*Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.*

#### **Article 11**

*Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.*

*No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.*

#### **Article 12**

*No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.*

Indeed, these shining advocates for social justice – Gerbrandt and Carleton - are on board with the tyrannical demand by Kimberly Murray to make residential school 'denialism' a criminal offense. Ms. Murray is a civil servant who has besmirched Canada's reputation by sending reports containing unfounded allegations to both the UN

<sup>39</sup> <https://chrr.info/about-us/partners/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous People, and to the UN's Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, both of which may prejudice Canada's geopolitical position; neither of which were within her authority to send.<sup>41</sup>

*Kimberly Murray, the independent special interlocutor on missing children, unmarked graves and burial sites associated with residential schools, is a civil servant, appointed by an Order in Council to report to the Justice Minister.*

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*Her mandate calls for her to "function independently and impartially, in a non-partisan and transparent manner to achieve the objectives of her mandate." She was to "begin a dialogue" with various affected domestic parties, review legislation, and to "Carry out this mandate in a manner that does not interfere with criminal investigations, prosecutions or civil proceedings."*

*In contravention of this mandate, Ms. Murray took it upon herself in January 2023 to send an unvetted 21-page report to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, prior to his visit to Canada to look into alleged human rights violations and claims of genocide; and in March 2023, Ms. Murray sent a 6-page version to the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*

*Despite having been the Executive Director of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Ms. Murray oddly claimed that the TRC had characterized Indian Residential Schools as genocide, which is not true. She submitted unsupported hearsay claims of extreme violence and nefarious deeds, lurid horror stories, none of which are in the TRC and none of which have been proven in a court of law.*

Gerbrandt and Carleton support the supposedly impartial Special Interlocutor's call to criminalize 'residential school denialism':

*"Moreover, we acknowledge the call made by Kimberly Murray, the independent special interlocutor for missing children and unmarked graves and burial sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, for non-Indigenous peoples to take responsibility for identifying and confronting residential school denialism to support IRS Survivors and truth and reconciliation efforts (Office of the Special Interlocutor, 2023). As such, we are engaging in this research to help Canadians understand the truth about media coverage of the ongoing searches for potential unmarked graves at former residential school sites across Canada as part of the process of putting truth before reconciliation."*

Likewise, CHRR partner, the Canadian Human Rights Museum has convicted Canada of genocide, the most heinous crime, without a trial.

In 2013, the Canadian Human Rights Museum's position was that:

*But the Canadian Museum for Human Rights says it's not in a position to determine what constitutes a genocide and it doesn't plan to use the term to title the exhibit.*

*"We are not a court. We are not an academic institution. We rely on those sources for information to inform our exhibits," said Angela Cassie, a spokesperson for the museum.<sup>42</sup>*

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<sup>41</sup> <https://medium.com/@UndauntedArtz2/special-interlocutor-has-no-authority-to-demand-criminalization-of-residential-school-factualism-98ad5466f268>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/human-rights-museum-sparks-debate-over-term-genocide-1.1400154>

Today the Canadian Museum of Human Rights is comfortable condemning Canada as guilty of genocide without trial.



In fact, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission only gathered *recollections* from former students of Indian Residential Schools. None of the people's statements were subject to cross-examination. If one is familiar with the history of Canada, none of the claims in the statement by the Canadian Human Rights Museum are applicable.<sup>43</sup> Certainly, it is not the place of tax-funded museum to make a declaration about the guilt of an entire nation when the claim of a Canadian Indigenous 'genocide' has never been tested in any court of law.

What kind of human rights does the Canadian Human Rights Museum uphold?

**Right to a fair trial and being innocent until proven guilty is a fundamental tenet of Canadian law and Universal Human Rights declarations.**

Perhaps it is the fact that there is now a competition for funding dollars in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the largest urban Indigenous population in Canada.<sup>44</sup>

In the summer of 2014, Andrew Woolford of the University of Manitoba spearheaded an effort to put Manitoba on the map with a genocide conference.<sup>45</sup> Tired of having his city mocked - "*Depending on the season, it is derided as Winterpeg or Waterpeg*" - it seems he and colleagues planned to put it on the map as the genocide capital of North America, an outcome of Winnipeg being host for the Eleventh Conference of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

<sup>43</sup> See broad historical context of Indian Residential Schools in the final section of this report "Settler Historians Need More Education, Less Ideology: Rebutting Sean Carleton on Senator Beyak and Indian Residential Schools" or online at SSRN:

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4560447](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4560447)

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/statistics-canada-indigenous-population-1.6591058#:~:text=Winnipeg%20again%20has%20the%20largest,the%20latest%20from%20Statistics%20Canada.>

<sup>45</sup> [Unsettling Genocide Studies at the Eleventh Conference of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, July 16-19, 2014, Winnipeg-Canada](#)



Robert Falcon Ouellette runs Aboriginal Focus Programs at the University of Manitoba. He commented in a 2013 story about the Canadian Human Rights Museum refusal to use the term 'genocide' saying:

*"I don't think the Canadian public is ready to hear that message, and I don't think the Canadian government could be promoting that in their own museum," he said Friday.*

*Falcon Ouellette said the term genocide conjures up images Canadians don't typically associate with their country.*

*"Canadians, they believe we go over to other countries in order to stop these genocides from happening. We go over to Rwanda and Bosnia and Europe during the Second World War in order to stop the Holocaust," he said. "So here we are, perhaps, learning that we committed a genocide."*

*He continued, "If you hear the word genocide, it hits your imagination. It hits something visual in the cortex in your brain and what it conjures up is, you know, mass killings. **It conjures up mass graves. It conjures up children being gassed in gas chambers.**" [bold emphasis added]*

Consequently, **it is clear that some people understood the gaslighting value of the term 'mass graves' almost a decade ago, in making people viscerally respond to claims of genocide.** This appears to belie the 'debunking' claims of Gerbrandt and Carlton in their report wherein they state:

*"To determine the media narrative in Canada, we selected 5 mainstream media outlets for analysis: CBC, National Post, The Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, and The Canadian Press. We examined articles published between May 27 to October 15, 2021. These dates were chosen to correspond to the news cycle between the May 27 announcement by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation and October 15, which is two weeks after the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30, 2021. News coverage of the ongoing searches at many former residential school sites across Canada continues, but focusing on the media narrative from the spring, summer, and fall of 2021 is necessary to investigate the foundation of the "mass grave hoax" narrative, which is the extent of "mass grave" media errors during that initial news cycle."*

Obviously, proponents of a theory of Indigenous genocide in Canada were aware a decade ago that 'mass graves' would be the ideal trigger copy for powerful headlines. Likewise, copycat Holocaust language ('survivors') and symbolism (shoes) have since been adopted by the Indigenous genocide movement.

Returning to the genocide conference in Winnipeg in July of 2014, Woolford and colleagues ensured that their genocide conference was well-publicized.

*"This began prior to the conference by making sure that the conference was well-advertized (sic) on websites, listservs and through Facebook groups frequented by local Indigenous peoples. We were also fortunate that a reporter featured our conference in a local newspaper prior to our opening. Mary Agnes Welch framed her Winnipeg Free Press article around the question of genocide in Canada, and featured comments from several of our presenters, including Charlene Bearhead, Trina Cooper-Bolam, and David MacDonald.<sup>1</sup>"*

Based on the foregoing, it is clear that Indigenous activists (whether Indigenous or 'settlers') understood that the term 'mass graves' conjures up visual and visceral reaction and imagery of 'genocide' and thus we see street theatre representations of children's shoes, as if like those of Auschwitz, where real people's shoes are stacked behind glass; the actual shoes of actual victims of the genocidal Holocaust. The shoes of people who were gassed

to death, worked to death or shot to death, falling into deep pits filled with the dead and dying bodies of their fellow Jews and dissidents. Real shoes of real people.

Not contemporary children’s shoes representing those whose parents voluntarily enrolled them in Indian Residential Schools to get an education, and who came home for summer holidays and festive seasonal events.

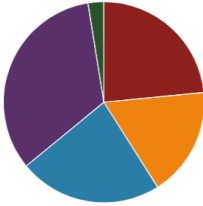
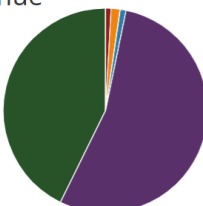
No Auschwitz detainee ever got to go home for Hannukah or Christmas. Do you see the difference?

Likewise, it appears that the Canadian Human Rights Museum changed its tune on ‘genocide’ – likely due to a sudden competitor institution arriving on the genocide scene – that being the fact that the University of Manitoba developed the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, which has been granted \$60 million to build an edifice to the phantom genocide of Canada.

Can it be that since the Canadian Human Rights Museum declined to name the plight of Canadian Indigenous people as ‘genocide,’ that, like children on the playground fighting over a single toy, the Indigenous genocide advocates decided to take their toy home and make their own Indigenous genocide museum?

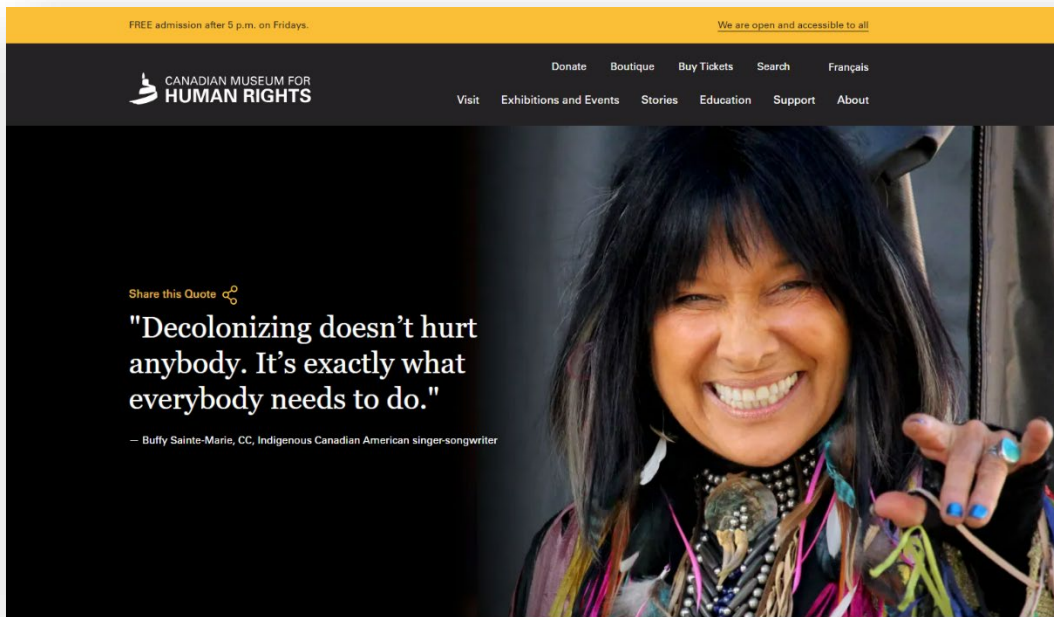
As bizarre as that sounds, it appears this is the case. Thus, in order to maintain a chunk of federal funding against its University competitor, it seems the Canadian Human Rights Museum changed their tune.

According to Canada Revenue Agency documents online, the “Friends of the Canadian Human Rights Museum” (Charitable number: 855114732 RR 0001) received slightly more than a third of their funding from the government while the University of Manitoba received more than half of their funding from government.

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|---|--|
| <p>Revenue</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Received donations \$704,819.00 (23.45%)</li> <li>■ Non-receipted donations \$527,787.00 (17.56%)</li> <li>■ Gifts from other registered charities \$692,916.00 (23.05%)</li> <li>■ Government funding \$1,004,098.00 (33.40%)</li> <li>■ All other revenue \$76,382.00 (2.54%)</li> </ul> <p>Total revenue: \$3,006,002.00</p> | <p>Revenue</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Received donations \$8,780,000.00 (0.87%)</li> <li>■ Non-receipted donations \$14,433,000.00 (1.44%)</li> <li>■ Gifts from other registered charities \$9,307,000.00 (0.93%)</li> <li>■ Government funding \$543,288,000.00 (54.04%)</li> <li>■ All other revenue \$429,619,000.00 (42.73%)</li> </ul> <p>Total revenue: \$1,005,427,000.00</p> |
| <p>Source: CRA Friends of the Canadian Human Rights Museum 855114732 RR 0001</p>  | <p>Source: CRA - University of Manitoba 119260669 RR 0001 which administers the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation; those employed by NCTR are UManitoba employees</p>   |

**Note:** These are not the only two institutions set on ‘mass graves’ and ‘genocide’ – UBC\* has its own fixation with ‘mass graves’ and ‘genocide’ and issued this document in June 2021, “*Considering the Legal and Human Rights Framework for Addressing Mass Graves Connected to Indian Residential Schools,*” despite no excavations or exhumations ever having been done at Kamloops.<sup>46</sup> There is also no list of missing children related to Kamloops Indian Residential School. Gerbrandt and Carleton take no notice of this document.

<sup>46</sup> UBC Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre <https://si-rshdc-2020.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2021/06/MassGravesFramework-TerminologyPaper-June-2021.pdf>  
Reference inserted in this updated report Oct. 27, 2023



In 2013, the Canadian Human Rights Museum refused to accept the claim that Indian Residential Schools in Canada were an example of genocide.<sup>47</sup> Now it uses Buffy Sainte-Marie as an agent for “decolonization.” This is tragically ironic considering Buffy’s personal history.

Based on a CBC Fifth Estate documentary of Oct. 27, 2023, it appears that Buffy is a white woman born of Italian and English parents. If true as presented, Buffy Sainte-Marie is a “colonizer” – a *pretendian* – even though the Piapot Cree family of Saskatchewan have adopted her in to their family. Though Buffy did a tremendous amount of good for Indigenous awareness, of course it is painful for many people (including fans like me) to find we’ve been tricked. For decades.<sup>48</sup>

Though Buffy claims, in the Canadian Human Rights Museum website, that “*Decolonizing doesn't hurt anybody. It's exactly what everybody needs to do*” – it is unlikely that the Jewish Asper family behind the development of the Canadian Human Rights Museum would agree with the current Hamas efforts to ‘decolonize’ Israel. The recent vehement, sometimes violent demonstrations in the streets around the world by Hamas supporters are an ominous forecast of what some people in Canada think decolonization means.<sup>49</sup>



<sup>47</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/human-rights-museum-sparks-debate-over-term-genocide-1.1400154>

<sup>48</sup> Updated Oct. 27, 2023 <https://youtu.be/eMsgCWNCUc4> Previous reference: [Buffy Sainte Marie at 80: More Relevant Than Ever \(chatelaine.com\)](#)

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.spiked-online.com/2023/10/28/the-dangers-of-decolonisation/>

This has direct application to Canada.

*“Follow your dreams. Kill Canada.”* What do people think that means?

**Following the claims of ‘mass graves,’ 83 churches were vandalized or burned to the ground in Canada.<sup>50</sup> As of March 30, 2020, hates crimes against Catholics in Canada are up 260% over the previous year.<sup>51</sup> Seems like decolonizing can hurt a lot of people. Doesn’t feel like this is reconciliation.**

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Thus, the effort to silence those who challenge the ‘mass grave’ narrative, blocking any effort to nuance and rectify the facts about Indian Residential School history means that Canada is headed for violent decolonization by those who believe and then take action upon the *blood libel* of genocide – the most heinous crime for which Canada has never been put on trial!

**In this regard, it can be said that the Canadian Human Rights Museum, Gerbrandt and Carleton and the Centre for Human Rights Research of the University of Manitoba, along with the mainstream media’s false reporting, are engaging in incitement and a hate crime. Their claims are false.**

Gerbrandt and Carleton claim the purpose of their “Debunking...” report on the media is two-fold, as follows:

*“First, revealing that journalists made some errors in their reports but not to the extent claimed by those insisting there is a “mass grave hoax” debunks conspiratorial talking points suggesting that the media, governments, and First Nations are deliberately lying to mislead the Canadian public. Second, such an analysis can assist journalists in reporting on this ongoing news story to avoid contributing to public confusion and fueling residential school denialism.”*

As Gerbrandt and Carleton point out in their report, a hoax is done with intent to deceive.

**I personally do not believe there was such intent in the minds of many aboriginal elders and Knowledge Keepers. I think there are very good historical examples of people disappearing from Indigenous communities and in conjunction with them going to Indian Residential Schools.** That does not mean something nefarious happened to them, which is the widespread assumption by world media and genocide activists.

However, while I accept that many elders and Knowledge Keepers reported their stories in good faith, I this report will show that there are **other opportunists who wish to capitalize on the claim of missing children and the phantom genocide.** In certain parts, this report incorporates work I have previously done on a relevant topic, in the interests of providing a prompt response to the Gerbrandt-Carleton report. Thus, there will be some duplication of information here and there.

## CONFABULATION AND FASD – ARE THESE THE SOURCE OF LURID TALES?

*Confabulation is a neuropsychiatric disorder wherein a patient generates a false memory without the intention of deceit.<sup>[1]</sup> The patient believes the statement to be truthful, hence the descriptive term*

<sup>50</sup> <https://tnc.news/2023/07/04/a-map-of-every-church-burnt-or-vandalized-since-the-residential-school-announcements1/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-03/canada-crimes-against-catholics-increase-260-percent.html#:~:text=Reports%20of%20hate%20crimes%20in,260%20percent%20growth%20against%20Catholics.>

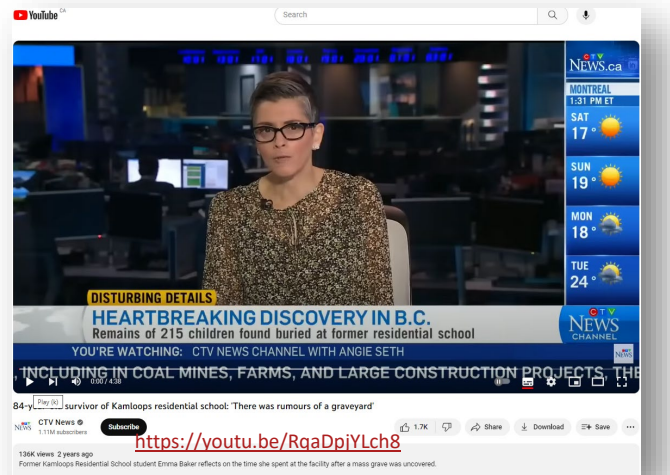
“honest lying.”<sup>[2]</sup> The hypothesis is that the patient generates information as a compensatory mechanism to fill holes in one’s memories.<sup>[3]</sup> It functions for self-coherence, integration of memories, and self-relevance.<sup>[4]</sup><sup>[1]</sup> Confabulations can include small details such as birthdays, or they may be fantastical and more broadly based.<sup>[5]</sup> They can be believable or bizarre. Presenting patients with contradictory information may further perpetuate confabulation in an attempt to explain their account.<sup>52</sup>

Canada is in the grip of a ‘mass grave/missing children’ psychosis related to Indian Residential Schools. The ‘shock and awe’ media campaign that accompanied the statements by the Kamloops First Nation claiming that clandestinely buried children’s bodies or remains had been found in an orchard thanks to a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) search sent shock waves around the world.<sup>53</sup> Contrary to claims in the Gerbrandt & Carleton report, the media never corrected this report.

As noted prior, the very first outlet to report on it was CJFC Kamloops, with the headline on May 27, 2021.

*What is known is that James Peters of CFJC Today in Kamloops picked up the phone a day or so later and was told he would be given a ‘scoop’ in which he would have a brief window to put the story out before it would be given to the rest of the media.<sup>8</sup> Peters put out a [tweet at 4:01 PM](#) on 27 May 2021 linking to a news story he had posted two minutes earlier which was time-stamped [May 27, 2021 | 3:59 PM](#). The news story was headlined ‘Tk’emlups confirms bodies of 215 children buried at former Kamloops Indian Residential School site’, and the text referred to the discovery as human remains.*

This story remains uncorrected to this day – Oct. 22, 2023. Normally, if human remains are discovered, the RCMP and the BC Coroner would have been called in. But GPR cannot identify human remains; the Kamloops Band knowingly released misinformation to the press, later claiming it was a leak. And as for the RCMP? It appears this is now a case of obstruction of justice. On June 4, 2021, the RCMP issued a statement that the Kamloops Band is now in charge of the investigation.<sup>54</sup>



Contrary to the claims of Gerbrandt and Carleton, this CTV news story of May 31, 2021, has not been corrected with any kind of ‘notes’ of correction. By cherry-picking the media outlets they reviewed, they managed to avoid this inconvenient fact that destroys their argument. The CTV story still trumpets “Remains of 215 children found buried at former residential school.” In fact, **no human remains** have been found.

