

The Lost Generation
First Nations Communities & White Middle-Class Adoption

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Introduction

The First Nations of Canada have lost a generation or more of children. These children were adopted out to white middle-class families in Canada and the U.S. Many of them are still lost. They have yet to be found.

This phenomenon is the foundation of our inquiry. We want to ask:

- Why did this happen?
- What are the effects on the First Nations communities who lost these children and on the adopted children who are now adults?
- How does this history change the approach to Christian missions?

We are here to make it crystal clear that the First Nations communities across Canada, and in particular Manitoba, have suffered a serious blow. The first blow came when Native children were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to residential schools in the 1800s. The second blow came when they were expected to integrate into white provincial schools in the late 1940s. The third and final blow came when government-funded child welfare agencies forcibly removed Native children from their homes and adopted them out to white middle-class couples in Canada and the U.S. It was only after the Manitoba Native leaders cried out en masse against these injustices in the 1970s and early 80s and sought media attention that the Manitoba government began to address the problem. The conclusion of this study was that white adoption of Native children was just a continuation of residential school policies. The effects on these children were just as severe as the trauma endured in the residential school.

The Church as Government Agent

The Church (Roman Catholic, Anglican, and United Church of Canada which includes Methodists and Presbyterians), in its effort to help the Canadian government in nation-building and “civilization” of the First Nations communities, willingly participated in the breakdown of First Nations communities. Why? We contend that racism was a core expression of the Church in Canada. Today, vestiges of racism continue to influence church policies.

Racism is hatred or intolerance of another race based on the belief, doctrine or assumption that inherent differences among the various human races determine cultural or individual achievement.¹ It involves the idea that differences among races create “natural superiority” and therefore “God-given” or “God-made” superiority of one race over another. This attitude of superiority by the European races has a long history in Canada. It is an attitude that has fueled the near genocide of the First Nations.

¹ Webster, Daniel, *Webster's College Dictionary*, p.1111

How can this racism be acknowledged and repented of? The Church can:

- personally examine and purge those areas of racist belief
- cooperate with the government in making monetary reparations
- make serious efforts to aid the repatriation movement
- zealously scrutinize their denominational mission policies toward First Nations peoples to determine where *systemic racism* has become the norm

Policies which must be addressed include any:

- which create tribal disharmony and separation
- which do not respect nor affirm the godly truth found in Native spirituality
- which diminish the ability for First Nations communities to think for themselves theologically and otherwise
- which do not allow Native leaders to determine what is best for their people

It is our hope that today will be a new day in Christian missions. It is our prayer that First Nations communities and missions organizations will continue the hard work of dialoguing in a way that carefully allows each other to voice different cultural values and norms.

Residential School Policies: The Breeding Ground for Racism

In 1908, Frank Oliver, the Minister of Indian Affairs remarked on the role that the residential schools would play in the one hundred year history of Aboriginal education. He believed that education would "...elevate the Indian from his condition of savagery" and make "him a self-supporting member of the State, and eventually a citizen in good standing."² Frank Oliver was not alone in his opinions about Native people. Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General for Indian Affairs (1913-1932) said it this way:

"I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that this country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone. That is my whole point. Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question and no Indian department and that is the whole object of this Bill."³

² Milloy, John, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986*, p.3

³ Chrisjohn, Roland & Young, Sherri, *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada*, p.42

What did Mr. Campbell Scott mean by “this Bill?” He was referring to Bill 14, an amendment to the Indian Act of 1884. The Indian Act of 1867 gave the Canadian government the power to legislate for Indians and their property. Bill 14 gave the Canadian government the power to annul the status of any Indian in Canada. That meant that the government decided “...who was and who was not an Indian.”⁴ The outcome of all of this legislation was the carefully planned and orchestrated stripping of Native identity, the ability to control their own councils and destiny, manage their reserve resources and educate their own children according to Native custom. The subjugation and assimilation of Native communities was the basis for all of the government’s actions.

Where was the Church in this scenario? Doing the government’s bidding. By the 1820s, the Methodists (forerunners of the United Church of Canada), Anglicans and Roman Catholics were dividing the land mass of Canada into their own private residential school territories. The Methodists moved into Upper Canada opening churches and day schools. The Anglican Missionary Society took the Grand River area. In the 1840s, the Roman Catholics began a day school on Manitoulin Island at Wikwemikong (Province of Manitoba).⁵

Even though one might think that the attitude of these Christian denominations was to develop a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ among the Natives, this was not entirely the case concerning the Church administration or its employees. The attitude of Church hierarchy and administration actually mirrored a government policy to “force a change in the Indian’s condition lest he die off” and to “kill the Indian in him and save the man.”⁶ Around the turn of the twentieth century, the “...Catholic Archbishop of St. Boniface and four other bishops petitioned the government to take children from their families as young as six, “...caught young to be saved from what is on the whole the degenerating influence of their home environment.”⁷ The Report of the Alberta Methodist Commission of 1911 said this:

“The Indian is the weak child in the family of our nation and for this reason presents the most earnest appeal for Christian sympathy and co-operation;...we are convinced that the only hope of successfully discharging this obligation to our Indian brethren is through the medium of the children, therefore education must be given the foremost place.”⁸

⁴ Milloy, John, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986*, p.21. The *Proclamation of 1763* preceded the Indian Act of 1857 and was the effort of Protestant mission societies, the Indian Department and band councils to establish Indian reserves across Canada. The Canadian government wanted the support of First Nations people in time of war and they wanted to appease their anger over territorial and economic losses. They established programs to assimilate Natives into the European model of self-sufficiency which included training in agriculture and settler arts and crafts. p.11

⁵ Ibid, p.14

⁶ Ibid, p.27

⁷ Ibid, p.27

⁸ Ibid, p.28

The Anglican Church also supported the bid for the Aboriginal nation's children. In 1820, Reverend John West of the Red River Settlement said that from the "...small beginning this system of Indian education, under divine Guidance and help, has gradually developed until we have at the present time nineteen schools of the residential class."⁹

The Canadian government found a willing partner in the Church to start its campaign of systematic genocide of the First Nations. For one hundred years Native children were forced to attend the "educational savior" that was the residential schools. Many things went wrong during this time period. By 1948 the residential school system was in chaos. Sordid tales of physical, sexual and emotional abuses were pouring out of the schools from the mouths of Native children, their parents and residential school staff. The hideous truth of residential schools could no longer be hidden.