<sup>52</sup>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK536961/#:~:text=Confabulation%20is%20a%20neuropsychiatric%20disorder,without%20the%20intention%20of%20deceit.>

<sup>53</sup> <https://cfjctoday.com/2021/05/27/tkemplups-confirms-bodies-of-215-children-buried-at-former-kamloops-indian-residential-school-site/>

<sup>54</sup> [Kamloops – Indian Residential School Records](#)

CTV's corrections policy states:

*"The goal of CTV News is to be accurate and balanced. Our credibility on air and online depends upon such reporting. Accordingly, CTV News will endeavour to promptly correct significant errors of fact in its journalism, once we determine that an error has been made."<sup>55</sup>*

CTV prides itself on its mass reach: "CTV News is Canada's most-watched news organization both locally and nationally, and has a network of national, international, and local news operations."

Emma Baker, a former student at Kamloops Indian Residential School, explained to CTV Interviewer Angie Seth, that the girls at Kamloops Indian Residential School (as 16-year-olds) used to make up stories of bodies buried in the orchard. Emma said:

*"Yeah, I was a student there. We didn't react too much with the lower grades. You know, like, we were in grade twelve. We all lived in the same building. And there was (sic) rumours of a graveyard, but nobody seemed to know where it was, and we didn't even know if it was true. And there was a big orchard there and we used to **make up stories about the graveyard being in the orchard.**"<sup>56</sup> (1:18) (bold emphasis added)*

CTV's Angie Seth doesn't skip a beat at this revelation; doesn't ask a question about whether or not Emma could then confirm whether or not she witnessed any suspicious activity or disappearing students, as a true investigative journalist would. She asks, "What was your experience like...?"

Angie doesn't ask: "Where did the rumours originate? What evidence, if any, prompted the rumours?" She doesn't say, "Were your stories based on you witnessing the disappearance of students? Did any students go missing in your time at Kamloops Indian Residential School? Do you remember their names?"

Imagine if some of today's Knowledge Keepers were children back then at Kamloops Indian Residential School who heard such stories via the grapevine in school from the older kids and assumed the **made-up stories** were true, and they carried this 'knowing' for decades. Finally, they revealed this 'knowing' as the push for evidence of genocide evidence came from groups like the Woolford genocide conference. Not only were these individuals then valorized and honored, as the federal government has adopted and legitimized "Two-eyed Seeing," a validation of intrinsic Indigenous knowledge on an almost mystical scale, those carrying this knowledge became as if shamans or Medicine Men, carrying forward these secrets.

*Two-eyed seeing* is opposite to Western civilization's traditional Scientific Method of evidence over ideology.

*"As wonderful as science is, science cannot see nature from an Aboriginal lens," Albert told us, as we sat around his kitchen table.*

*"And the big difference there is that science sees nature as an object; the Aboriginal lens sees nature as a subject. Because it's through the language, it teaches you that everything is alive, physically and spiritually."<sup>57</sup>*

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.ctvnews.ca/editorial-standards-and-policies>

<sup>56</sup> <https://youtu.be/RqaDpiYLch8>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/two-eyed-seeing-doc-1.6304574>

*Two-eyed seeing* is promoted as a method of decolonizing science, including on climate change.<sup>58</sup>

In the CTV interview, Emma Baker sounds obviously shocked to think that the once **made-up stories** of graveyards in the orchards appears to be true – and this is entirely the fault of the method of the ‘no questions asked’ media reporting and failure of the Kamloops First Nation to correct the original information leaked to James Peters of CFJC.

No questions asked about the names of the alleged missing children.

No questions asked about the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) technology and its ability/inability to identify human remains.

No questions asked about the ‘shock and awe’ proliferation of stories via news agencies which claim to be the bastion of truthful, accurate reporting.

## THE ROLE OF CONFABULATION

Newspapers are opportunists. *“If it bleeds, it leads”* has been the motto for decades.

The media are happy to wade into the fray. However, there is an ethical challenge in such reporting which every mainstream news agency failed in their coverage of the Kamloops Indian Residential School ‘discovery.’

*Sometimes such stories are essential, and we must be made aware of them. And sometimes they’re just a spectacle of other people’s misery.*<sup>59</sup>

Based on flawed reporting, lack of investigative questions, lack of even cursory research of publicly available school archival files and provincial death records (certainly a large news outlet could have sub-contracted a skilled historical researcher), a willingness to repeat unfounded allegations and a maudlin focus on lurid hearsay stories with no effort to confirm the facts from readily available public documents, **mainstream media have traumatized an entire nation, and especially former Indian Residential School students many of whom *did* have traumatic experiences there.**

Likewise, they have silenced any former students who had rewarding experiences,<sup>60</sup> creating a completely unbalanced narrative, not only in Canada but around the world.

This unbalanced reporting has also contributed to global efforts by China and a bloc of terror states to have Canada formally investigated by the UN on charges of genocide. Terry Glavin is the only mainstream reporter to have noted this serious geopolitical play by China.<sup>61</sup> In effect, mainstream media and academia who are promoting the unfounded claims of ‘mass graves,’ ‘missing children,’ and the phantom genocide at Indian Residential Schools are *aiding alien states which have a malicious agenda against Canada.*

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/news/news-article/decolonizing-canadas-climate-atlas-through-two-eyed-seeing/>

<sup>59</sup> <https://newsliteracymatters.com/2019/11/11/q-what-does-if-it-bleeds-it-leads-mean/>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/My+life+in+an+Indian+Residential+School.-a0255178734>

<sup>61</sup> <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/the-year-of-the-graves-how-the-worlds-media-got-it-wrong-on-residential-school-graves>

One might ask, in the absence of evidence, where did the more lurid stories of life at Indian Residential School as a 'horror show' originate? How could children be so gullible as to believe 'made up' stories of a graveyard in the orchard once they are grown up?

The reasons may be related to alcoholism, FASD and confabulation.

According to a 2011 archived study on StatsCanada:

*For those 12 and older, the rate of heavy drinking (five or more drinks on one occasion at least once a month in the 12 months preceding the survey) was 35% for off-reserve First Nations people, 30% for Métis, and 39% for Inuit, compared with 23% for non-Aboriginal people. An estimated 43% of off-reserve First Nations people, 38% of Métis, 40% of Inuit and 36% of non-Aboriginal people aged 12 to 24 reported heavy drinking.*

Many of the wildest stories about abuse by priests and nuns or other religious orders have been filmed by Kevin Annett and given credence by people like Noam Chomsky and newspapers like the Globe and Mail,<sup>62</sup> despite the fact that a central figure, William Coombs, was a known alcoholic.

Confabulation is a known side-effect of both Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and alcoholism. Both conditions have higher rates in Indigenous communities than mainstream society, though both are also certainly problematic nation-wide.

*"Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe the impacts on the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol.1,2 FASD is a lifelong disability. Individuals with FASD will experience some degree of challenges in their daily living and need support with motor skills, physical health, learning, memory, attention, communication, emotional regulation and social skills to reach their full potential."*<sup>63</sup>

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*Damage to the function of the frontal lobes in the brain means that a person with FASD may confabulate – make up things that may not be true.*

*This is not lying – it's a specific behaviour based on a neurological condition – 'faulty wiring' in the brain.*<sup>64</sup>

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*"...fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) or alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND) is no doubt part of the problem when people speculate and confabulate."*<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/sexual-abuse-at-heart-of-pain/article962152/>

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/reports-publications/health-promotion-chronic-disease-prevention-canada-research-policy-practice/vol-41-no-9-2021/hpcdp-41-9-05-eng.pdf>

<sup>64</sup> [https://www.fasd-can.org.nz/not\\_lying\\_confabulation#:~:text=Damage%20to%20the%20function%20of,faulty%20wiring'%20in%20the%20brain.](https://www.fasd-can.org.nz/not_lying_confabulation#:~:text=Damage%20to%20the%20function%20of,faulty%20wiring'%20in%20the%20brain.)

<sup>65</sup> [https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/ARNDConferenceConsensusStatementBooklet\\_Complete.pdf](https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/ARNDConferenceConsensusStatementBooklet_Complete.pdf)



FASD is an in-born condition that cannot be healed, but often can be helped if the child gets early special needs care. It is the result of maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy.<sup>66</sup> There is no known ‘safe’ limit for a mother to consume alcohol while pregnant. Alcohol crosses the placenta and destroys the brain development of the fetus. It affects people by making them quite gullible, child-like, impulsive, sometimes with explosive tempers. FASD individuals take things quite literally and cannot understand nuance. They are also unable to appreciate the consequences of their actions (often leading to repeat jail sentences in the case of offenders), and they often confabulate – indeed, sometimes will tell you ‘what you want to hear’ as they often have a special desire to please.

By contrast, alcoholics confabulate due to a condition known as Korsakoff’s Syndrome, typically caused by a lack of Vitamin B1/Thiamin.

*“Confabulations generally refer to the emergence of memories of experiences and events that, in reality, never took place, and which are unintentionally produced. They are frequently observed in alcoholic Korsakoff’s syndrome.”<sup>67</sup>*

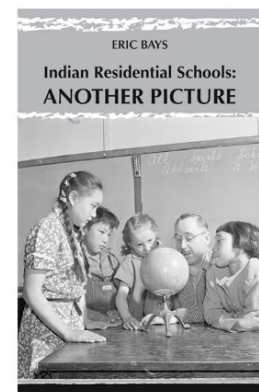
Since no part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission relied on traditional forms of cross-examination nor did it require witnesses to support or challenge people’s recollections, it is quite possible that the recollections as well as the ‘knowings’ of Indigenous communities that are claiming to have, as yet unnamed, missing children, means some or all of the harshest claims about Indian Residential Schools may be confabulations or affected by conditions like FASD.

Likewise, in terms of ‘leading the witness’ participants in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process were asked point blank if they knew of missing or dead students. The alleged veracity of such claims surely links back to the Kevin Annett documentary featuring the tragic confabulations of the destitute alcoholic William Coombes.

## DEATH AND DISAPPEARANCE IN A WELL-DOCUMENTED POPULATION

Here is an example where seven people disappeared from a community in one day; three of them vanished into an Indian Residential School.

One need only read this sad story in Eric Bays’ book, *“Indian Residential Schools: Another Picture.”* Bays explains that at the Hudson’s Bay trading post at Albany, an Indigenous father showed up saying there was no food in the family tent and that his wife was ill. The father then died. The Hudson’s Bay sent out men with food, only to find the family in a tent, the mother deceased with five children around her. A two-month-old baby was given up to a relative, the 16-year-old joined other relatives on a hunt, and the remaining three children, a boy and two girls, came to the residential school. During a flu epidemic, the youngest of the three died at the school.



<sup>66</sup> <https://www.brainfacts.org/diseases-and-disorders/childhood-disorders/2018/what-is-fetal-alcohol-syndrome,-and-how-does-it-affect-the-brain-082318#:~:text=Brain%20imaging%20studies%20have%20shown,hippocampus%2C%20and%20the%20basal%20ganglia.>

<sup>67</sup>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1073191119899476#:~:text=Confabulations%20generally%20refer%20to%20the,observed%20i n%20alcoholic%20Korsakoff's%20syndrome.>

This vignette is a repeating story through the history of Indian Residential Schools. Orphaned children. Families in distress. This also is an example of why many Indigenous people 'know' there are missing children from their communities — and why they feel certain the loss is directly associated with Indian Residential Schools.

In this one instance, we see that seven people vanished from the tribal community within days. The mother and father died. All but two children vanished; one too young to remember anything — the older 16-year-old likely traumatized at being suddenly orphaned. Were these parents given a proper burial in that community? Did anyone tend their graves? Are there markers to remember them by name? If not, it would be as if an entire family simply disappeared.<sup>68</sup>

One can imagine how this story might unfold over time within that community. Thus, it is a misperception of historical events which has been amplified by historically uninformed mainstream media actors, hungry for dramatic headlines to draw in readers.

Many Indigenous people do believe that there are missing children. Thanks to overwrought media coverage **without any historical context**, many *non-Indigenous* people also believe this today.

However, over the course of 113 years of operation and 150,000 students, **there is no list of missing persons reports.**

Since the Indian Residential Schools were originally developed for status Indians (those whose Bands were signatory to treaties), the federal government had very complete listings of Band members and names because they had to make treaty payments accordingly. Any child who went to an Indian Residential School had government funding attached to their name and school number.

There are no missing persons reports over the course of 113 years and 150,000 students that have not been resolved, related to Indian Residential Schools. There are no reports filed by parents or bands of names of individuals who have gone missing at Indian Residential Schools.

These are the facts. There are no unresolved missing persons reports over the course of 113 years and 150,000 students.

One might then ask, why would Indigenous people easily accept the claim that children were murdered or died under nefarious circumstances and were secretly buried, as is the fundamental premise of the Kamloops Indian Residential Schools graves, as reported as the story broke?

One reason might be that homicide is a fact of life in most Indigenous communities. In some ways it is the norm.

Sadly, tragically, StatsCanada reports that:

*“For the period from 2015 to 2020, the average homicide rate involving Indigenous victims (8.64 per 100,000 Indigenous people) was six times higher than the homicide rate involving non-Indigenous victims (1.39 per 100,000 non-Indigenous people). The homicide rates for Indigenous people were particularly high in the Prairie provinces and in the territories.”<sup>69</sup>*

<sup>68</sup> Excerpt of a previous work by the author “Indian Residential Schools — The Untold Story of A Lifeboat for the Least of Society”

<https://medium.com/@UndauntedArtz2/indian-residential-schools-the-untold-story-of-a-lifeboat-for-the-least-of-society-66cb2c4d4042>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00012-eng.htm>

If we look at the world in historical terms of those elders or Knowledge Keepers, in their experience or in stories passed on through generations, since some children went to Indian Residential Schools and these individuals did not see the children again, it is easy to believe that something bad happened to them or that they were murdered. In a small community, stories and concerns like this would easily become the local 'urban legend' and it would make sense of the absence of the missing people for that community. Likewise, such disappearances prior to the 1940's coincides with the tuberculosis (TB) plague which was a Grim Reaper in all strata of society worldwide, extremely more so in Indigenous communities. This plague waned dramatically in the 1940's-50s, when modern treatments became available. So, prior to the 1950s, many children did go to Indian Residential Schools, and some died there or were sent on to sanatoria or hospitals for treatment. Some children got well; others died. Sanatorium treatments were *years* long, meaning if a child ever returned to their home community after years-long isolation in a TB sanatorium, they returned a teenager or young adult and were unrecognizable to former family and friends.

Moffat et al (2013) in *"Sanitoriums and the Canadian Colonial Legacy: The Untold Experiences of Tuberculosis Treatment"* note that *"within the context of TB, public health officials were granted the authority to coercively institutionalize the affected, forcibly removing infected individuals and placing them in sanitoriums (Shedden, 2011)"*. Due to the long treatment periods, contact with family, culture and heritage was lost. One aboriginal testimonial in Moffat reads: *"My brother went to the sanitorium and stayed there for seven years because he was allergic to the medication. It took seven years for the tuberculosis to go dormant. I never knew my brother. My older sister has no memory of him. My siblings never met their brother until he was thirteen. He was a total stranger. That's the emotional part — that we had a brother we never knew."*<sup>70</sup>

Thus, it would have been true for those in the community that, effectively, the child had disappeared.

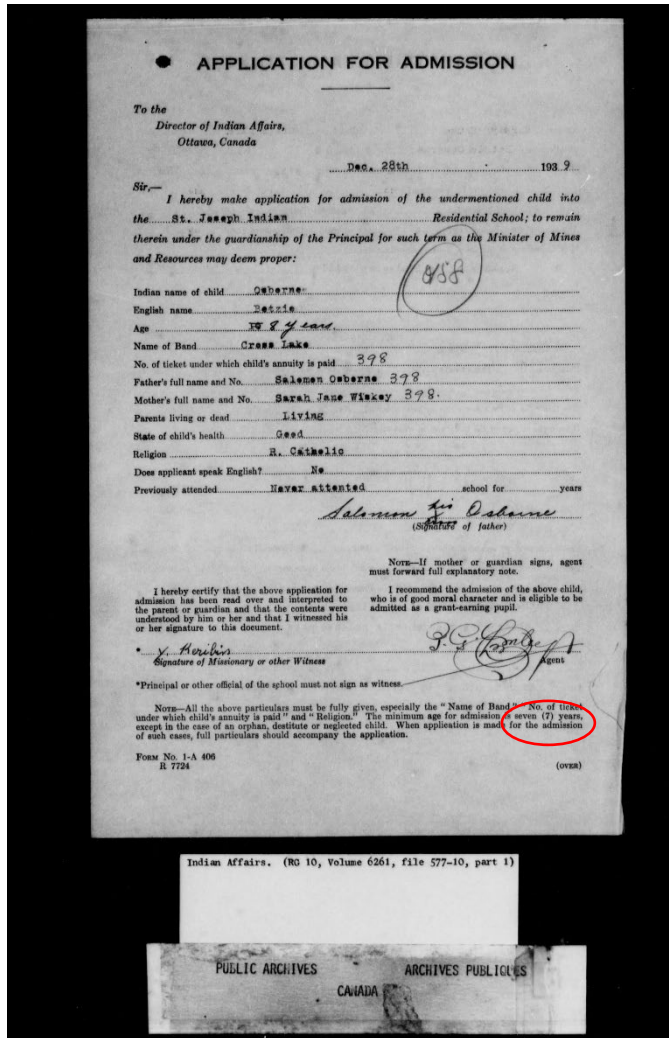
## INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS MASTER NARRATIVE – A MISDIAGNOSIS

In Canada, the federal government made extraordinary efforts to treat tuberculosis in Indigenous communities by transporting infected mothers or fathers from their remote villages to sanatoria, typically hundreds of miles away. Several early TB treatments were extremely painful and could be described as torture since modern anesthesia was not available. Often TB sufferers were literally incarcerated in the sanatoria, certainly for months but sometimes for *years*, living an isolated, sedentary, very boring life of bedrest, quality nutritious meals, and perhaps some hobby or craft (like soapstone carving) to pass the time.

However, this meant that the children left behind had no one to care for them. Orphaned or destitute children, or those from dysfunctional families, were given preferential access to Indian Residential Schools with the schools effectively serving as the child welfare system of the time. According to regulation, children could only be admitted to Indian Residential School if they were a minimum of seven years old and their parent or legal guardian signed the enrollment form, unless the child was orphaned (one or both parents absent for TB treatment, separated/divorced, or deceased), destitute, or dysfunctional. In all such cases, the child would have been deemed to be at risk. In the absence of relatives who could take in orphaned children, the Indian Residential Schools served as a home. It is surprising that even in documents from the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation there is no

<sup>70</sup> <https://medium.com/@UndauntedArtz2/unmarked-or-mass-graves-10a7a8b12e71>

clarity on this topic. For instance, in their handbook "Listening to Survivors," in one story, author Richard van Camp, states that his mother was taken from her family at age 5. His mother was not eligible for admission at age 5 – unless there was a problem at home – orphaned, destitute, dysfunctional family. Likewise, as a Dene person, born in Fort Smith, neither he nor his mother would have been Status Indians and therefore there was no mandatory attendance required at Indian Residential Schools. (Note: the mandatory rule was only applied if there was no Indian Day School on that reserve, and only after 1920, to align with provincial truancy laws across Canada).



Van Camp reports: "My mother was five when she was flown out of her community to Fort Smith where she attended two Residential Schools for 12 years: Breynat Hall and Grandin College. Her number was 12."

If she was five, an exception was made for her admittance – orphaned, destitute or a dysfunctional family. The reason she was given a number was for the sorting and separation of her dedicated numbered laundry and clothing. This was especially important in earlier times when TB was rife as it is a highly contagious disease and the germs were known to remain on fabric.

The claims that children were "forcibly taken from their families" may be true in some such cases. If the family was dysfunctional, rife with alcoholism, neglect, physical or sexual abuse, or domestic violence, then, as now, the RCMP would apprehend the child and take them to safety. However, this was not the norm. Most children were voluntarily enrolled in Indian Residential

Schools by their parents who wanted their children to be able to acquire the necessary skills to cope in a changing world. In many cases there was a waiting list for admission. As noted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports, Indian Residential Schools were the choice of the band elite as they wanted their children to get ahead in life.

While the master narrative of intergenerational trauma related to Indian Residential Schools is the focus of almost everything related to Indigenous affairs in Canada today, in fact:

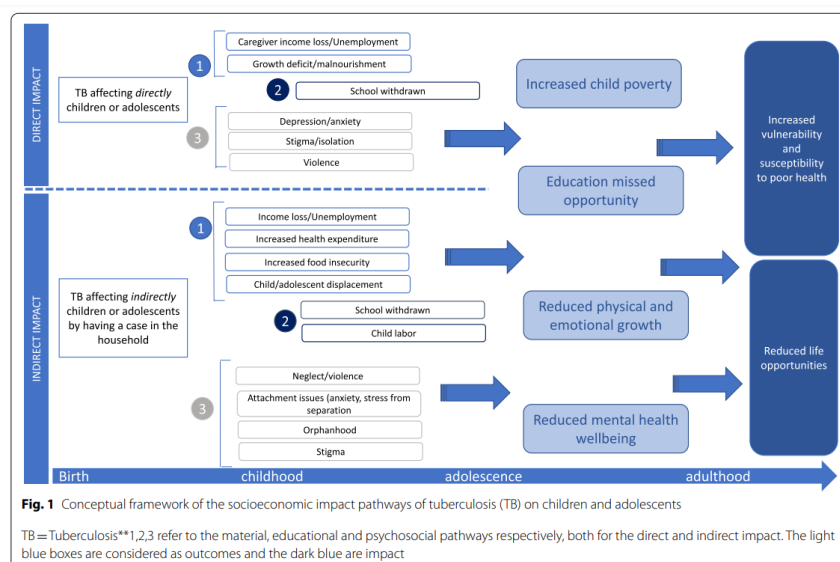
- only 4% of the 150,000 residential school attendees are represented by the comments in the Truth and Reconciliation reports;
- only one sixth of all potential Indigenous students ever attended Indian Residential Schools,
- and as a subset, only one third of all potential Status Indians ever attended Indian Residential Schools.
- The average number of years of attendance was 4.5, thus few people reached a high level of literacy or numeracy.

After the turn of the century, the government provided transportation for the children to go home from Indian Residential Schools for the summer holidays and for festive occasions (like Christmas or Easter, if the families were not too remote). This was provided for all students except for orphans or those children who might be at risk in dysfunctional/abusive/violent homes. They remained at the school; some grew up there, lived there for their entire life and many became employees.

Inuit and Metis children were never required to attend Indian Residential Schools; in fact, Metis were technically prohibited from attending, though in certain locations, allowances were made based on what appear to be personal connections to the religious order and the standing of the parents in the community, or on compassionate grounds for an orphan or child in distress.

Thus, based on the numbers, the alleged intergenerational trauma from Indian Residential School attendance would only apply to a small percentage of Indigenous people in Canada. However, the master-narrative perpetuated in the media of “forced to attend Indian Residential School” makes it easier to blame white Christian Canadian society for various socio-economic problems today, while ingraining a sense of victimhood in Indigenous people, many of whom do face very serious life challenges – challenges unrelated to Indian Residential Schools.

**In effect, society as the doctor has misdiagnosed the condition and is treating the wrong disease with the wrong cure. TB and the related family disruption is the driver of intergenerational trauma, not Christian missions or Indian Residential Schools.**



Source: *The socioeconomic impact of tuberculosis on children and adolescents: a scoping review and conceptual framework*

As shown in *“The socioeconomic impact of tuberculosis on children and adolescents: a scoping review and conceptual framework”* clearly it was TB that caused the greatest disruption, emotional crisis and on-going life impacts for many hundreds of Indigenous children (though not all) and this is the cause of much intergenerational trauma as well. While children would have experienced both culture shock and a deep sense of abandonment or rejection when suddenly sent to school, separated from their families (either temporarily or actually orphaned) due to their parent(s) needing TB treatment, this diagnosis would have meant destitution, and substantial family dysfunction. Indian Residential Schools were the only option for care for these children at the time.

Then, as now, there were significant socio-economic problems in Indigenous families and communities. StatsCanada reports on the situation today:

*“Indigenous people aged 15 and older were nearly 10 times more likely than non-Indigenous people to have been under the legal responsibility of the government during their childhood (11% versus 1.3%). This overrepresentation in child welfare services could only be partially explained by the higher rates of child maltreatment or neglect.”*

Likewise, as we saw with the recent draconian COVID public health regulations, in the 1920s federal legislation was amended **to allow the police to forcibly separate people from a high-risk TB infected setting**. Back in the days of the forgotten TB plague, either the infected individual was forcibly removed for care or an at-risk individual, such as one or more children, might be removed to prevent further exposure. For the most part, historical records indicate that Indigenous people did not believe TB was contagious in nature; then, as now, Indigenous people were reluctant to get treatment for TB or to follow health guidance regarding isolation from other people, as discussed in *“Finally when I started falling down...”*<sup>71</sup> Health statistics also indicate that today many Indigenous people do not follow the proper adherence to the strict medication regimes of today.

Historically, a TB diagnosis was disastrous for any Canadian, thus being isolated in sanatoria for forcible administration of treatment and care was the norm for hundreds of thousands of Canadians. However, TB was statistically much more prevalent in Indigenous communities due to their preferred forms of communal living, food sharing, poor sanitation, and living arrangements in crowded conditions.

## CULTURE SHOCK

As described by Moore (1946) in researching the conditions of the “Bush Indians”:

*“Formerly the Indians lived in wigwams and still do in some areas. Today the Indian is copying the white man and lives during the winter months in small one-roomed shacks (Fig.1). Frequently the conditions are almost unbelievable - as many as 10 to 12 people living in a shack 12 feet square. The only furniture may consist of a stove in the centre and a small table or stool (Fig. 2). Sometimes there may be one broken-down single bed, but the majority sleep on the floor. The door is seldom more than 5 feet high and is covered by a blanket or old piece of canvas to keep out the wind. Two small windows let in the light, and the sole source of ventilation is the stove and the fairly large hole in the flat roof for the stove-pipe. Their sanitary habits are very primitive. Refuse and excreta litter the snow in the immediate vicinity of the*

<sup>71</sup> <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/jjih/article/view/29072>

*house. With the advent of spring the whole family moves to tents, which they set up a few hundred feet away, and trust to the spring and summer rains to wash away the refuse. During the summer months they frequently change the location of the tents as they move about in their quest for food.”*

Imagine the culture shock of a child arriving from such a home to an Indian Residential School, where for public health requirements, the child was stripped of their clothes, their hair cut to deal with typical lice infestations, and they were given a good scrubbing in a shower, and thing probably unknown to them. All of this was administered all at once upon their arrival. Indeed, it is one of the more common recollections of former students.

*Rodney Clifton, Professor Emeritus of the University of Manitoba, actually worked at Stringer Hall from 1966–67, the Anglican Mission hostel in Inuvik, NWT, whose student residents attended Sir Alexander Mackenzie School. His explanation of receiving students is both horrifying and enlightening.*

*It is horrifying because he describes some of the returning students to the hall as wearing the exact same clothes that they had left in, though now in a shambles. For some, their clothes had not been changed in the two summer months and the kids had not had a bath, the water being too cold on the barren tundra. He describes the children as having stood in smudge fires while at home with their parents, to fight off the vicious biting insects of the Northern Tundra (this was long before “Deep Woods OFF” or similar repellents). For those unfamiliar, the famous Canadian tune “[The Blackfly](#)” offers a glimpse of how such biting insects can drive one to distraction. Thus, dirty, smoky, and smelly, many of the children often also had pus-filled infected insect bites on their heads and even in their ears. Lice were also common.*

*This situation required that the child be submitted to showers and vigorous scrubbing upon arrival, and likely the burning of unsalvageable clothes be done immediately. Clean institutional clothing was provided as part of the educational package and to provide commonality between students, so there was no difference between those who might have nicer clothing than those were poor.<sup>72</sup>*

Returning to living conditions of Bush Indians, Moore explains the shocking rate of infant mortality in the 1940s:

*“The infant mortality rate among the Indians studied reached the astounding figure in 1942 of slightly under 400 per 1,000 live births, with a comparable figure for the white population of Canada of 52. The crude mortality rate for 1942 was 39.04 per 1,000, in contrast with a rate of 8.3 for the white population.”*

He goes on to describe the extremely high mortality rates:

*“Tuberculosis is the greatest single cause of death, with a death rate 14 times higher than that among the white population. In 1942, the death rate for Indians from tuberculosis for all of Canada was 732 per 100,000, with a comparable death rate among the white population of 51.4. However, in certain farming areas, where the Indians are well established, with a higher economic status and comparatively good nutrition, the death rate from tuberculosis is only slightly higher than in the surrounding white population. Among the Northern Indians death rates from 1,000 to 3,000 per 100,000 are encountered. In the area studied the death rate from tuberculosis in 1942 was 1,400 per 100,000. The comparable figure for the white population of Manitoba was 27.1.”*

In reading historical documents, it is easy to see how this impression of ‘missing children’ was left with some former students and other residents of remote communities, especially when there were very low literacy levels

<sup>72</sup> <https://medium.com/@UndauntedArtz2/they-gave-me-a-number-indian-residential-school-denialism-and-genocide-37f34f5e4ddc>

amongst the people in general. In terms of how this misperception about Indian Residential Schools expanded through mainstream society and global media outlets, the answer is also simple.

Historical illiteracy, not hoax.

Few of the media stories on the topic of 'mass graves' or Indian Residential Schools even mention the forgotten TB plague, not even the pinnacle of television investigative reporting, 60 Minutes, made mention of it.

## CASE IN POINT – STEPHEN KAKFWI AND MARIE WILSON

*Marie Wilson, a commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said thousands of children who died in residential schools are buried across Canada, "many of them in unmarked graves, many of them in graveyards where their own family members perhaps never had the chance to do proper spiritual farewells or sending-home ceremonies." – Western Catholic Reporter, April 22, 2013*

Marie Wilson was the only non-Indigenous commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A former journalist of 35 years with CBC, Wilson has obviously empathetically embraced the story of missing children in unmarked graves, undoubtedly moved by many of the recollections of those who came to tell their stories to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, the truth is established with evidence, not just personal recollections.

Wilson is married to Stephen Kakfwi whose biography, "*Stoneface*" tells the part of the story that virtually all media reports about Indian Residential Schools exclude. **Tuberculosis ravaged his family life.** Kakfwi had eleven siblings. In the opening of his book he writes:

*"...I am sitting among with my coffee among the spruce and birch trees in my backyard in Yellowknife. I hear a plane starting up and I can tell it's a Beaver. I think of 1955, when a Beaver took my mother away. She left us six times over the course of twelve years, and she was gone for a total of six years. She spent all that time in hospitals getting treated for TB. And as I listen again to the sound of the float plane, sixty-seven years later, I have tears in my eyes, thinking of how she must have felt leaving us behind, wondering if she would live or ever see us again. **Her brothers, sisters and parents had already died from TB.**"(bold added)*

As I have written in "*Ambiguous Losses: Epidemics, Orphans and Unmarked Graves*,"<sup>73</sup> the lives of most Indigenous people in Canada have suffered generational impacts of unresolved grief related to these ambiguous losses. Blaming an external enemy like Christian nuns and priests and Indian Residential School is perhaps easier than addressing these devastating losses of loved ones. News outlets like Associated Press (AP) repeatedly lie about the purpose of Indian Residential Schools,<sup>74</sup> claiming that the children were forced to convert to Christianity.

*"From the 19th century until the 1970s, more than 150,000 First Nations children were required to attend state-funded Christian schools as part of a program to assimilate them into Canadian society. They were*

<sup>73</sup> <https://michellestirling.com/2023/07/28/ambiguous-losses-epidemics-orphans-and-unmarked-graves/>

<sup>74</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/canada-456d8b4077bf2b86b5ed1d608bf97b63>



*forced to convert to Christianity and not allowed to speak their native languages. Many were beaten and verbally abused, and up to 6,000 are said to have died.”*

In Kakfwi’s biography, his mother, Georgina, and father, Noel, are pictured on page 27 at the baptism of his sister Irene with Father Rene Furnoleau (dated 1957). As will be seen on virtually all Applications for Enrolment, the family’s Christian denomination is noted and children were sent to a school that followed the family’s path of faith. As Robert Carney, father of the well-known former banker and climate czar, Mark Carney, detailed in his review of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996),<sup>75</sup> aboriginal languages were incorporated into education and liturgy. Some students were fluent in four languages:

*Insofar as maternal language loss or retention among former residential pupils, the chapter does not refer to research that has been done, such as interviews with 44 adults who attended the school at Fort Chipewyan from 1900 to 1930. Nearly half the respondents indicated they could communicate in four languages: Chipewyan or Slavey, Cree, English and French. Were there similar outcomes elsewhere at the same time or later? And if so, might the schools have played a role in this regard? The Commissioners did not pursue these and related questions.*

Rodney Clifton, a former residential school dormitory supervisor from the 1960’s, noted that during class time, children were restricted from speaking their own language to prevent secret or rude conversations about others and to encourage English fluency, as any immersion-style program does.

It should be noted that for the most part it was the Oblate Fathers, most of whom were highly educated, very intelligent individuals and skilled ethnographers, created ‘syllabics’ and diverse bilingual dictionaries. They are condemned today as preventing the use of native languages in schools when in fact most were fluent in one or more native languages, and they incorporated native languages into the liturgy. By creating a written method and dictionaries for what were once only oral languages, these were saved from extinction.

Returning to the Kakfwi biography, Stephen obviously adored his mother Georgina, a remarkable woman who was strong, independent and skilled in the bushcraft in the woods. He had **11 siblings**, two of whom died in infancy. He recounts that his parents also adopted three of their grandchildren and even though his father passed away in his fifties, his mother continued raising whatever children were still in her care.

Imagine the challenge of raising and feeding so many children when they were mostly reliant upon you and community hunters and trappers to bring in sufficient game. Today, couples are reluctant to even have one baby, citing the cost of living and difficulties of parenting.

Imagine living in the bush, having to take care of all your subsistence needs by hand – chopping wood, carrying water, keeping food in stock and the fire going, while also trapping to earn a meagre income for buying staples from the nearest fly-in store. In times of distress, such as having to travel far away for TB treatment, there could only be one way to care for so many children. Some or all of them had to go to Indian Residential School where they would have a home, regular food, and education. In some cases, one or two children might be farmed out to relatives, but in most cases, relatives also had many children and the same challenges of survival day by day.

Today, many former Indian Residential School students decry the fact that they were denied the opportunity to learn traditional hunting and trapping skills from their grandparents. Kakfwi tells how “...as a kid I wanted to be a

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<sup>75</sup> [https://michellestirling.files.wordpress.com/2023/03/review-article\\_-canada\\_-royal-commission-on-aboriginal-peoples.pdf](https://michellestirling.files.wordpress.com/2023/03/review-article_-canada_-royal-commission-on-aboriginal-peoples.pdf) (Note: the original file can be found on the Wayback Machine. The pdf is posted on my blog for reader convenience.)

hunter and trapper. When I was about eight years old, I kept telling my grandparents, “I don’t want to go to school; I want to go into the bush and I want to go trapping.”

His grandfather kept telling him “No, you’ve got to go to school.”

Kakwfi relates that his grandfather never gave him a dollar in his life, even though at one point he asked for some money as he was going back to Indian Residential School at Grollier Hall. At that point, his grandfather Gabriel gave him a pencil. A beat-up little pencil, saying “That’s what you’re going to need.”

But Kakwfi really wanted to go trapping, so one day his grandfather took him trapping, even giving him the .22 bolt action rifle to carry. The boy was proud of his role, but as the day progressed, a long trek, with his grandfather quickly setting traps and intermittently stopping to light fires to warm the boy, that rifle became heavier and heavier. They didn’t get home until near dark; by now he was just dragging the rifle.

He writes that he went straight to bed when they finally got home, exhausted. And the next day “I was pretty happy to go back to school.”

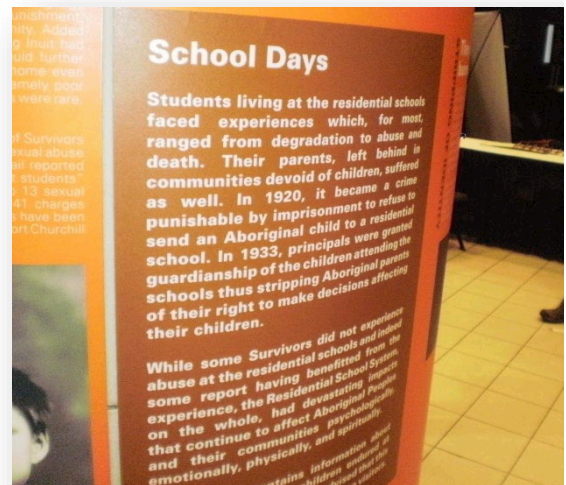
Kakwfi’s book also tells a story about Sugha, an elderly woman who was born in the mountains and had a big imagination and was a good storyteller.

He talks about Sugha’s way of creating a story.

*“It wasn’t true, but she threw it in there anyway. She’d look you straight in the eye and dare you to call bullshit, you know? You see, Dene storytelling has always been an important part of our culture. During the long, dark nights of winter, when it’s cold and people are hungry or grieving, storytelling was given high regard because that’s all there was to do. Storytelling is an essential part of our lives, as necessary as sleeping or eating.”*

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a mass storytelling event, rather like during World War II in Britain where people diarized their experiences in the “Mass Observation” program.<sup>76</sup>

The difference is that the Mass Observation diaries were written in private. For the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the state prompted the stories, they were told in public, and there were diverse cultural and psychological elements at play – that of being a good storyteller, that of recalling difficult personal times long past which had been tightly framed by the commission around Indian Residential Schools, that of being a victim – a survivor – not an individual with agency. This leads to groupthink. The biased agenda of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was



<sup>76</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass-Observation#:~:text=In%20August%201939%2C%20Mass%20Observation,their%20style%2C%20content%20and%20length.>

evident from what was written in the opening lines of the following panel of a kiosk as people entered the Truth and Reconciliation meeting room.

Dr Phillip Zimbardo, psychologist, explains how in a group, people are subject to group influences. This is shown in the famous Asch Conformity Experiment.<sup>77</sup> In the experiment, a group of people who are primed to go along with the experiment's question and answer are in a room. A naïve volunteer enters, unaware that the others will be acting as a group, according to the direction of the researcher. The test administrator shows everyone an illustration with a set of lines and asks them to say which is the longest line. After a few examples in which everyone answers out loud correctly, suddenly all the confederate participants start saying the same wrong answer – and thus the naïve volunteer also agrees and says the same wrong thing as the others.

They are to look at the line on the left and then say which line is equal to it from the three shown on the right. For the first few samples of lines, the answers are accurate from everyone, but on the third try, all of the confederate participants say the wrong number...and so does the naïve volunteer, bowing to group pressure.

**It is the 'open witnessing' of people voicing their views that most influence the naïve volunteer.** When the same experiment is run asking participants to write their answer on a piece of paper, thus private from each other, participants were not swayed by 'public opinion.'



*"The subject denies the evidence of his own eyes and yields to group influence."*

It should be remembered that non-Indigenous staff who testified did not have their testimony transcribed and those Indigenous people who had 'warm memories' of Indian Residential Schools were relegated a small section of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports.

<sup>77</sup> <https://youtu.be/NyDDyT1IDhA>

*“Around 4 in 10 Indigenous people (41%, or 42% of First Nations people, 39% of Métis, and 45% of Inuit) aged 15 years and older reported experiencing sexual or physical violence by an adult before the age of 15. In contrast, 25% of non-Indigenous people reported experiencing violence during childhood. More specifically, 36% of Indigenous people experienced physical violence and 16% experienced sexual violence. Among non-Indigenous people, these proportions were 22% and 6%, respectively.”*<sup>78</sup>

In *Beyond The Orange Shirt Story*, Phyllis Webstad’s aunt, Theresa Jack, writes:

*“There was lots of violence and drinking on the reserve. Many times at Granny Suzanne’s, we had to hide ourselves for our safety, usually in the sweat house or the haystack by the creek. My two uncles lived with us. One of them abused me sexually, and the other abused me mentally and physically. He would beat me and my brother with sticks and anything he could get his hands on. He even bullwhipped us once.”*<sup>79</sup>

By contrast, no such atrocities are noted in *Beyond the Orange Shirt* as having occurred at the schools she and Phyllis attended. Thus, one might conclude that there are similar cases of projection.

Indigenous communities and reserves are very small, tight-knit places. Sexual and physical abuse cannot be easily prosecuted without putting oneself and one’s own family at risk of retribution – possibly violent or deadly in nature. Many communities have one or more criminal gangs. Thus, for some victims, it is easier to blame elderly nuns and priests than to name names in their own lives.

Presently in the news is Evelyn Korkmaz, who started an organization called Ending Clergy Abuse.<sup>80</sup> Evelyn’s bio states:

*Her story attests to the terrible cycle of abuse that existed within these institutions: many of Evelyn’s classmates had been abused by the clergy at the school, and this learned pattern of abuse led those students to assault the young Evelyn.*

The assumption is that her cousins who gang raped her numerous times while on her way home from school had been similarly assaulted by the clergy at the school, but no such charges have been laid, despite investigations. Evelyn was a day scholar and did not live at St. Anne’s. Her name has recently surfaced in relation to charges of gross indecency laid against a 97-year-old Sister Seguin.<sup>81</sup> Her cousins, who she admits gang raped and tortured her numerous times, have never been charged.

Reportedly, Evelyn’s mother, who is still alive, worked for the school when she was a young girl, remains a devout Christian, and does not, to this day, accept that the priests and the nuns were abusing children.

However, as explained in J.R. Miller’s “Shingwauk’s Vision” student-on-student sexual abuse and gang-style bullying was a feature of some Indian Residential Schools. (pg. 336)

This phenomenon is rarely mentioned in discussions about sexual abuse related to Indian Residential Schools.

<sup>78</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220719/dq220719c-eng.htm>

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.dorchesterreview.ca/blogs/news/behind-the-orange-shirt>

<sup>80</sup> [Korkmaz, Evelyn – CRESTWOOD](https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/st-annes-nun-residential-school-charges-1.7001318)

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/st-annes-nun-residential-school-charges-1.7001318>

Neither have any student perpetrators been charged. On p. 280 of *Up Ghost River*, Edmund Metatawabin says:

*After the healing conference, I gave the Ontario Provincial Police a booklet of testimonies. . . .*

He then says he was sitting in the office of Diana Fuller, the Crown's lawyer who was 'prosecuting all the St Anne's cases':

*"So, no students?" she asked. . . . I had asked her to limit the court case to only the staff, and not to prosecute any of the allegations of physical and sexual abuse committed by St Anne's students.*

*"No," I said. "It's not fair to them. Lots of them were just repeating the behaviour that they learned from the staff."*

That statement is unsubstantiated. An extensive Ontario Provincial Police investigation took place in the 1990's related to St. Anne's Indian Residential School.

Edmund Metatawabin sent his booklet of testimonies to the OPP after the healing conference in 1992 (*Up Ghost River*, p. 280). See also Jorge Barrera:

<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/st-anne-residential-school-opp-documents/>

The investigation began on Nov. 9, 1992, after Fort Albany First Nation Chief Edmund Metatawabin presented evidence to police following a healing conference attended by St. Anne's survivors. Over the next six years, the OPP would interview 700 victims and witnesses and gather 900 statements about assaults, sexual assaults, suspicious deaths and a multitude of abuses alleged to have occurred at the school between 1941 and 1972.

Investigators identified 74 suspects and charged seven people. Five were convicted of crimes committed at the residential school.

Edmund Metatawabin, who initiated the 1992 OPP investigation (see p. 280 of his autobiography, *Up Ghost River*), admits that his own memory is so faulty that he could not be used as a witness (see p. 282):

*Because of my memory lapses due to repeated trauma and alcoholism, they did not use me as a witness against Sister Wesley or Brother Jutras.*

According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Appendix 3, only one Catholic priest and one Catholic brother were convicted of sexual abuse in residential schools. Two Indigenous nuns were convicted of non-sexual abuse, one a Cree nun, the other an Ojibway nun. In other words, their 'own people', as Edmund Metatawabin put it about the Cree kitchen staff at St Anne's.

There were students who were assaulted by staff or administrators, but over the 113 years and 150,000 students, the ratio of such assaults, based on investigations, charges and convictions is on a par with contemporary ratios of sexual interference/assault in non-Indigenous public schools, health facilities and sports.

**Such acts are a devastating betrayal of trust of a small, defenceless child** – however there are opportunistic people in all sectors of society, willing to take advantage of the innocent or less able in many different ways.

Matt Walsh has recently issued a scathing review of Canada's ongoing search for unmarked graves and missing children at Indian Residential Schools. As more excavations of alleged secret burial sites come up empty-handed, his stance is that then "[Why should we believe you about anything else?](#)"

Let us not be so hard-hearted. The issue is not really about graves or bodies — it is about hearts and souls. It is about the emptiness of loss which many people are suffering. There is much to believe. And much to gently question.

**This statue is called "Emptiness" and was created by a grieving parent. It is a great attempt at describing how a parent feels after losing a child.**



<https://www.penwellgabeltopeka.com/Blog/6245/Melancoliesculpture>

Residential Schools as the source of the many tragedies and problems on reserve today, but historians with an eye for detail know that only 1/6th of all Indigenous children ever went to Indian Residential School, on average for 4.5 years. **That cannot be the source of the present-day problems.**

Thus, if psychologists are only considering Indian Residential Schools as the cornerstone of personal trauma and social decay, this approach fails to consider that there may have been physical and sexual abuse in the original home, unrelated to any person going to Indian Residential School.

Many recollections of former residential school students who describe themselves as 'survivors' say they entered the residential school at the age of 4 or 5 and that they were 'taken' there. This

The Indian Residential School is today presented as only harmful and indeed as genocide. This orthodoxy is now deeply embedded in nearly all aspects of Canadian society, including psychology — the helping professions may be helping spread myths about our history, deepening the wounds, widening the societal gap and defeating efforts at reconciliation. Any experienced historian looking at the paper "[Residential Schools And The Effects On Indigenous Health And Well-Being In Canada — A Scoping Review](#)" would be alarmed at the assumptions made about historical fact and the confirmation bias about all the problems assigned to Indian Residential Schools, rather than the obvious challenges on reserve such as overcrowding due to lack of housing, alcoholism, FASD, sexual abuse, criminal gangs, human trafficking, drugs and nepotism.

The theme of psychological views on Indian Residential Schools is that children who were physically or sexually abused there, then became abusers, and this explains the problems on reserves, typically described as 'intergenerational trauma.'

But, if you are a seasoned historian and archival researcher, many things do not ring true with many survivor stories. It is convenient for the public to blame Indian



*Image licensed from Adobe Stock.*

statement affirms the common statement that ‘children were forcibly removed’ from their families. For those pushing the genocide agenda, ‘forcible separation’ is one of the indicators of genocide.

But the minimum enrollment age for Indian Residential Schools was 7 and the parents voluntarily enrolled their children — unless the child was orphaned, or from a destitute or dysfunctional family. If so, the Indian Agent and school administrators waived that age barrier in favor of providing immediate care for a child in trouble. Thus, one can conclude there were serious issues in the family if a child entered at an age younger than 7. They may have been ‘taken’ if they were apprehended by child welfare to protect them from some other kind of harm at home. Likewise, children who attended Indian Residential Schools were sent home for the summer (that’s not what happens with genocides). But if a child would be at risk at home, or was orphaned, they did not go home for the holidays. This was for their protection. So, when some survivors say they did not go home for years, that’s why. Either they were orphaned, or going home might have put them in danger. Thus, they are ‘survivors’ of their own family, hard as that may be to acknowledge.

*Department of Indian Affairs Residential School Enrollment Form with Age Restrictions.*

Perhaps that harm at home was neglect...or physical or sexual abuse. In the home. Before residential school.

A colleague recently sent me a 2013 article showing that 40% of First Nations children in Alberta were [not in public school at all](#). Thousands of young Indigenous people drop out of high school, many do not have a driver’s license, leaving them essentially marooned on reserve and without a diploma, common requirements to even get an entry level job. Nor do they then have sufficient self-learning skills like reading or math to teach themselves new skills.

Again, in the same article Indian Residential Schools are blamed for the reticence to go to school. The reality is that 100 years ago part of the reason the residential school model proliferated was to address the problem of Indigenous children not attending day schools on reserve.

Graduates of Indian Residential Schools include some of the most accomplished First Nations people and many icons of industry, whether the farming and ranching success of Frank Red Crow back in the day (adopted son of [Chief Red Crow](#)), or the breathtaking architecture of [Douglas Cardinal](#). Other graduates simply found rewarding work in practical jobs or at home as parents.

The fact is it is **hard to go to school every day**. And it is **hard to go to work every day**. **You only achieve things in life with persistence, incremental learning and change — every day**. Residential schools made you go to school every day unless you were ill. Then you could rest in the infirmary.

So the question is, are psychologists aware of the vast education gaps on reserve? Are they persistently blaming Indian Residential Schools for intergenerational trauma, when much of the trauma is contemporary and more likely

the product of idle children who have little education but much time on their hands, bumping up against [criminal gangs](#) and perpetrators at home on reserve?

Are psychologists aware of what was said in 1998 in this [interview in Alberta Report](#)?

Mrs. Galloway believes that it is unfair to blame residential schools for the conditions found on many reserves. *“the suicide rates are very high, there is a lot of sexual abuse on the reserve; some of my siblings were sexually abused by band members. But my parents never attended a residential school, and they still had problems; my father lost his logging business because of drinking. A lot of these problems were present before the schools. When you put a group of people together in a small area like a reserve there will be problems. But it’s always easier to blame others.*

*“The real problem is lack of financial accountability,” insists Mrs. Galloway. “each year, Indian Affairs doles out \$13 billion to 680 reserves across Canada; and we don’t know where a lot of it goes. And now, with this apology, the government is handing out another \$350 million. When that money is gone, we’ll be having the same discussion in 10 years, and there will be the same excuses for more money.*

How prescient. Here we are 25 years later. Today [Canadians are now shelling out \\$60 billion in](#) various forms of compensation and reparations, and taxpayers were not even consulted about this. And that’s not the final tab.

In light of the vast media coverage of ‘unmarked graves’ (which quickly escalated to ‘mass graves’) many people feel this level of compensation is appropriate as they have not done the due diligence on this matter. Few Canadians understand how the ‘genocide’ claims have escalated. Indeed, some Indigenous activists want ‘land back’ as additional reparations for the alleged genocide, and groups like David Suzuki Foundation are advocating for that. [UNDRIP changes to Canadian law may end up facilitating that.](#) Most Canadians have no idea this is part of the agenda.

Again, experienced historians and archivists go to the records and there they find that, almost without exception, **EVERY CHILD MATTERED**. The child was accounted for, the child was registered, the child had a medical examination prior to being accepted into the school. If the child became very ill, they were sent on to hospital or a tuberculosis sanatorium, or if there was no hope, the child was sent home to be with family. If the child died at school, there was a medical certificate and, if the death was not from disease but injury or accident, there was an inquest. In most cases, the child was buried at home on reserve, though if distance or circumstances did not permit, they would have been buried with full Catholic rites (or other relevant denomination funeral rites) at the mission community graveyard.

People continue to claim that they have ‘4 or 5 family members’ who went missing at Indian Residential Schools. Simple question. If so, why did parents continue to send their children there after the first child (allegedly) went missing?

There is also a repeating *meme* in many commentaries that there was abuse by Catholic (less often Anglican) ‘*priests and nuns*’ throughout the mantra of Indian Residential Schools despite there being schools run by other denominations and also by the federal government. In fact Catholic priests are not notably more prone to exploit children; the most [predatory behavior is from sport coaches](#). Is this just convenient shorthand imagery for the cult of Catholic horror films that may have created some of the more bizarre memories claimed by former students, of babies being burned in incinerators? **Some of these former students also have a history of drinking and drug abuse which may have affected their memory.** Am I blaming the victim? No. I am challenging the psychologists. Don’t assume.



Are psychologists aware of the anti-Catholic bias of those promoting traditional Indigenous culture? Also from the 1998 Alberta Report article:

Mr. Lorenz believes that it is convenient for the native political leadership to overlook the positive side of residential schools. "victimhood gets money," he says simply, "and there are certain vested political interests who have no reason to say anything good about residential schools. If you're trying to get money, balance is not what you want." Mr. Lorenz also believes that adherents to native religions like to discredit Christianity by smearing the residential schools. "there are definitely some people who see Christianity as a rival religion. Those who spearhead the native spirituality revival are very hostile. If they can use the schools as a stick to beat the Catholics, they're going to use it. If someone says that the schools weren't so bad, they become pariahs; they sold out to the whites."



By Yiwahikanak — Own work, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2450591>

Some 500,000 Indigenous Canadians are Catholics; many rejoice in the weekly services, festive holidays, or events like the [annual pilgrimage to Lac Ste. Anne](#), for instance. Do psychologists support religious beliefs of their Indigenous clients, or do they hold a patriarchal, colonial '[Noble Savage](#)' perspective of all Indigenous people as the sole keepers of Mother Earth, eternally innocent and good hunter-gatherers with no future in hi-tech, parliament or even [outer space](#)?

And have psychologists and therapists unwittingly reinforced these inaccuracies by their persistent desire to blame all dysfunction on reserves on the legacy of Indian Residential Schools? With their best-intentioned methods, but lacking historical context, therapists are attempting to heal Indigenous people suffering from various painful experiences. In trying to draw people out from ASSUMED 'denial' related to Indian Residential School history, which is based on their own beliefs of what that constituted, not the facts of history, have psychologists been planting messages drawn from their own confirmation bias?

As American psychologist, David Raskin, testified in the Martensville, Saskatchewan Satanic Panic trials of the 1990s, with some prompting and leading questions from a person with confirmation bias about an event, people are able to remember all kinds of things that never happened.

**There is no doubt that some children were abused at Indian Residential Schools. They have not been ignored. It mattered.**

**Example:** Canadian taxpayers spent one million dollars in British Columbia between 1994 and 2003 as the RCMP investigated 14 schools, reports from 330 victims and 180 suspects with most complaints originating in the 1980s. However, those Indian Residential Schools were no longer being administered and staffed by 'priests and nuns'...that ended in 1969. That means the Federal Government was hiring secular teachers, or, as more likely, turning over operation of the schools to the local Indigenous bands. Ultimately, 14 individuals were charged with 148 counts of sexual assault and 11 of physical assault, resulting in multiple convictions. However, this report does not appear to be publicly available for some reason. If the reports have disappeared and Indigenous staff were on duty then who were the abusers in IRS in the Eighties? Is that being covered up? Or did the RCMP spend a million dollars of taxpayer's money on something of a wild goose chase on some of the more bizarre allegations about illicit babies thrown into incinerators, and in the process did track down some perpetrators?

Sadly, in real life, as the Missing and Murdered Women report found, the perps on reserve are often family or people in positions of authority, as in the sad case in [Manitoba of Lester Desjarlais](#). Child [sexual abuse is prevalent on reserve](#).

In working with damaged people, the first step is to let them tell their story and **believe them**. Sometimes they are telling the truth and sometimes they are telling a protective mythology that allows them to go on in life.

The next step is to carefully assess whether what has been said is verifiable fact, or if it is the story that a survivor of family or institutional abuse must tell themselves in order to continue.

As I have written elsewhere, [families often create myths](#) about what happened to their children in order to protect their relationships. Sometimes revealing the truth can be too painful or disruptive.

However, in terms of Canadian history, as a society we must not accept personal recollections at face value, especially when these unvetted recollections contribute to the destruction of society, create hateful ideology against a specific religion, or when they rewrite the history of this country.

**Thousands of students benefitted from and enjoyed their time at Indian Residential Schools.** Cancel culture and the 'OMERTA' on reserves where certain parties have significant financial interests riding on the genocide theme make it impossible for individuals to tell the positive side of the story without putting themselves at risk. This is a fact that psychologists should be aware of, and they must also be willing to consider that sexual abuse on reserve may stem from family members or other predators. It may be easier for a victim of abuse to blame residential schools because reserve communities are small and typically nepotistic. Being ostracized in a small community for speaking up will not win you any friends and no matter the issues, may put you or your family at [risk of serious harm](#); but if the therapist and client are not able to recognize the true source of victimization, it will also mean you can never properly heal the wounds or get to safety.



*Cowley, Alberta. Photo credit: Clive Schaupmeyer*

No amount of financial compensation from the government will fix that, either.

**I do believe Indigenous individuals and communities are suffering from serious [ambiguous losses](#).** Addressing these may be a more productive path of treatment than blaming Indian Residential Schools.

**Canada is not a nation of genocidal murderers and sexual predators. We are a nation of peacemakers and must make peace with this past.**

## ABORIGINAL INDUSTRY

For people unfamiliar with Indigenous issues in Canada, the thought of compensating people who were harmed in significant or lesser ways at Indian Residential Schools seems like the right thing to do, especially if the past involved mass graves and murder!

Even if people do not believe such claims, most people in Canada are also interested in a fair settlement for those who truly suffered and subsequent reconciliation. Canada enjoyed 150 years of ‘peace, order and good government’ until recently. Another ‘Shut Down Canada’ like that of the 2020 rail and road blockades will not advance the interests of anyone except those who want to ‘kill Canada.’<sup>82</sup> It is concerning that foreign funding may be driving these kinds of actions. As the Allan Inquiry/Alberta Inquiry into the Tar Sands Campaign against Alberta found, Indigenous crisis actors have been hired for \$100/day for protests, or \$300/day ‘with feathers’ – i.e., dressing in traditional Indigenous attire. In 2003, the US Library of Congress issued a report on Transnational Activities of Chinese Criminal Gang activities, noting:

*“Most of the illegal Chinese migrants who enter Canada move along into the United States, either overland or in container ships. The Akwesasne Mohawk Territory in northern New York, Walpole Island, Ontario at the west end of Lake Erie, and the Niagara frontier region at the east end of Lake Erie have been transit points into the United States from Canada for trafficking migrants and goods. Most of the illegal migrants coming into Canada from China originate in Fujian Province.”<sup>83</sup>*

Unfortunately, Canada has a thriving “Aboriginal Industry,” a term coined by Frances Widdowson and Albert Howard in their book *“Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry.”*<sup>84</sup> In effect, taxpayers, via Canadian government policies, are spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year, ostensibly to assist Indigenous communities to lift themselves up from poverty and despair; in fact, various elites, consultants, lawyers, and more recently, archeologists, are helping themselves to generous portions of this pie.

Meanwhile, most First Nations reserves struggle with lack of clean drinking water, insufficient housing, high unemployment and low education, all exacerbated by serious social problems like fentanyl addiction and overdoses, alcoholism, domestic violence, and child neglect. Money cannot solve all of these, but money diverted from necessary services just makes things worse.

The federal government set up an elaborate method of providing former students of Indian Residential Schools with substantial compensation. As the potential claims were so many, it was decided to provide a blanket ‘Common Experience’ payment of \$10,000 each, with additional increments for every year a person attended the school. No one had to testify to any harmful experience; just having attended a school, and having one’s presence confirmed was sufficient. For those individuals who may have suffered greater harm such as physical or sexual abuse, an Independent Assessment Process was devised, wherein a private conversation with qualified interviewers could lead to a determination of a higher compensation fee, ranging upwards of \$150,000 (perhaps more in some cases). Again, no cross-examination required.

Various layers of settlements were developed regarding which type of school a person attended – whether Indian Residential School (boarding at the school), a day scholar at an Indian Residential School (living at home but attending the school for learning), an Indian day school on reserve (a typical school with boarding at home), or attending an Indian Residential School as a day scholar far from home, and boarding with a family nearby. Some schools were administered by the federal government and some by provinces, further complicating matters.

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/csis-rail-blockades-assess-terrorism-1.6628584>

<sup>83</sup> <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA439847.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> [https://www.amazon.ca/Disrobing-Aboriginal-Industry-Indigenous-Preservation/dp/0773534210/ref=cm\\_cr\\_ar\\_p\\_d\\_product\\_top?ie=UTF8](https://www.amazon.ca/Disrobing-Aboriginal-Industry-Indigenous-Preservation/dp/0773534210/ref=cm_cr_ar_p_d_product_top?ie=UTF8)

To date, the compensation is ranging in the order of \$60 billion dollars. There are only 1.8 million aboriginal people in Canada and not all of them qualify for compensation payments for schooling, and not all attended these schools. These arrangements are being made with no parliamentary oversight.<sup>85 86</sup>

The biggest winner in all this are the law firms.

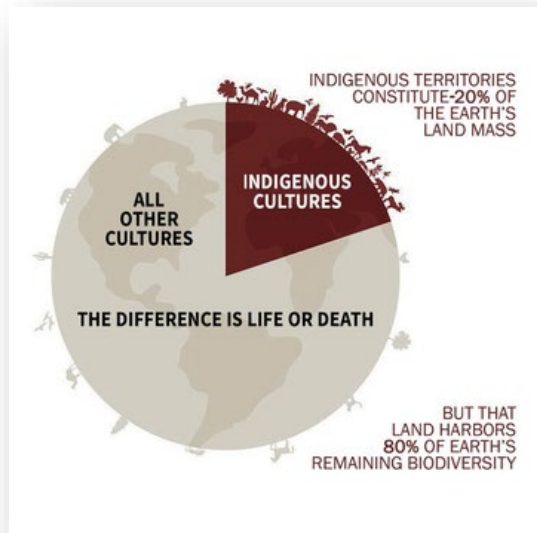
Maclean's magazine cites one firm stands to potentially earn \$100 million dollars: the clients? Not so much.<sup>87</sup>

The point? Obviously there are significant financial rewards at stake for some people, and some of these people have influential media contacts.

## NATURE CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Canada is a self-proclaimed climate leader in the world. At the same time, it has all the natural resources – energy, rare minerals, forestry, fresh water, fisheries and agricultural land that is the envy of every competitor nation in the world.

Indigenous peoples in general are proclaimed by the UN as having special inherited qualities as land, air and water protectors. Indeed, some 60% of the worlds undeveloped resources sit on aboriginal land.



Thus, with the temptation of First Nations 'land back' as reparation for genocide, or the lesser charge of crimes against humanity, there are hundreds of billions, potentially trillions of dollars riding on the premise that the Canadian landscape is littered with hidden graves of Indigenous children, that thus all the land is sacred, and the reconciliation and repentance required is to give the land back.

Piled on top of that is the climate movement. The 'land back' theme was expressed in the [2020 Nature Climate Solutions Summit](#), a meeting where all the climate activist ENGOs were present: "As part of a "how to save the earth" group, the Indigenous people gave a simple piece of advice: *"It's easy to save the earth: give it back to the red people."*

As a self-proclaimed climate leader, Canada is promoting the concept of "Nature-based Climate Solutions" – effectively turning Canada's natural wilderness into

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/article/canadian-taxpayers-not-consulted-about-massive-reparations-to-first-nations-people>

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/studies/from-reconciliation-to-reparations-exploiting-a-noble-idea>

<sup>87</sup> <https://macleans.ca/news/canada/white-mans-windfall-a-profile-of-tony-merchant/>

a large carbon credit operation and planning that Indigenous people will be the on-site managers.<sup>88</sup> Similar operations exist in British Columbia such as the Great Bear Rainforest – not just about saving the habitat of the rare white Kermode bear (and blocking tanker traffic off the West Coast) but also a carbon trading scheme.<sup>89</sup>

Hundreds of billions of dollars are at stake here, thus the genocide claim along with the ‘land back’ movement are other unseen hands behind the passion play of the phantom genocide.

## HAVE CANADIANS BEEN DEFRAUDED?

### Fraud

- **380 (1)** Every one who, by deceit, falsehood or other fraudulent means, whether or not it is a false pretence within the meaning of this Act, defrauds the public or any person, whether ascertained or not, of any property, money or valuable security or any service,
  - **(a)** is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding fourteen years, where the subject-matter of the offence is a testamentary instrument or the value of the subject-matter of the offence exceeds five thousand dollars; or
  - **(b)** is guilty
    - **(i)** of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or
    - **(ii)** of an offence punishable on summary conviction,where the value of the subject-matter of the offence does not exceed five thousand dollars.<sup>90</sup>

Some \$60 million was spent on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Some \$60 million has been dedicated to the development of an edifice to house the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) on the campus of the University of Manitoba. Likewise, operational and staff costs for the NCTR will come from taxpayers as it operates under the administration of the University of Manitoba. Significant grants have been doled out to genocide scholars and settler historians to distort the facts of Canadian history. Some \$320 million has been dedicated for graveyard investigations by First Nations. The enormous mass formation psychosis caused by unrelenting, inaccurate and hysterical media coverage (which is funded by Canadian tax dollars) means that most Indigenous communities are demanding funding for healing centres and psychological services.

On Oct. 23, 2023, the federal court approved a \$23 billion child welfare settlement.<sup>91</sup>

*This settlement is for the alleged failure of federally organized foster care. Foster care was set up because of the alleged failure of the Sixties Scoop. The Sixties Scoop took place because of the alleged failure of the residential schools. Residential schools were created because of the alleged failure of the day schools. Does anyone else see a pattern here? – Thomas Flanagan*

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/our-environment/nature-based-climate-solutions.html>

<sup>89</sup> <https://rabble.ca/environment/great-bear-rainforest-carbon-store-or-carbon-story/>

<sup>90</sup> <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-46/section-380.html>

<sup>91</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/10045834/first-nations-child-welfare-settlement-approved/>

In cities across Canada, tax-funded monuments have been raised or are in the process of being developed. In the City of Calgary, a \$1 million dollar allocation for such a memorial was recently announced. They plan to bronze the shoes that were never on the feet of the children who are not missing and bronze the Teddy Bears that were all part of another 215-shoe street theatre memorial at Calgary City Hall. Obviously no one did their historical or contemporary research. Teddy Bears were created in honor of Theodore Roosevelt, a man who hated Indians. Most of the shoes used in the display were likely made in China by Indigenous Uighur people who are experiencing and actual genocide.<sup>92</sup> They propose to place this *faux pas* at Fort Calgary, where Colonel Macleod is memorialized – the man who led the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) to stop the actual genocidal decimation of the Blackfoot Nation by whisky traders; to prevent the murderous US Indian Wars (1644-1924) from spilling into Canada.

I’m not a lawyer. Ask the question. Have Canadians been defrauded?

### GUATEMALAN FORENSIC TEAM HAVE A CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND MUST NOT WORK ON CANADIAN SOIL

It’s hard to believe that a conflict of interest exists between Canada and an organization tasked with forensic removal and identification of Guatemalans who were ‘disappeared,’ tortured, and murdered during the civil war in Guatemala which raged between 1960 and 1996. But there is one, in my opinion. And that is why, despite the offer by the [Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala \(FAFG\)](#) to help with the identification of alleged Indigenous bodies in unmarked graves across Canada, claimed to be evidence of genocide, the Guatemalan’s offer to help should be declined.

The Guatemalan group’s name appears in documentation which Kimberly Murray, Special Interlocutor on Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, sent to Jose Francisco Cali-Tzay, the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Human Rights, himself a Guatemalan, and in her interim report to the federal government. Murray was supposed to have been appointed to be objective and impartial in her position, but she states clearly in her report that she does not intend to be so.

Thus we have an agenda-driven Special Interlocutor communicating a biased and error-filled report with unfounded accusations of genocide to the UN Special Rapporteur. No wonder his parting remarks about Indian Residential Schools in Canada (following a 10-day visit in March of 2023) is that the schools constituted an “appalling legacy.” What can we expect of his upcoming report in September?

How can Jose Francisco Cali-Tzay make this judgement when there is no list of names of missing persons reported to the Department of Indian Affairs over the 100+ years of the operation of the Indian Residential Schools; no names of people whose identities and deaths are not documented if they were enrolled in an Indian Residential School?

There are many claims of missing school-mates by former students who are quite elderly now. Some have said “we used to make up stories about bodies buried in the orchard.” Stories of children? Now taken as gospel truth.

<sup>92</sup> <https://medium.com/@UndauntedArtz2/calgarys-colossal-historical-copycat-blunder-0746ee6daf30>

Indigenous family members have been surprised to find links to former residential school attendees, but these are people they did not personally know. One person has claimed her grandfather committed suicide at an Indian Residential School. Records show that boy was nine years old and had no descendants; he died from mistakenly eating a toxic weed confused for a similar country food.

Long-forgotten graves or surprise relatives, found by genealogy, do not constitute genocide.

The fact that wooden crosses have disintegrated over time has escalated to claims of genocide. However, there was no law preventing Indigenous people from keeping the graves of their loved ones in proper order. As these images from the graveyard on the Kainai Reserve, overlooking St. Paul’s Indian Residential School building show, some graves have been kept up nicely, some have not.





By contrast, a physical genocide occurs when people with known identities and addresses and who are of a specific race, social or political class, or religious persuasion, are taken by force with the intent to harm them in order to extract secrets or property, or with the intent to murder them and all their kind. Usually much later, after a regime change, mass graves of victims are found and the gruesome but humanitarian act of exhuming, identifying, and repatriating remains begins. That is genocide. Intent to murder, to hide the crime, erase the people, and make them disappear. This happened in Guatemala.

This never happened in Canada. Indian Residential School children were enrolled year after year by their parents and there was often a waiting list to get into the schools. Their parents were able to visit, and the children went home for summer vacation and some religious holidays (if they lived close enough, vis a vis travel time years ago). Children who were orphaned, in destitute or dysfunctional families could be accepted at an age younger than the 7-year-old enrollment standard. Many schools celebrated native culture; prayer services were often translated into native languages. This is not genocide.

Most schools also had Indigenous staff. Are people suggesting they covered up the alleged murders of their own people?



Due to Kimberly Murray's predictive pitch for them in her reports, and her erroneous murder claims filed with Cali-Tzay, the Guatemalan forensic group are in a real or perceived conflict of interest, in my opinion, and must not be allowed to participate in Canadian excavations. Because the agenda-driven insistence that there was a genocide in Canada — a physical genocide — in an Indigenous-led search, might shift from being imagined to being created by skilled forensic researchers if they also hold a similar Indigenous-led agenda-driven viewpoint.

No genocide. No FAFG required.

## PHANTOM STUDENTS OF GENOCIDE

The body of a former Indian Residential School student, in perfect shape, has been exhumed in northern B.C. The person was a student of the Lejac Indian Residential School. Her parents were also residential school students — they went to the Williams Lake Indian Residential School where they met, subsequently married and had a large family. In the Catholic tradition, their daughter's exhumed uncorrupted body is evidence of sainthood.

[Rose Prince](#) was one of nine children of Jean-Marie and Agathe Prince of the Nak'azdli Carrier First Nation. One of the first Catholic families of Northern British Columbia, Rose's father was known as "Church Chief" as he sang at Our Lady of Good Hope church. He worked as an interpreter for the priest and was custodian of the buildings.

*"When Rose turned six, her parents sent her to the school at Fort St. James, which was run by the Sisters of the Child Jesus, under the direction of Father Joseph Allard, OMI. Less than a year later, on January 16, 1922, Rose, with those of her siblings already in school, was included in the 75 children transferred from the Fort St. James School to the brand new Lejac Indian Residential School, built by the Canadian Government at the request of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Normally, she would have stayed there for her primary education, 10 years or so only interrupted by summer vacations. In fact, she will stay there all her life."<sup>[1]</sup>*

The outcome of her life in a residential school, a life of humility, piety, and modest kindness to all, resulted in the exultation of her body in death; her uncorrupted remains were exhumed in 1951 to move them to a new burial site. The new grave of Rose Prince has become a place of pilgrimage for people seeking healing, peace, connection with G-d, and renewal of faith.

Many people will not believe this story.

Some people have no faith in G-d.

Some reject the Catholic religion.

Others, like Tanya Talaga, whose [op-ed](#) in the Globe and Mail of May 12, 2023, accuse the Oblate Fathers who ran dozens of Indian Residential Schools, of 'sin' and of genocide.

Yet, many people will believe Tanya's claim of genocide with no physical evidence at all!

To date, no bodies have been exhumed to lend credence to this heinous accusation. To date, no one has produced evidence that any parents had children go missing and did not know what happened to them. Children who died were properly buried. In most cases, the parents signed the death certificates. Ground Penetrating Radar can only

identify ‘disturbances’ — not coffins or bodies. And even if other bodies are found in unmarked graves at or near former Indian Residential Schools, that is only indicative of death, not murder.

The body of Rose Prince has been exhumed. Her life is a testament to the compassion of the Oblate Indian Residential Schools. Contrary to claims that children were forced to attend, students were registered to attend by their parents. Parents could continue their work on the trapline or hunting, unhindered by little children. This is not genocide.

These schools also took in the halt, the lame, and the sick. This is charity, not genocide.

Robert Carney was a historian and former University of Alberta professor, and father of the well-known Mark Carney. In his peer-reviewed papers and in his review of the [1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples](#) he explained that residential schools were the local social services and medical hub, from their outset.

Indeed, Rose Prince was disabled with a painful back deformity. As she entered her teens, her sister died of pneumonia, her mother died of influenza while on the trap line in 1931, and her baby six-year-old sister died two years later. Rose elected to remain at Lejac Indian Residential School her entire life, humbly performing any necessary tasks and living her life in prayer.

Contrary to claims of cultural genocide at Oblate residential schools, many of the Oblate Fathers were fluent in Aboriginal languages. Some wrote dictionaries and created written forms of oral languages to ensure their survival. Rose Prince also brought her language into Christian prayer.

*“... with the help of a hymnal and a prayer book in the Dakelh language, that of the Carrier First Nations, she teaches the students to sing and pray in their own language. Even the sisters adapt to this initiative, and prayers and hymns alternate in Dakelh and English.”*

Rose Prince was diagnosed with tuberculosis later in life and died in Vanderhoof hospital in August of 1949 at the age of thirty-four.

By contrast, Talaga’s claims of genocide rests upon phantom students. ‘Possible unmarked graves’ is not proof of anything other than a phantom genocide.

## SETTLER HISTORIANS NEED MORE EDUCATION, LESS IDEOLOGY: REBUTTING SEAN CARLETON ON SENATOR BEYAK AND INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

### ABSTRACT

Canada, once honored worldwide as a nation of peacemakers, is presently accused of genocide by China; condemned as a colonialist purveyor of genocide by a bevy of self-described ‘settler historians’ within Canada. The focus of the alleged ‘genocide’ is the establishment of Indian Residential Schools and the outcomes thereof for some 150,000 Indigenous students over the course of ~100 years. The evidence of this alleged heinous crime is said to be in recollections published in the reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015, which, contrary to Carleton’s abstract, only claimed the schools constituted ‘cultural genocide’ – nothing more. Carleton (2021) assesses the instance of Canadian Senator Lynn Beyak attempting to provide diverse perspectives (typically positive) on Indian Residential Schools as a case of ‘residential school denialism.’ This work will provide historical

evidence rebutting Carleton (2021) which presented theories of ‘denialism’ but little actual historical evidence to support his case.

**KEYWORDS:** residential schools, denialism, settler colonialism, truth and reconciliation, history

## Introduction

*“So on the call for gratitude, I just want to express my own personal gratitude to all of you for the, what is it? Six hundred and twelve years you’ve dedicated to us. ‘Cause I’ve said many times that for me, I probably would have been found on skid row somewhere dead years ago had it not been for, had it not been for residential school.”*

*“And we’ve always said at the beginning that we need a balanced story. Sometimes those who have had a good experience in residential school stay back, because they’re intimidated by the level of negative stories.”<sup>93</sup>*

*-Chief Wilton Littlechild, Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission*

Indian Residential School history has become a topic of extreme contention in Canada ever since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee reports in 2015. These reports are widely touted as ‘the Truth’ by supporters and mainstream commentators and settler historians, however the recollections recorded in the reports are simply that – recollections – of aging adults who were between the ages of 4 and 15 at the time of their attendance at diverse Indian Residential Schools in Canada. The statements represent perhaps 4% of the number of attendees at Indian Residential Schools (approximately 150,000 students over ~100 years). Those 150,000 students attending these schools were only 1/6<sup>th</sup> of all Indigenous students, or 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all eligible ‘Status Indians.’

For outsiders, this delineation is confusing, but due to the fact that Canada made “numbered treaties” with diverse aboriginal bands across much of Canada (though not all), *prior* to inviting settlement, those Indigenous people who are registered under one of the numbered treaties are deemed to be ‘Status Indians’ with special rights afforded by the treaty. There are also other Indigenous groups in Canada – the Metis (an identifiable group of citizens who are part Indian, part Immigrant), and the Inuit, a separately identified group of Indigenous people who live in the high Arctic and who were never part of the numbered treaties.

The point is that unlike many bombastic claims, not ‘all’ Indigenous students attended Indian Residential Schools, thus it is curious that all the ills of present-day Indigenous society is directly attributed to these schools when most Indigenous children never set foot inside one of them; those who did attend were there on average for 4.5 years and went home to spend summers with family.

Regarding the numbered treaties, a key element of the treaties are passages wherein the Crown offered the option of education to Indigenous tribes; in reciprocal fashion, at treaty signings, or shortly thereafter, the tribal chief and council typically requested that there be an educational facility established for their children, so as to learn how to operate in the new and rapidly changing world. Early chiefs like Chief Crowfoot and Chief Red Crow were taken by train to Eastern Canada and shown the industrialized world there and given presentations by students who

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<sup>93</sup> At the TRC hearing with the Oblates in Saint Mary, Alberta, 2011: [https://archives.nctr.ca/uploads/r/National-Centre-for-Truth-and-Reconciliation-NCTR/b/d/b/dbd55ce8cf4e0d796702a1c4977255bba6b5dd6cd8eb5434889014710682dc051/SC012T\\_01.pdf](https://archives.nctr.ca/uploads/r/National-Centre-for-Truth-and-Reconciliation-NCTR/b/d/b/dbd55ce8cf4e0d796702a1c4977255bba6b5dd6cd8eb5434889014710682dc051/SC012T_01.pdf)

attended the Mohawk Institute, an industrial skills training centre, so they were well-aware of what the future held and embraced it. (Dempsey 2015; Smith 2017<sup>94</sup>)

Contemporary geopolitics has a role in this story. Layered upon the misinformation and historical distortions of the 'settler historians' is the fact that a further potentially devastating geopolitical element has arisen. China has taken the opportunity to accuse Canada of conducting genocide against Indigenous people.<sup>95</sup> Ostensibly this accusation is in retaliation for Canada and allies calling for an UN-led investigation into allegations of a Chinese genocide against the Uighur people of officially the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Canadian 'settler historian' narratives are thus aiding and abetting an aggressive foreign power play against their own country.

## Method

The absence of historical context in Carleton (2021) allows the uninformed reader to reach the wrong conclusions about why any person, especially a Canadian Senator, would argue that Indian Residential Schools have been beneficial to many, albeit harmful to some. This paper provides that historical context. Senator Lynn Beyak was a Canadian Senator who disputed the predominantly dark claims and the official government line<sup>96</sup> of the Truth and Reconciliation Reports (TRC), which were published in 2015 after a 6-year cross-country process, gathering recollections of former students, typically self-described as 'residential school survivors.' Beyak posted letters of support and testimonies of Canadians who also disputed the TRC narrative on her Senate website, some of which were deemed to be racist and insensitive. Beyak refused to take Senate-mandated anti-racism training and following two suspensions, she was ultimately removed from the Canadian Senate. Beyak has an adopted Indigenous sister.

Carleton simplistically presents Senator Beyak's arguments and those of her supporters as a heartless case of 'denialism' in the face of countless personal stories of anguish as retold in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports. Carleton employs the work of several social scientists to claim that 'deniers' use discursive methods to avoid dealing with the unpleasant, and in some cases, revolting treatment that some residential school students suffered, as a means of propping and legitimizing the 'material power, privilege, and profit' of the colonizers. This paper will set important historical context and provide countervailing evidence about the historical context of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's biases, and evidence of misleading the public in the recently released "*Sacred Responsibility: Missing Children and Unmarked Graves*" by Kimberly Murray, former executive director of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The evidence shows that Carleton (2021) is factually and logically flawed – a non-sequitur meant for the scrap-heap of academic study.

## Historical Context

Carleton (2021) fails to set any historical context, which is crucial for understanding the reason for the development of Indian Residential Schools and for determining if the intent was 'genocidal' or 'beneficent' or simply a matter of practicality.

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<sup>94</sup> <https://www.canadashistory.ca/explore/first-nations-inuit-metis/chiefs-journey>

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-canada-un-calls-investigation-crimes-indigenous-uyghurs-1.6075025>

<sup>96</sup> "In December 2015, the TRC released its entire 6-volume final report. All Canadians are encouraged to read the summary or the final report to learn more about the terrible history of Indian Residential Schools and its sad legacy." <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525>

## US Civil War 1861-1865; US Indian Wars 1622-1924

Canada was confederated as a country in 1867. The roots of Canada lay in economic and trade interests of Britain and France with the regional aboriginal people dating back to explorers John Cabot (1497), Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, and others. Both Britain and France were naval powers, a fact which greatly impressed Indigenous people (Miller 2012). Both countries were keenly interested in the fur trade, the pelts for which were provided by various Indigenous groups across Canada. Likewise, as early as 1832 Indigenous people like Chief Shingawauk were impressed with the new technologies of the Europeans and wanted to establish a “Teaching Wigwam” where Indigenous people could be taught equivalent skills, so as to become conversant with the language (for trade) and to be as technologically advanced as the newcomers. (Miller 2012)

These Indigenous groups were interested in the modern technologies and products offered in trade by the British and French ‘*courier de bois*.’ Along with trade came the Roman Catholic and Anglican (Church of England) missionaries (and later Methodist and United Church), eager to spread the word of Christ.

Some Indigenous people found commonalities between their own spiritual expression and that of the church (particularly the cross, which would relate to the native spirituality of the ‘four directions’).

In general, the newcomer Canadians had successful trade relations with Indigenous people; Metis were frequently the middlemen, guides, and translators.

However, at Confederation in 1867, Canada as a nation was just a handful of eastern provinces, the lower slices of modern-day Ontario and Quebec and a couple of maritime provinces – Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. West of Ontario lay Rupert’s Land and north beyond that were the North West Territories and further yet beyond the Rocky Mountains was British Columbia.

Canada’s existence was flimsy, especially because the US Civil War had not only violently rocked the southern neighbour, but it had also created a million-man standing army. Along with that enormous US military force (barely exceeded today with the contemporary 1.4-million-person US military) was the ongoing military conflict with the Native Americans resident there – the conflict known as the Indian Wars – the subject of countless Hollywood “Cowboys and Indians” movies and novels for decades. These Indian Wars had begun in 1622 (before the US declared itself independent of England on July 4, 1776) and continued on until 1924.

Sir John A. Macdonald was prime minister of Canada at Confederation, and he had a vision of the country as a great nation from ‘sea to sea.’ Thus, the US Indian Wars and the contingent US military might pose an existential threat to Canada, should those conflicts spill over the border.

US Indian Wars essentially sprang from the US settlers ‘staking a claim’ on land and then battling it out with any Native American who came by upon whose territory they had randomly settled. Gunning down an Indian incurred the wrath of the tribal brothers; gunning down a settler brought in the US Cavalry, and in this fashion, Indian Wars in the US slowly snaked their way across the country, always with the risk that the conflict might spill over the undefended northern border, or “Medicine Line” as it was known by Indigenous people. North of the line in Canada, good medicine – trade and commerce; South of it in the US, bad medicine – the cavalry, whisky traders, and smallpox.

Another economic consideration was crucial. The US was spending ~\$18 million/year on Indian Wars. That was Canada’s entire operating budget.

### The Buffalo

The Plains Indians relied almost entirely on the buffalo for all their needs – food, clothing, hand tools, shelter. With the advance of railways in the US, buffalo were seen as an impediment to industrial progress. These enormous animals were said to run in herds of thousands that could run for days on end without stopping. Trains had to stop and wait, often for days. Likewise, the US Cavalry and military recognized that Plains Indians would be disempowered if the buffalo were to be diminished – so they began a campaign of mass slaughter of the buffalo, effectively creating a form of food siege against the nomadic warriors.

Buffalo tongue was a highly prized delicacy among Europeans, the hides were used to make warm fur coats and the leather of the hides were in demand for belts for the pulleys and gears of the burgeoning industrial revolution in Europe.

With all these factors combined, from herds of some 60 – 100 million, through aggressive hunting of the buffalo, mostly in the US, the buffalo rapidly diminished over the course of two decades to perhaps 1,000 remaining animals by 1880. The Plains people faced starvation.

### **Rapacious Traders**

By the mid-1870's, in the south of what is today's province of Alberta, rapacious whisky traders had infiltrated from the US. This region of the plains had been jealously guarded by the Blackfoot Nation who were described with awe by authors at the time – "They were all highly intelligent, good hunters and fierce fighters." (Haydon 1900s)

French and British traders had conducted convivial and civil trade with diverse Indigenous tribes across much of Canada for nearly 300 years. Trading sessions typically began with ceremonial peace pipes and whisky, which was watered down according to the Chief's preference – meaning that these were not drunken exploitative sessions but a woodlands version of today's diplomatic cocktail event at a trade conference. By contrast, the whisky traders who infiltrated southern Alberta (modern day), were men who were typically battle-hardened former Confederate soldiers. Their world had been shredded by the US Civil War; they were just in the trade for the money. Their *modus operandi*, operating from Fort Whoop-up, was to proffer a tin cup with a rounded bottom, filled with a mix of whisky, strychnine, old tea, and turpentine to any Indigenous brave wanting to trade furs. The cup could not be set down between sips as it would spill, so the deadly mixture was consumed quickly. Rapacious trade ensued where furs, horses and even women were absconded with by the whiskey traders. Drunk, dying, and half-crazed bodies of braves littered the land.

To get a glimpse of the view of such traders at the time, this horrific quote is telling:

*"If we had only been allowed to carry on the business in our own way for another two years, there would have been no trouble now as to feeding the Indians, for there would have been none left to feed: whisky, pistols, strychnine and other like processes would have effectively cleared away these wretched natives."*

–Alexander Staveley Hill, former whisky trader who became a Southern Alberta rancher.

In 1873, the Benton Gang of Montana crossed the border into the Cypress Hills (southeastern region of modern-day Alberta), allegedly in pursuit of stolen horses. They left a barrel of whisky as a trap for the Assiniboine tribe camping there, and once the tribe was sufficiently numbed, they enacted a massacre of brutal proportions. News of this reached Ottawa and triggered the formation of the North West Mounted Police who came West the next year, a force of 300 men outfitted in bright scarlet red to differentiate them from a distance from the blue-coated US cavalry. Their mission was to get rid of the whisky traders, make treaties with the Plains people, to defend the border, and to prevent hostilities from spilling over the Medicine Line in either direction. In the US, settlement was progressing quickly across the country. It was inevitable that the same would happen in Canada – the intention was to avoid a situation of Indian Wars in Canada.

## Custer's Last Stand

On June 26, 1876, the US federal troops, led by General Custer, attacked a large Indian encampment at the Bighorn River in Montana, just 600 miles south of present-day Calgary, then the NWMP outpost of Fort Calgary. Custer and all of the men directly under his command were killed. In shock at the loss to a perceived inferior fighting force, the Americans poured more forces into the region, forcing many Lakota fighters to surrender.

In May of 1877, the victorious leader of the Indigenous fighters, Chief Sitting Bull, led his people north to cross the Medicine Line for asylum, presenting King George medals to the Mounties, claiming allegiance to the Queen.

This was an extremely risky situation. Many braves on the Canadian side wanted to join forces and cross the border going south to engage with the US Cavalry; Sitting Bull's presence on Canadian soil was certainly a tempting target for the US Cavalry to cross the border north and thus instigate the very Indian Wars that Macdonald and Macleod were attempting to avoid. The US saw Indians as hostile forces to be subdued by force first, negotiation second. By contrast, Canada saw Indigenous people as long-term trade and economic partners and indeed, in the early days of Canada as a British colony, various Indigenous tribes had even gone to war with the fledgling British-Canadians against the US, resulting in the famous mythology of the burning of the White House in the war of 1812.

Chief Crowfoot could clearly see the outcome of any such engagement south of the border would simply wipe out more of his people. Thus, by September 22, 1877, he was ready and willing to sign Treaty 7.

Effectively, the numbered treaties made Indigenous people wards of the state. Today, this is decried by settler historians and their ilk as a colonial impediment to full realization of Indigenous potential over the years. However, in the context of the time, and considering the very real possibility that other Indian War conflicts in the US might lead to the US Cavalry making an incursion into Canada, this status would have offered further legal protection to those Indigenous people who were signatory to the numbered treaties.<sup>97</sup>

## The Numbered Treaties

"The Mounties" (North West Mounted Police (NWMP), today known as Royal Canadian Mounted Police – (RCMP)) had run the whisky traders out of Southern Alberta and stopped the merciless trade, establishing law and order. They had been preceded by various Roman Catholic fathers who had set up missions across the plains. Many Indigenous people had already chosen Christianity, impressed as they were by these courageous Oblate fathers who had great personal stamina and charisma, who travelled alone with perhaps one or two Metis guides, and who were endlessly curious about Indigenous ways. It was these early missionaries who developed syllabic 'alphabets' to transcribe the hither-to-only-oral Indigenous languages; it was they who created dictionaries to preserve the spoken word for all time. It was also they who convinced the Blackfoot and Cree nations, traditional enemies, to stop warring against each other.

Smallpox had devastated the Native American tribes and it had shown no mercy as it swept into Canada.

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<sup>97</sup> [Author comment: Ironically, this is directly in contrast to how Hitler operated his genocide against the Jews. Jews were specifically transported to work and concentration or death camps across Europe, far from their nations, so that they would not have any civil rights nor any sovereign body or institution that they could call upon to protect them.]

Chief Crowfoot and others could see the future for their people would be bleak or non-existent without some means of support and some method to ensure that young people could learn skills for the changing world. Contrary to narratives by settler historians and others, who infantilize early chiefs and claim the Indigenous leaders who negotiated treaties 'didn't know' what they were signing, those chiefs were very experienced negotiators and their tribes had vigorously defended their own territories against other tribes for thousands of years.

Some insights from "The Great Blackfoot Treaties" by Hugh Dempsey. (2015)

Excerpt from the Forward:

*"This book had its beginnings at an Indian Association of Alberta meeting in 1951 when, as a reporter for the Edmonton Bulletin, I was left wondering why all the speakers placed such an emphasis on Treaties. Obviously, they were important, as they were associated with Queen Victoria, but that was almost seventy-five years ago. Surely, they were of no particular importance in 1951. Yet, as I listened, I came to realize that the Treaties were more than just pieces of paper. They were promises upon which the whole future of the Native people ultimately depended. The Natives gave up their rights to their hunting grounds, and in exchange the government took on the responsibility for their future. Buffalo hunters had to be taught how to become farmers or ranchers, and education was needed if their children were to survive under the new order."*

## Settlement

With the treaties signed, Canada was able to begin construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to thus arrange for British Columbia (BC) to come into Confederation (BC had demanded that a wagon track be built as its price for entry), to reach the mineral resources and timber of the west, and to bring farmers to the now empty plains which the buffalo once ruled and the nomadic tribes had freely roamed.

During the early settlement period on the Canadian prairies, many American farmers made their way north, bringing their Indian-as-enemy world view with them. At one point the Mounties were asked by a settler that if an Indian stole cattle, could the settler just shoot him? Of course the answer was 'no' and to his surprise, the American settler was told he would be charged with murder in such a case. Thus, the case for separation on reserves also had some merit from a personal security perspective for Indigenous people.

## Treaty Chiefs Travel East to See the New World

In 1886, Sir John A. Macdonald invited chiefs of Saskatchewan and Alberta who had remained loyal during the North West Rebellion to tour the east.<sup>98</sup> The conflict of 1885, centered on the Saskatchewan Rivers, was called the "North West Rebellion" and that is the uprising that the Blackfoot Chiefs chose not to support, as it was a Treaty promise that they had made in 1877. Chief Crowfoot [**Isapo-Muxika** / ᓂᓴᓂᓴᓴᓴᓴ] and Chief Red Crow [**Mi'k ai'stoowa**] were among those promised a trip east by train to see the new world. There they were shown the cities, towns, farms and industry of the east. They were given a tour of the Mohawk Institute, a residential school.<sup>99</sup>

*"The Plain's visitors learned that two recent female graduates had begun their careers as schoolteachers, and two male graduates had obtained work, one as a carpenter, the other as a blacksmith."*

<sup>98</sup> North West Rebellion – corrected from previous versions which mistakenly referred to the Red River Rebellion

<sup>99</sup> "Chief's Journey" in Canada's History by Donald B. Smith. (Sept 5, 2017)



*"Each of the chiefs was presented with a pair of mittens made by the pupils...and Red Crow was so delighted with them that he wore his on the way home."*

*"The Mohawk Institute impressed the Plains visitors...Red Crow returned convinced that education could help solve his community's problems."*

Chief Red Crow freely chose to send his son Shot Close (renamed with the anglicized name: Frank Red Crow) to the St. Joseph's/Dunbow Industrial School in 1894, 10 years after it had opened. By doing so he bypassed local boarding schools established on his Reserve...St. Mary's (Catholic) in 1888, and St. Paul's (Anglican) in 1889. Both offered an academic course of studies. Frank consented to his father's wishes thereby retaining his dignity, identity and freedom. He agreed to receive a Catholic education at Dunbow.

Frank Red Crow learned to speak English but not at the expense of his Native tongue. He was fluently bilingual and could communicate efficiently in two worlds.

The clever Chief even provided a convincing rationale for the segregation of students...but for a short time only! Red Crow likened sending youth away from home for an education to warriors and hunters leaving their base camp to form war parties and hunting forays out on the prairies...a time that would mature them with wisdom and confidence. The goal, of course, always being to arrive safely back at home with good things to share. What a metaphor!

As Hugh Dempsey passes on the thinking of Red Crow, let us ponder his words,

*"...but just as warriors spent months away from home, gaining the prestige and knowledge needed to sustain them in later years, so did his son need the white man's education." <sup>100</sup>*

#### **"Learn to Code"<sup>101</sup>**

If framed in today's terms, Indigenous people were facing a massive transition – a Great Reset of their world. They were being forced to 'learn to code.' Indian Residential Schools – often industrial schools – were created to teach practical academic and income-earning skills to students. It was an enormous leap for many because of the associated cultural changes, the transition from living in a strictly oral culture as hunter-gatherers living off the land, to one which is sedentary, agro-industrialized, and which relies heavily on the written word and math. Students were required to learn the English or French language, and possibly also learn the written form of one's own oral language, previously unavailable to Indigenous people. Living patterns at Indian Residential Schools also included the teaching of the complexities of social norms in Anglo-Saxon or Francophone societies, along with new methods of personal hygiene and medical treatments further challenged students. Harsh physical discipline for small offences was foreign to most tribal societies but common to Western society and there are ample records showing that some residential school employees or administrators were predatory or sado-masochistic. However, such terrible abuses of a child's trust were not unique to Indian Residential Schools in the context of the time

<sup>100</sup> "Red Crow: Warrior Chief" by Hugh Dempsey. (1980).

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.newsweek.com/joe-biden-new-hampshire-campaign-code-1479913>

(Carney 1998). The Western view of children at the time was that they were simply small versions of adults, and thus were typically bluntly treated as such.

Many graduates of Indian Residential Schools went on to have rewarding careers, with some becoming teachers on reserve. Thus the Indian Residential Schools created a crop of Indigenous people skilled in the ways of the future world, who could pass that information on to the thousands who did not attend such schools. However, many Indian Residential School attendees only went there for an average of 3-4 years. Many former students foundered, caught between the new world they had experienced and the old world back home, feeling that they had no place in either.

Settler historians and many public figures like Murray Sinclair, former judge and Canadian senator and chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have falsely claimed or intimated that ALL Indigenous children were 'forced' to go to Indian Residential Schools, and suggest that all were there for years, as if in 'jail.' However, only 1/6<sup>th</sup> of all Indigenous children ever attended Indian Residential Schools. Children had to be voluntarily enrolled by their parents. The minimum age was 7 years unless the child was an orphan, from a destitute or dysfunctional family, in which case the minimum age was waived in favor of providing immediate assistance to the child. Children were given a medical examination prior to entry; those with TB or suspected symptoms resided in make-shift separation at the schools. At some Indian Residential Schools there was a floor reserved for those children with TB symptoms.

Children were often allowed to speak their own languages on the playground or between classes, but in some cases the children were punished for not speaking English. Policies appeared to have varied widely from school to school. While part of this may simply have been due to the strict disciplinary measures, in other cases the policy was meant to prevent secret conversations, rude remarks, or antagonism between students of different Indigenous tribes, especially those who were formerly at war. Generally speaking, in polite post-Victorian society, it was (and still is) considered rude to conduct a conversation in a different language in front of those who cannot understand what you are saying (unless doing live translation), so it was also a matter of social practice and job-placement preparation.

Since some residential schools were located on reserve, children frequently saw their families. For those who lived far away, they were given government paid transportation home for the summer months. Thus, the claims of a 'cultural genocide' over the alleged loss of culture and language is not supported by the evidence. Indeed, Carney (1998) reported that children who attended the Fort Chipewyan school were fluent in four languages, English, French, Cree and Slavey.

### **Tuberculosis – the Forgotten Plague**

Much has been made of the death toll at Indian Residential Schools as being due to the schools themselves being crowded, poorly ventilated, with substandard food rations and poor hygiene, leading to a spread of Tuberculosis (TB). According to Carney (1998)<sup>102</sup> when compared to death rates from TB for children on reserve, where such records were kept the children at Indian Residential Schools fared much better in terms of survival: *“for the attendance area of Sacred Heart Residential School at Fort Providence around the same time, the evidence is that deaths of children from tuberculosis were higher at the community level than at the school. Sacred Heart, like many of its counterparts, was the sole medical facility in the region where in-patient health care was available. The above accounts of the schools' many-faceted roles were corroborated in pupil records throughout the system's history.”*

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<sup>102</sup> [https://michellestirling.files.wordpress.com/2023/03/review-article\\_-canada\\_-royal-commission-on-aboriginal-peoples.pdf](https://michellestirling.files.wordpress.com/2023/03/review-article_-canada_-royal-commission-on-aboriginal-peoples.pdf)

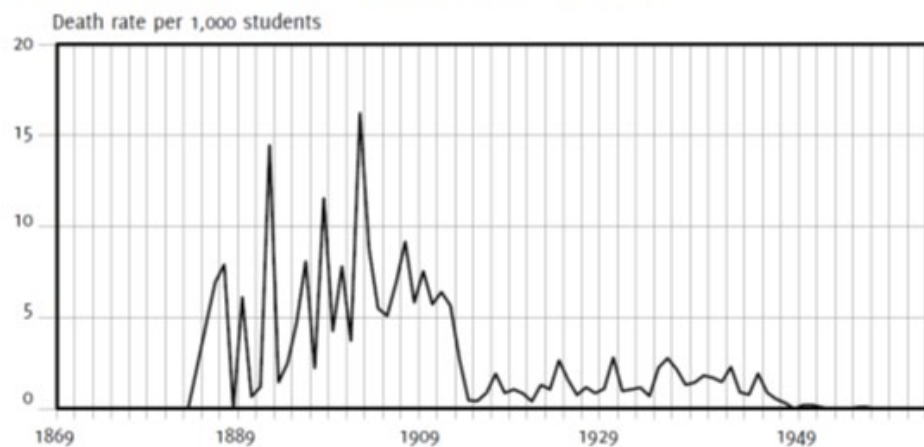
In fact, tuberculosis was ‘captain of all these men of death’ throughout the world until about the 1950s and the advent of vaccines and streptomycin and related treatments. Prior to that, the best-case scenario was to be admitted to a sanatorium where long months or years of strict inactivity, painful treatments like collapsing of a lung, force feeding of a highly nutritious diet, and monotonous social isolation from loved ones may have saved the physical life of the patient, but often destroyed the psyche and social networks.

In Canada in 1908, one Canadian died of TB every hour of the day, and two every hour of the night. (Wherrett 1977). Estimated population of Canada in 1908 was 6,625,000<sup>103</sup> so about 13,140 people were dying annually of TB. Consider these numbers in context of COVID-19 deaths in 2021 in Canada of 53,147 in a population of some 37 million<sup>104</sup> with access to modern healthcare, good nutrition, and good hygienic practices/modern sanitation.

Indigenous communities were seriously affected by TB, as they are today. During Captain John Palliser’s survey of the US-Canada border in 1869, he had noted that scrofula was present amongst aboriginal tribes, which is a precursor to TB. Buffalo is known to be carriers of bovine tuberculosis. The transition from a largely meat-based ‘keto’ diet, nomadic life and living in open air tents to a sedentary camp life or communal living in cramped housing exacerbated the rate of TB among Indigenous people. According to Bryce (1907) no child admitted to the schools was free of TB however, orphans and children from destitute or dysfunctional homes could not be refused entry as they had no other place to go; many young children who appeared to be free of the disease likely had latent TB if they came from an infected home.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report acknowledges that over 60% of the deaths at Indian Residential Schools were due to Tuberculosis; the next highest cause of death was influenza.

**Graph 5**  
**Residential school tuberculosis death rates per 1,000 population,**  
**Named and Unnamed registers combined, 1869–1965**



Source: Rosenthal, "Statistical Analysis of Deaths," 97–99.

Source: Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reports

There was no public health system in Canada until well into the 1960’s, by which time Indian Residential Schools were closing and children were being integrated in common public schools. Also by this time the threat of TB was

<sup>103</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/98-187-x/4151287-eng.htm>

<sup>104</sup> <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/>

greatly reduced in all sectors of society except Inuit communities in the high Arctic where it remains high to this day.

### Location of death

For 1,391 of the 3,201 deaths (43.5%) on the Named and Unnamed registers combined for the period from 1867 to 2000, there is no known location of death. Table 4 reports on the location of the 1,810 deaths for which there is a known location of death.

**Table 4. Location of residential school deaths, 1867–2000.**

| Location         | Named Register | Named and Unnamed Registers Combined |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| School           | 423            | 832                                  |
| Hospital         | 400            | 427                                  |
| Sanatorium       | 43             | 43                                   |
| Home             | 300            | 418                                  |
| Other Non-School | 75             | 90                                   |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>1,241</b>   | <b>1,810</b>                         |

Source: Rosenthal, "Statistical Analysis of Deaths."

*Source: Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report – note that only 423 students are confirmed to have died while at the schools. The 'unnamed' register is thought to contain many duplicate names due to errors in transcription. These numbers apply to the 150,000 attendees over the course of 113 years.*

### Context of the Times

Life was precarious in the early days of Canada. One of Canada's most famous characters is the fictional orphan, Anne of Green Gables. It was common for children to be orphaned, whether born to rich or poor parents, no matter the race. In Anne of Green Gables case, the fictional parents died of typhoid fever and the housekeeper took in Anne, then a baby of 3 months. However, when the housekeeper's husband died, she was unable to care for her own children and Anne was sent on to an orphanage.

As noted in "The Indian Today"<sup>105</sup> published in the 1960's "Residential Schools - these are boarding schools for homeless children, orphans, children whose parents are in hospitals, who are unable to care for them."

*One need only read this sad story in Eric Bays' book, "Indian Residential Schools: Another Picture." Bays explains that at the Hudson's Bay trading post at Albany, a father showed up saying there was no food in the family tent and that his wife was ill. The father then died. The Hudson's Bay sent out men with food, only to find the family in a tent, the mother deceased with five children around her. A two-month-old baby was given up to a relative, the 16-year-old joined other relatives on a hunt, and the remaining three children, a boy and two girls, came to the residential school. During a flu epidemic, the youngest of the three died at the school.<sup>106</sup>*

This type of family devastation and loss of life was common from the inception of Indian Residential Schools, which became the social services hub of the day. This example also gives an inkling of why many Indigenous people are filled with a sense of missing people due to these 'ambiguous losses.' In the vignette above, five people disappeared from that Indigenous community that day. Two of them, the parents, died. It is unknown where they were buried or by whom. The two-month-old baby was unofficially adopted relatives while the 16-year-old joined

<sup>105</sup> [R32-764-1969-eng.pdf \(publications.gc.ca\)](#)

<sup>106</sup> <https://michellestirling.com/2023/07/28/ambiguous-losses-epidemics-orphans-and-unmarked-graves/>

another group of relatives on a hunt. Overall, the only story going forward in the collective mind of these Indigenous people would be that the baby's three little siblings vanished into an Indian Residential School and did not return. The public archive records show that many Indigenous children were orphaned and rescued by residential schools – a lifeboat in a stormy sea of life.

That discipline at Indian Residential Schools was strict may have been reflective of the times as recorded in Rothman's "Shadow of Death" wherein, referring to diaries and letters, the author traces the life of a mother suffering from TB. The woman was a strict disciplinarian and forced her children to do household tasks, intent on instilling self-discipline, polite manners, and useful skills in her children. She was hoping that if she died of TB, then as orphans, her children might be taken in by family member or friend as useful domestics. Indeed, in the days prior to modern TB treatments, people's lives were often planned around or ruled by fear of contracting TB or by the challenges of living with TB – either in themselves or in family members.

Canada's Indian Residential Schools-as-orphanages at least maintained cultural and family ties where possible. By contrast, in the Anglo-Saxon world of Britain, between 1945 and 1974, orphaned or impoverished British children were scooped up by the Bernardo orphanage operations and over 150,000 were shipped off to British colonies like Canada to work as domestics or farm labourers. Most of these children never saw any family members again and few ever returned to Britain. Though some found suitable work placements and welcoming families, many were abused and beaten, neglected or abandoned.

During the Spanish Flu epidemic (1918-1920), vast numbers of children were orphaned as the disease hit young adults – parents - hardest of all. During the 3 deadliest months of 1918, for example, New York City reported 21 000 new orphans<sup>2</sup> and Pennsylvania reported 45 000.<sup>4 107</sup>

From this time period, there are records of mass graves for victims of Spanish Flu at Indian Residential Schools, simply because in those cases, there were too many bodies and not enough gravediggers. However, there was no nefarious intent, and these matters are diarized and documented accordingly by people at the time.

### **Settler Historians Rewriting History with an Agenda**

A clear example of settler historians rewriting history occurred on National Indigenous People's Day, June 26, 2023. One settler historian was tweeting about well-known Indigenous people and their personal stories. Two of the people were Chief Dan George and Richard Wagamese. The settler historian claimed in both places that they were 'forced to go to residential school.' In fact, Chief Dan George was enrolled at too-young an age because, according to his story, he and his older brother were inseparable, so the father enrolled the two of them together. While Chief Dan George related that he was at first terrified of the nuns and fathers in their sweeping gowns, he soon came to love learning and he actually cried when, at age 16, he was forced to leave Indian Residential School (due to this being the cut-off age for government funding at the time) because he knew he needed more education. During his schooling, George and his brother went home every two weeks to spend the weekend with family.

Regarding Richard Wagamese, the sad story is that his mother and extended communal family left him, a toddler barely 3 years of age, with a group of other older children at their tent campsite in winter while the adults all went drinking in a town about 50 miles away. The children quickly ran out of food and wood for the fire, so they made their way to a small town where, freezing and starving, the local police picked them up and rescued them. Thus,

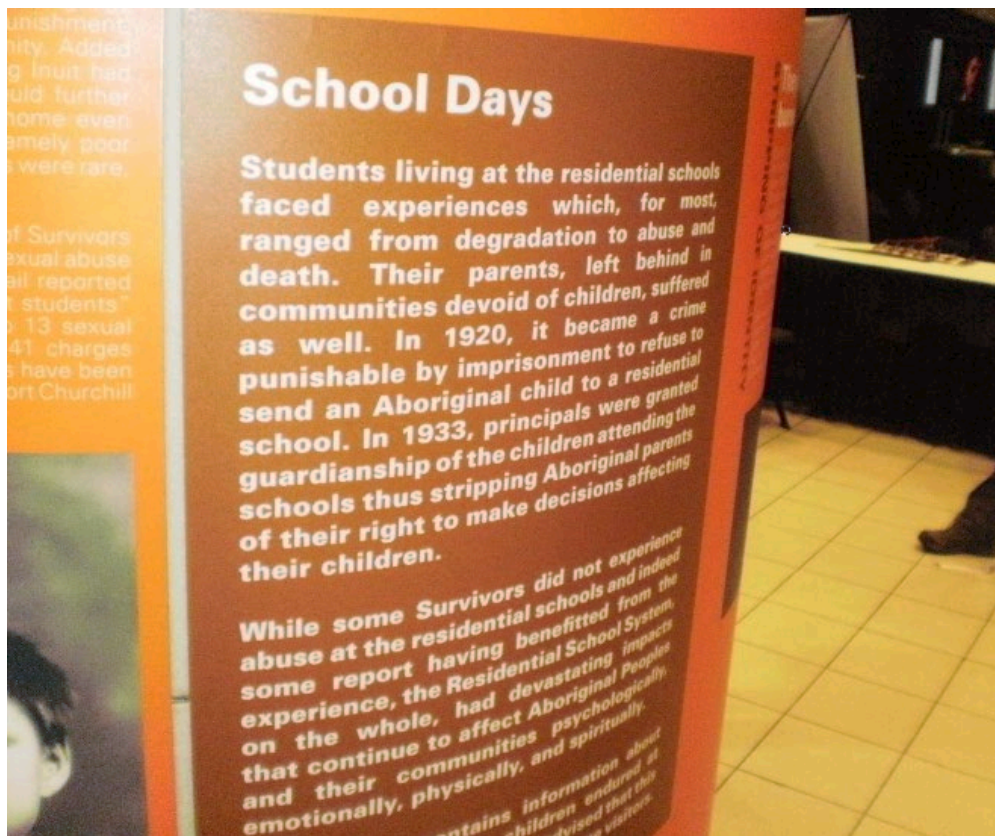
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<sup>107</sup> <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article-abstract/151/2/e2021054525/190462/Caring-for-Pandemic-Orphans-The-Spanish-Flu?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

Richard was 'forced' to go to (or rescued by?) foster homes....by his parent's negligence, not by the Canadian government. Sadly, some of his foster homes were abusive. He did not reconnect with his biological mother until he was about 21. She had been a student at an Indian Residential School, but Wagamese reported she had nothing but praise for what the school had taught her, that she was strong in her faith and that her house was spotless, her yard well-kept, being the only one in that condition on her reserve. Despite the difficulties and abuse that Wagamese suffered at many of the foster homes he was bounced into over the years, he was ever grateful for having learned how to write and made a career of telling his own and other Indigenous stories and perspectives, both as an author of books and as a journalist.

### Truth and Reconciliation Bias

The name of the "Truth" and Reconciliation Commission leads one to believe everything published is the truth and without bias. However, the kiosk at the entryway to these events had this opening statement: "Students living at the residential schools faced experiences which, for most, ranged from degradation to abuse and death."



Source: Photo of kiosk at one of the TRC events illustrating the inherent bias and distortion of historical fact of the proceedings in the opening statement. Many children enjoyed and benefitted from their residential school experience and no community was devoid of children. Aboriginal parents did have agency and there are records of some parents summarily removing students from school due to poor food or treatment. Parents had to voluntarily enroll and apply for admission for their children to attend the schools; there was often a waiting list. The 1920 laws regarding truancy were instituted to align with off-

*reserve, non-indigenous truancy laws. The mandate was rarely enforced. Likewise, all schools then and now become 'locus parentis' for children. (Image contributed by a former residential school student and used with permission.)*

However, to have the 'truth' one must have the whole truth. According to J. R. Miller's "Residential Schools and Reconciliation" which was published by University of Toronto Press in 2017, concerning the Truth and Reconciliation Process: (pg. 230)

*"Although the commissioners frequently said they wanted to hear from school staff and other non-Native peoples as well as former students, the oral record that the commission collected was composed overwhelmingly of survivors' statements.*

*"Indeed, the professional historian on the TRC staff [Helen Harrison] said that the commissioners' actions 'were not consistent with its claims to wish to include non-Aboriginal voices on the record.'*

*"Indeed, her budget for the project on school staff was cut from \$100,000 to \$10,000 and she was told that the Commission would not transcribe the interviews she had conducted. Thus, very few former staff came forward to speak publicly."*

Indeed, many of the Sisters and Brothers who worked at the Indian Residential Schools were too frail to testify; many had passed on, but those still living recounted tales of positive experiences and expressed a great love for their former students, one which was often mutual.<sup>108</sup>

### **The Mystery of Unmarked Graves and Claims of Genocide**

On April 22, 2013, Western Catholic Reporter published an article in which Marie Wilson, commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission claimed that thousands of children who died at Indian Residential Schools were buried in unmarked graves across Canada.<sup>109</sup> No substantiating evidence was offered for this statement. Other influential Indigenous leaders, include former Senator and judge Murray Sinclair have made similar claims, making estimates of 10,000 to 25,000 'missing children' in unmarked graves. Again, no evidence has been offered to support this claim. Raymond Frogner, archivist for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation says: "He also anticipates the number of children on the death register will increase at "least by five-fold."<sup>110</sup> Statistically, based on the number of children attending residential schools, this would be an impossibility.

If we examine the number of claimants for the "Common Experience Payment" (CEP - a compensation of ~\$20,000 paid to any party verified as having attended a residential school, there were 103,203 applicants for the CEP.

<sup>108</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20230224000538/https://www.wcr.ab.ca/This-Week/Stories/entryid/899>

<sup>109</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20221202184751/https://www.wcr.ab.ca/This-Week/Stories/entryid/3966>

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/residential-school-children-deaths-numbers-1.6182456>

In addition, there was a separate compensation program for those who also claimed significant abuse which is called the “Individual Assessment Payment” for which some 31,103 former students claimed abuse of some sort.

Therefore, 30% of those who attended Indian Residential Schools claimed abuse. Only some of that abuse would have been sexual. Perhaps only a fraction; this is unknown as the private testimonies are sealed. People may have claimed unduly harsh or revolting punishments.

Therefore, of the 150,000 Indian Residential School students (as estimated by the government), 103,203 of them were still alive in 2007.

This means 69% of the students who attended an IRS institution over a period 113 years, were still alive 124 years after the first government-funded schools were established.

Thus, the claim of ‘genocide’ is false.

Likewise, there are no historical documents such as missing persons reports that would substantiate such claims of genocide.

In May of 2021, the Kamloops band announced that Ground Penetrating Radar had discovered 215 unmarked graves in the orchard. International media quickly picked up on this shocking story and soon it had morphed from ‘unmarked graves’ (quite common in abandoned historic cemeteries) into ‘mass graves’ – the icon of genocidal murder. Suddenly, in sequence, a number of other First Nations bands across Canada discovered unmarked graves, usually in old community cemeteries where one would expect to find graves; unmarked after a century as wooden crosses and headboards disintegrated.

None-the-less, based on such claims, an outraged ‘*No pride in genocide*’ movement has grown in Canada. The federal government has granted some \$340 million to First Nations for graveyard analysis and presumably digging. So, many are engaged in Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) analysis, typically directed by elders and Knowledge Keepers. This is a boon to Canada’s archeology industry<sup>111</sup> as described by the Globe and Mail:

*“Beginning in the early 2000s, meanwhile, a series of court decisions reaffirmed the Crown’s duty to consult with and accommodate Indigenous peoples in the course of development, leading to a boom in archeological consulting, with professionals such as Mr. Racher increasingly called on to establish the heritage value of sites across the country.*

*That produced a bumper crop of contracts – Mr. Racher, who used to be a part-time Volkswagen mechanic and furnace installer, now has a staff of dozens – but it also created a sea change in the way archeologists thought about their relationship with Indigenous people.*

Most of the claims of unmarked graves rely on the recollections of elders and Knowledge Keepers, some of whom claim to have witnessed midnight burials of children nefariously murdered by priests and nuns. Most of these accusations appear to stem from a popular ‘underground’ movie by defrocked United Church minister Kevin Annett, along with his self-established Potemkin organizations doing international human rights investigations. Likewise the written works of American author/activist Ward Churchill such as “Kill the Indian, Save the Man,” “Struggle for the Land,” and “A Little Matter of Genocide” along with various academic scholars (whose works are devoid of historical context presented herein) have been conflating the Jewish Holocaust under the Nazis as equivalent to attendance at Indian Residential School. These ‘settler historians’ have created their own cottage

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/excavating-canadas-past-with-a-newly-critical-eye/article37682921/>



industry and have fueled a kind of death cult in Canada, one that is difficult to reason with; as a corollary the Indigenous community has adopted a 'street theatre' version of Jewish Holocaust victims, calling residential school students 'survivors,' using pairs of shoes as street art to depict the missing children (echoing the Auschwitz display of thousands of shoes of Holocaust victims) and demanding compensation. In fact, to date it appears that financial compensation for Indian Residential School students is topping that offered to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. It appears that the fascination with the theme of 'genocide' is related to an ardent wish for the 'land back' of all of Canada.

Fundamentally, the tragedy of this situation can be found in opposing world views where Western society relies on evidence-based documentation and rule of law which requires an accuser to name the alleged perpetrator and then face them in court while Indigenous society relies on the oral history of Knowledge Keepers and elders and Indigenous law – which is not consistent across the 630 tribes of Canada. While these elders are undoubtedly the storehouse of traditional Indigenous culture, due to the 'telephone game' effect of unfounded rumors and suspicions expanding into nightmare scenarios of nefarious priests and nuns, it is difficult for a traditional culture to rely on Western societal documentation, and equally difficult, in an honor-based society, to confront an elder with the possibility that their memory is false or distorted. Widdowson (2021) addresses this conflict between the Western Scientific Method and Indigenous Traditional Knowledge in her work on "Indigenizing the University." Armstrong and Green (2022) discuss the scientific method as a means for finding useful knowledge. This is the anti-thesis of community storytelling.

These competing world-views are creating a psychological, social, emotional and practical gridlock in Canada on Indian Residential Schools and unmarked graves where one party is tied to the culturally defined norm of deferring to elders and their oral histories, and the other party relies upon centuries old development of the Scientific Method based on evidence, repeatable experiment, and in the case of legal matters, centuries of case law and precedents.

As this author has written elsewhere regarding the English River First Nation press conference about GPR findings at the Beauval Indian Residential School:

*"Blatant, blanket accusations against Catholic priests and nuns of murder and rape because a seismic device has found signs of graves in a community graveyard is on par with a hate crime. It is incitement. And sadly, it is likely more churches will be vandalized because of these irrational statements which are based only on oral histories of elders, elders who were then children, who perhaps conflated their residential school experiences with aspects of the Martensville Satanic panic which swept Saskatchewan in the 1990s. As American psychologist David Riskin testified in that case, all it takes is a little prompting and repeated leading interviews and people can remarkably remember all kinds of things that never happened."*

Sadly, these conflicting world views may not be reconcilable.

### **Genocide Puts Winnipeg on the Map**

In the year 2000, Winnipeg entrepreneur and philanthropist Israel Asper (aka "Izzy")<sup>112</sup> had a vision of creating a world-class human rights centre in his home town:

<sup>112</sup> <https://asperfoundation.com/israelasper/>

*“the longitudinal centre of Canada and the heart of the continent, would play home to the new Museum. ...The location at The Forks, where the Red and Assiniboine Rivers meet, also serves a deeper significance. For thousands of years, Indigenous people followed its waterways for peacemaking, dialogue and trade. Today this ancestral land stands as a National Historic Site and the home to the Museum.”<sup>113</sup>*

The Canadian Human Rights Museum opened on Sept. 14, 2014.

Just two months prior, Winnipeg had hosted the Eleventh Conference of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, July 16-19, 2014, titled: *“Time, Movement, and Space: Genocide Studies and Indigenous Peoples.”* A paper by Woolford (2015) opens with some remarkable commentary, expressing resentment that Winnipeg has always been the “butt of too many jokes” thus it seems the concept of being the centre of Indigenous genocide research will somehow elevate the city’s status within Canada and put Winnipeg ‘on the map.’ Woolford writes:

*“When Winnipeg was selected as host for the Eleventh Conference of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, it was an opportunity to showcase the intellectual vibrancy of the city and region to our visiting delegates. In Canada, Winnipeg is the butt of too many jokes. Depending on the season, it is portrayed as a land of unbearable cold (“Colder than Mars,” read one recent headline), floods, and mosquitoes. Depending on the season, it is derided as Winterpeg or Waterpeg. To this extent, Winnipeg may seem the less-exotic conference option when bookended by meetings in Siena and Yerevan. But Winnipeg is also at the geographic centre of North America. It sits at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, at the crossroads of the Anishinaabe, Métis, Cree, Dakota and Oji-Cree Nations. It is a historic meeting place of Indigenous peoples, and a most fitting site for our conference theme: **Time, Movement, and Space: Genocide Studies and Indigenous Peoples.** It is a space long marked by movements and interactions among peoples, including the destructive momentum of settler colonialism.”*

However, it appears that the ‘intellectual vibrancy’ of the settler historian academic community in Canada does not include nor endorse the historical context provided within this paper.

The genocide conference and growing Indigenous claims of residential schools as genocide have certainly put Canada and soon Winnipeg on the map. Where once Canada was revered as a nation of peacekeepers<sup>114</sup> and the Aerodrome of Democracy,<sup>115</sup> it is now reviled as a nation of genocidal murderers, filled with “priest and nuns who are rapists and murderers walking around free”<sup>116</sup> – despite there not being evidence to support such bombastic statements.

Not content with Izzy Asper’s beautiful Canadian Museum of Human Rights, the settler historians and residential school genocide activists have extended the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in an exceptional example of empire building, to where the University of Manitoba will soon be home to a separate edifice, the

<sup>113</sup> <https://humanrights.ca/about/our-history>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/peacekeeping>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/official-military-history-lineages/general/book-1983-aerodrome-democracy.html>

<sup>116</sup> Chief Bobby Cameron – English River First Nations news conference <https://youtu.be/tqD-jmmd-l>

National Truth and Reconciliation Centre,<sup>117</sup> with funding of \$60 million from the federal government<sup>118 119</sup> The press release states:

*“With this funding, the NCTR will build an international learning centre where Survivors, their families and people from across Canada and around the world can come to learn the truth about residential schools.”*

Ironically and sadly, as shown within this document, the NCTR will be teaching historical distortions of fact without context.

As briefly argued in the Winnipeg Free Press at the time of the 2014 genocide conference, and mentioned in Woolford (2015), a fundamental element defining genocide is that of intent to destroy a people.

Education was offered in the treaties and requested by chiefs and band councils. Saskatchewan and Alberta Chiefs were taken east to tour the Mohawk Institute, an example of the residential/industrial school model and to see how society was changing. They were well aware of the type of institution the government was planning.

Children had to be voluntarily enrolled and were not summarily taken from homes, which is a contrived mantra developed by the ‘residential school genocide complex’ to meet the second criteria of genocide – that of ‘forced separation.’ The genocide reference refers to eternal separation; residential schools accepted students in the fall, returned them to family for festive occasions like Christmas and Easter (if distances permitted for the short holiday time) and paid for transport for the children to go home to their parents for the summer months. Thus, this claim by the NCTR is a fundamental distortion of historical fact. Of course, the resident orphans had nowhere to go home to, so they remained at the schools with the devoted attention of the Sisters and Brothers who were thus, due to their dedication to their charges, denied holiday time, and did not complain or revolt. Hardly genocidal behavior.

The claim that religion was imposed is also false as most families had already chosen a Christian faith. In some circumstances a child of an Anglican faith might have been sent to a school of another denomination, typically Roman Catholic as their school network was in the majority, but this would have been due to distance to other options and was only done with consent of the parent.

The claim that thousands of children are missing and buried in secret graves, dead due to nefarious and murderous activities of priests and nuns also has no supporting evidence. There are no unresolved missing persons reports filed over the 113 years and 150,000 students who were educated at Indian Residential Schools. Though many elders and Knowledge Keepers, as well as senior officials like Murray Sinclair have repeatedly claimed thousands of children are missing, the names of any of these missing children have yet to be presented by anyone. The ever-growing list of names on the NCTR memorial banner includes thousands of loved ones who passed away who have *no relation whatsoever to residential school attendance.*

Since Indian Residential Schools and Indian First Nations Bands were funded by allocations of annuities assigned to the student, the record-keeping was quite specific in tracking whether the child was on reserve, in residential

<sup>117</sup> <https://nctr.ca/nctr-welcomes-funding-and-a-new-home-in-federal-budget-2022/>

<sup>118</sup> Provincial, territorial, municipal and community archives and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation are responsible for the response to Call to Action 77. The Government of Canada continues to support the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation with \$60 million from Budget 2022 in funding towards the overall cost of the Centre's new facility, in addition to support for community-led efforts to locate, identify, memorialize and commemorate missing children and unmarked burials, and the full disclosure of federal documents related to residential schools. <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1524505153967/1557512946537>

<sup>119</sup> <https://nctr.ca/national-centre-for-truth-and-reconciliation-welcomes-funding-for-centres-new-permanent-home-and-long-term-work/>

school, at a sanatorium or hospital, or, sadly, deceased. If a child died of injury while at school, an inquest was held. Death certificates were executed by a doctor or medical officer and filed with provincial vital statistics.<sup>120</sup>

A common complaint, one which Raymond Frogner of the NCTR has raised, is that some children's names were incorrectly recorded, the child was renamed with an anglicized name (in one case he claims 13 such errors for one student).<sup>121</sup> However, in a time when administrators of schools or bands were working in English or French, working with sometimes complicated aboriginal names, and dealing with handwritten notes, some of which are difficult to understand today, such errors did occur. But as in the case of Marieyvonne Alaka Ukaliannuk, the "Eskimo number" (or in other cases, the student number) was a unifying tracking number which allows the careful archival researcher to identify what records belong to whom. (*Note: unlike the Holocaust where numbers were tattooed on the arms of victims, children at residential schools were assigned numbers for sorting laundry and personal effects, something which was especially important in the early days of contagious diseases like TB*).

Ironically, after claiming the NCTR will teach people 'the truth' about residential schools, anyone who questions their 'truth' with evidence such as that within this document is labelled a 'residential school denier' and there are demands by the "No pride in genocide" activists to criminalize academic research or public commentaries such as this.

Meanwhile in Winnipeg at the Canadian Human Rights Museum, a highlight of that institution is the Royal Blessing, inherent in which is a dedication to freedom of speech, a 'colonial' concept since 1215.

### **2010: The Royal blessing**

*On July 3, 2010, the Museum cornerstone is unveiled by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. She had personally selected a stone from Runnymede, the English meadow where the Magna Carta, a landmark human rights charter, was sealed in 1215. This stone, inscribed with a message from the Queen, is encased in Manitoba Tyndall stone.<sup>122</sup>*

### **Glaring Example of Errors in "Sacred Responsibility..." Kimberly Murray's Report**

Historical distortions by the NCTR and genocide activists are many and are now endemic.

On June 16, 2023, Kimberly Murray, Special Interlocutor on Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, released her interim report titled: "*Sacred Responsibility: Searching for the Missing Children and Unmarked Burials.*"<sup>123</sup>

The report is fraught with errors of fact.

<sup>120</sup> Apparently in some provinces these records are only held for 70 years. However, there are reports that Ancestry.com has most of these records.

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-residential-school-denialism-doesnt-stand-up-to-reality/>

<sup>122</sup> <https://humanrights.ca/about/our-history>

<sup>123</sup> [https://osi-bis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/OSI\\_InterimReport\\_FINDINGS\\_June-2023\\_web.pdf](https://osi-bis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/OSI_InterimReport_FINDINGS_June-2023_web.pdf)

Consider the first case study of a reputed missing child. The report reads *“In the early 1960s, Marieyvonne Alaka Ukaliannuk was only four years old when she was taken from her hometown of Igloolik and sent on a floater plane to the Sir Joseph Bernier Federal Day School located in Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut.”*

There was no mandate for Marieyvonne to attend any residential school because she was an Inuit child. Mandatory attendance at school only applied to ‘status Indians’ in the numbered treaty regions of Canada and was in keeping with public school truancy regulations (though it was rarely enforced). But had she been required to attend, the minimum enrollment age was **seven**, unless the child was deemed to be in a destitute or dysfunctional family or was an orphan. In the CBC article footnoted to this passage in the *“Sacred Responsibility...”* report, Marieyvonne’s mother states *““The last time I saw her was when I was going on the plane for TB [tuberculosis],”* said Marieyvonne’s mother, Therese Ukaliannuk, in Inuktitut.”

Thus, Marieyvonne’s mother was going south for TB treatment – which often took months or years. It may be that her father asked for help to care for her, or that regional authorities stepped in to protect the child, either as an orphan or due to family dysfunction,<sup>124</sup> because she was accepted to the hostel at age four.

Marieyvonne’s story is sad as she had an accident that resulted in a head injury, and during treatment TB manifested itself. Since her mother had been sent south for TB treatment, it is likely the child had latent TB.

The *“Sacred Responsibility...”* report intimates that Marieyvonne was heartlessly ‘taken’ away and states that the family was not kept informed of her whereabouts or her tragic death at age 8, as a quadriplegic in a charitable care home in Quebec.

In the context of the time, it was common that people gave up guardianship of children or family members who were extremely ill to the state or charitable organizations. There were social norms and a lack of present day social and physical supports that made it uncomfortable for families to keep developmentally handicapped or disabled children at home. Likewise, in the context of the time, being infected with TB was a ‘kiss of social death’ – not only for the individual but also for the entire family, as it is today in Canada’s north. Thus, the family may have formally or informally rescinded their right to know, possibly to their own social benefit.<sup>125</sup> Even today, TB screenings can result in societal rejection... *“people are afraid to come near us.”*<sup>126</sup> Marieyvonne became a quadriplegic due to TB meningitis. Certainly, in the 1960s, it would have been impossible to care for a quadriplegic child, at home in Igloolik (population 2022 1,682). To this day, complex health care needs for Igloolik residents is provided by The Ottawa Hospital, a 5-hour flight south.<sup>127</sup> Consequently the *“Sacred Responsibility...”* telling of little Marieyvonne’s sad story distorts historical fact, context, and the practical realities of life in the north, then and now.

Crucially, Theresa Ukaliannuk was afforded a preferential meeting with the Pope, despite her child’s story not being a case of any violation of human rights of the time or related to improper care at an Indian Residential School.<sup>128</sup> This author is not aware of any record showing that Theresa herself ever attended residential school.

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.ottawahospital.on.ca/en/healthy-tomorrows/grateful-inuk-patient-shares-his-life-story/>

<sup>125</sup> <https://cps.ca/en/documents/position/tuberculosis-among-first-nations-inuit-and-metis-children-and-youth>

<sup>126</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/tb-clinic-qikiqtarjuaq-stigma-1.4554194>

<sup>127</sup> <https://www.ottawahospital.on.ca/en/uncategorized/far-from-home-patients-from-nunavut-travel-thousands-of-kilometres-for-care-at-the-ottawa-hospital/>

<sup>128</sup> <https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/mixed-emotions-in-crowd-as-pope-delivers-igaluit-speech/>

## Senator Beyak – Destroyer of the Genocide Narrative Must be Destroyed.

According to the NCTR website, the project and potentially an edifice was developed toward the end of the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (i.e., sometime between 2014 and 2015 one would imagine).

Senator Beyak was appointed to the Canadian Senate in 2013. By 2017 she had created controversy in a Senate session for asking Indigenous participants about whether or not they supported financial accountability on reserves. CBC reports:

*“Beyak subsequently grilled residential school survivors about their time at the schools during a Senate committee meeting, asking them if they endorsed her plan to audit all First Nations for financial irregularities.”*

*“The speech that caused so much hurt and distress was actually a speech about taxes,” Beyak said at the time.*

Beyak continued her stance on Indian Residential Schools as having benefitted many with controversial speeches and the posting of commentaries by ordinary Canadians on her Senate website.<sup>129</sup> By 2019, her refusal to comply with anti-racism re-education camp (eerily similar to the situation that Dr. Jordan Peterson now finds himself in) resulted in so much ‘brand damage’ to the Conservatives that they kicked her out of the Senate.

Based on the evidence in this document, it is clear that Beyak’s presentation of a non-genocidal narrative – in fact a beneficial narrative about Indian Residential Schools – threatened to topple the settler historian cottage industry and their castle-building exercise, the building of a new edifice at the University of Manitoba for the NCTR which will, they say, decolonize history.

*“By incorporating Indigenous perspectives, values, laws and protocols, we are creating something new — we are working on decolonizing the archive, to be built on principles of respect, honesty, wisdom, courage, humility, love and truth.”<sup>130</sup>*

Based on the evidence presented herein, it is clear that the NCTR and the residential-school-as-genocide activists are not doing anything more than rewriting history to get more grants and destabilize Canada. To keep this dirty secret, those with dissenting views, whether Senator Lynn Beyak, this author or others, must be silenced, slandered with labels of ‘residential school denier’ and their reputations destroyed.

## Conclusion

Canadian taxpayers are paying millions of dollars for Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) searches of known graveyard for missing children which do not exist. Canada’s international reputation has been blackened by this campaign; indeed, China has exploited the discovery of the alleged unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School to join together with several terror states and accuse Canada of genocide. On October 27, 2022, the entire House of Commons, at the urging of NDP MP Leah Gazan voted unanimously, without discussion or evidence, to describe Indian Residential Schools as genocide. Clearly the message delivered to Senator Beyak was loud and clear to all MPs, thus not even a peep of a challenge was raised. As this paper is being written, all Canadian laws are about to be rewritten to align with the United Nations Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act<sup>131</sup> and

<sup>129</sup> Full disclosure, this author submitted a letter to Senator Beyak. See appendix for a copy.

<sup>130</sup> <https://nctr.ca/about/>

<sup>131</sup> <https://justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/ap-pa/ah/pdf/unda-action-plan-digital-eng.pdf>

we await the results of an investigation by Francisco Jose Cali-Tzay, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, into Canadian Indian Residential Schools. We can hardly expect a fair hearing as Kimberly Murray sent him a 21-page unauthorized, unvetted report, filled with unsupported allegations of murders and nefarious midnight burials along with other outrageous claims. Ms. Murray is a civil servant appointed by an Order-in-Council whose mandate was to simply create dialogue with former residential school students (self-described as survivors), review legislation and to report to the Justice Minister. Her mandate expressly forbade her to do anything to interfere with investigations.

*“Carry out this mandate in a manner that does not interfere with criminal investigations, prosecutions or civil proceedings.”<sup>132</sup>*

Kimberly Murray is also supposed to act impartially. Instead, she is advocating that scholarly works like this, or any dissenting view be subject to criminalization, similar to the treatment reserved for Holocaust denial.<sup>133</sup>

There is no doubt that many children suffered at Indian Residential Schools, and this is why the compensation program was established. Though it cannot rewrite the past, it does recognize those who suffered and provides some form of recompense.

At the same time, many children benefitted from Indian Residential Schools. If we are to have truth and reconciliation, this must also be part of the evidence. As Senator Beyak said:

*“Telling the truth is sometimes controversial but never racist. The Senate’s reputation has been enriched by my stand, as clearly stated in thousands of letters from Canadians that I submitted to the Senate ethics officer,” Beyak said in a May 2019 speech.*

Sadly, based on the extreme violence that broke out in terms of the vandalizing over some 83 churches in Canada, based on the unsubstantiated claims that unmarked/mass graves of children had been found in the orchard at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, it appears that the genocide narrative will tear Canada apart.<sup>134</sup> That, along with the application of UNDRIP will Balkanize this country and pit Indigenous people against any perceived ‘settler’ – whether of the WASPY colonial variety, whether Roman Catholic or Hindi. Unless the gas lighting stops there is a risk the country may descend into violence and anarchy. Canadians already experienced this in the first two months of “Shut Down Canada” in 2020 where all road and rail lines crossing Indigenous reserves were violently blockaded.

Canadian taxpayers are paying billions to fortify lies and unsupported allegations against our ancestors; residential ‘factualists’ like this author may be jailed for telling the inconvenient truth that Indian Residential Schools did not commit genocide against Indigenous people. While people are eager to rewrite Canada’s laws to meet UNDRIP guidelines, they are not so keen to abide by the UN Charter of Human Rights, Article 19.

<sup>132</sup> <https://medium.com/@UndauntedArtz2/special-interlocutor-has-no-authority-to-demand-criminalization-of-residential-school-factualism-98ad5466f268>

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-special-interlocutor-hopeful-new-justice-minister-will-act-to-address/>

<sup>134</sup> <https://tnc.news/2023/07/04/a-map-of-every-church-burnt-or-vandalized-since-the-residential-school-announcements1/#:~:text=83%20Christian%20churches%20in%20Canada,located%20near%20former%20residential%20schools.>

## Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Clearly people have forgotten the words of “Dief the Chief” –

*"I am Canadian, a free Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship God in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, free to choose those who govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind."*

(John Diefenbaker, House of Commons Debates, 1 July 1960) <sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> <https://diefenbaker.usask.ca/exhibits/online-exhibits-content/the-canadian-bill-of-rights.php#IamaCanadianafreeCanadian>



## Appendix I

Freedom of Speech and Historical facts are essential to reconciliation.

Yahoo/Sent

**Michelle Stirling** < >

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To:lynn.beyak@sen,lillian.dyck@sen

Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 12:50 p.m.

Senator Beyak and Senator Dyck,

I believe Senator Beyak is wrongfully pilloried by the press and the historical context of the times of residential schools is not even being considered. Please see my short article below.

I agree that horrible things happened to many people in residential schools. I grew up in Ponoka beside Maskwacis (formerly Hobbema) and also worked in Ponoka for 5 years with some 30% of my clients were aboriginal people. Serious issues abound - but not recognizing the historical facts and context of residential schools distorts the story.

My own father (a white British boy) went to a boarding school and was abused there - this has gone on in boarding schools to this very day. It is a "Lord of the Flies" environment. My father was left-handed. At the time this was considered to be literally Satanic. His hand was caned black and blue and he was made to stand in the corner with a dunce cap on. However, his father had died as an aviation pioneer; his mother had no means to keep herself and returned to her father's farm as a worker. They were difficult times for everyone.

On the maternal side, my mother's baby sister was *given* away to neighbours who had no children when my grandmother died after giving birth to her. Then my own mother was sent to England at age 13 to care for her elderly grandmother. Children were small servants at the time across the board, with no rights, and if they were lucky enough to eat and have shelter, they were lucky.

I strongly believe we must discuss the history of this country and we must face injustices of the past - but we do not right any wrongs by creating MORE injustices by asking people to step down or shut up, and by failing to set the context of history.

I hope you will consider my comments. An op-ed below based on over a decade of research in the Glenbow Museum under the supervision of Dr. Hugh Dempsey.

Thank you,  
Michelle Stirling

## Freedom of Speech for Senator Beyak and Historical Facts on Residential Schools

By Michelle Stirling

It is a tragedy that Senator Beyak's Charter Right of freedom of speech and attempts to bring balance to the story on residential schools are being stifled. Worse? The media are not doing any homework.

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People are ignorant of Canadian history. Canada protected First Nations people overall and did not stage Indian Wars as in the US. In fact, Canada was a sanctuary state for American native people fleeing the US Cavalry, after they had defeated General Custer and annihilated five companies of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry.

Imagine a similar scenario today – that refuge in Canada would be provided to hundreds of murderous renegades with the US Cavalry hot on their heels. Canada was the sheltering “White Grandmother” for Sitting Bull and his people.

A sea change occurred in the lives of nomadic aboriginal people in the 1800's. In the 1837-40 smallpox outbreaks in the US, entire First Nations villages were wiped out. Malnutrition had set in among First Nations as the buffalo – once numbering an estimated 60 million on the plains – had been reduced to about 1,000 by the 1880's.

A descendant of Rev. McDougall of the Stoney Mission recalled to me that his ancestor had adopted 17 aboriginal children as they had been orphaned by smallpox. The missionaries, constantly denounced in the press today, created a written form for many aboriginal oral languages, and created dictionaries to preserve the wisdom and knowledge of the people.

As the nomadic aboriginal way of life vanished and treaty obligations kicked in, residential schools offered a means of rapidly educating, integrating and feeding the geographically scattered numbers of children living on the verge of starvation.

Residential schools were planned with graveyards, graves remained unmarked and bodies were not returned home for good reasons. Death was common across Canada with tuberculosis (TB) the greatest killer up until the 1950's. TB was often considered a [shameful thing](#) within families, never to be mentioned. Bodies of people who died of contagion were forbidden by law to be transported anywhere except to the graveyard. Death rates from TB in First Nations people in Saskatchewan were ten times higher than among whites due to “drastic changes in lifestyle, poverty and overcrowding.”

TB was not imported by Europeans. TB bacterium has been found in 9,000-year-old bison.

In 1918, the Spanish Flu swept across Canada. Records in Saskatchewan show that those who died were buried as soon as possible to avoid further contamination. At least 20 First Nations children are recorded as dying in one residential school alone at that time.

Children's rights were not a thing in those days. Children were often given up to orphanages or given away to relatives or childless couples when poor families could not support their needs.

But what of cultural genocide? E. Pauline Johnson, *Tekahionwake*, (1816-1884) was a Canadian poet and child of a British mother and Mohawk chief. She was honoured in society; undoubtedly a role model for Indian Affairs authority Duncan Scott (1862-1947) who was also a poet and who likely felt this type of ‘foot-in-both-cultures’ person would be the outcome of his department's residential school policy. He shared a view many Canadians share today: *“I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone...”*

Pauline Johnson, a single woman, poet, child of literate parents, herself with only three years of Indian day school education, a mixed-race aboriginal woman, managed to stand alone and became an international literary star.

Schooling for anyone in the early days of Canada was considered a luxury. Prior to 1880 in England most children aged four and up were working! Boarding schools were the norm only for the well-to-do.

Consequently, in Canada First Nations children were provided with what white children were often denied – free, full education.

That the methods were heavy-handed cannot be denied; brutal disciplinary methods, like caning, were the norm in British society right up to the 1990's.

It is only fair to set this historic context first when discussing truth and reconciliation and to speak freely on this topic.

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## Notes on the Author

Michelle Stirling is a former member of the Canadian Association of Journalists. She researched, wrote, and co-produced historical shows about Southern Alberta under the supervision of Dr. Hugh Dempsey, then curator of the Glenbow Museum. Stirling interviewed several hundred Albertans including descendants of Colonel Macleod and Treaty 7 signatories, as well as pioneers, academic historians and popular historians like Grant McEwan (who was born in 1902).

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# *Every Living Child*



*Matters Most Of All!*

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