The Canadian government decided to take the management of the schools out of the hands of these three denominations. Control of the schools was not wrested from these churches until 1986. That didn't matter to the government. In the early 1950s they started a campaign to close the residential schools and assimilate Native children into regular public provincial schools. This policy failed as well. Years of forced assimilation into residential schools had produced a wide spread *generational* phenomenon among Native children, their parents and grandparents called "Residential School Syndrome." Symptoms of RSS include:

- personality disorders
- complete lack of insight into their own motives
- split with reality bordering on Schizophrenia
- lack of empathy
- difficulty recognizing desires, subjective experiences, feelings of victims
- symptoms of Narcissistic personality disorder
- reacting to criticism with withdrawal, petulance, disdain, rage or defiant counterattacks
- in denial that anything "bad" happened to them
- unshakable belief that "target group" are whining ingrates
- borderline incontinence at suggestion of criminal investigation.¹⁰

By the 1960s, many adults on Native reserves across Canada had this syndrome and so did their children. Many children were not able to be assimilated into white provincial schools. This *generational* syndrome made it impossible for them to cope with the white world altogether. In the 60s, the government started a new policy of assimilation. It was known as the "Sixties Scoop." That meant that "at risk" Native children were *scooped* from their seemingly "dysfunctional" homes, often without the slightest provocation and

⁹ Milloy, John, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System- 1879-1986*, p.xi

¹⁰ Chrisjohn, Roland, Young, Sherri, *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada*, pp.84-85. These are only a few of the reported symptoms of this syndrome. Chrisjohn and Young also assert that the creation of Residential Schools follows a time-tested method of obliterating indigenous cultures and that this form of cultural annihilation has been long-studied and known to produce these kinds of effects by human beings living under severe and prolonged oppression. p.4

put into foster care, and in many cases, adopted outright to white middle-class families in Canada and the U.S.

The Sixties Scoop-Province of Manitoba

In March of 1982, a Manitoba family court judge named Edwin Kimelman held hearings across Manitoba about the phenomenon of white adoption of Native children from the province. After the hearings concluded, Judge Kimelman made this statement:

“When the Indian residential schools were operating, children were forcibly removed from their homes for the duration of the academic year. The children were punished if they used their own language, sang their own songs or told their own stories. But at least under that system the children knew who their parents were and they returned home for the summer months. With the closing of the residential schools, rather than providing the resources on reserves to build economic security and providing services to support responsible parenting, society found it easier and cheaper to remove the children from their homes and apparently fill the market demand for children in Eastern Canada and the U.S.”¹¹

Kimelman agreed with Native leaders in Manitoba that aboriginal children were the victims of a policy of “wholesale exportation” to other provinces and the U.S. Judge Kimelman reviewed ninety-three cases of adoption and found that no attempt had been made to find Native homes for these aboriginal children. Over a period of twenty years (mid-1960s to early 80s), Manitoba lost about three thousand Native children to white adoption.

The Canadian Council on Social Development in the 1980s concluded that the staff of child welfare agencies tended to be white middle-class people who assumed that low-income Native parents could only provide a less than adequate home for their children. Basically, in the eyes of the child welfare system, the sin of the Native home was poverty.

¹¹ York, Geoffrey, *The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada*, p.215 York contends that the two decade history of sending Indian and Métis children from Manitoba to other provinces and the U.S. to white-middle class couples was based on the assumption that these white couples would make better parents than low-income families on Indian reserves and Métis communities. See p.202

Stories of Repatriation

Lisa's Story

Lisa is the daughter of a Métis family that lives in the town of Camperville in northwestern Manitoba. She was born in the town of Winnipegosis and lived with her Métis parents until she was three and a half. She was removed from their home because they were heavy drinkers. No attempt was made to place her with other Métis relatives or within that same Métis community. Instead she was adopted out to a white middle-class couple in Montreal. Her adopted father started to sexually abuse her at the age of eleven. That same year the family moved with Lisa to the U.S. She was removed from the house and put into a series of foster homes after the abuse was reported. By the time she was fifteen she was working as a prostitute, had suffered every kind of STD imaginable, had an alcohol problem and a series of psychological and emotional problems for which she was under a doctor's care. She was reunited with her family in April of 1985 at the age of sixteen. The reunion with her Métis family was one of "trying to recapture the lost years." Lisa is still angry at the child welfare officials in Manitoba who "ruined my life and childhood."*

Cameron's Story

Cameron was born on the Sioux Valley Indian reserve in southwestern Manitoba. He was removed from his home at the age of eight because his parents were heavy drinkers. At age eleven, the Children's Aid Society of Western Manitoba sent Cameron to live with a bachelor businessman in Wichita, Kansas (U.S.). Within six months he was running away from this home. A year and a half later the single man adopted Cameron after the Aid Society insisted that there were no local foster homes or adoptive parents. It is unknown whether or how hard the Aid Society looked for local reserve homes. The adoption was a disaster. Cameron continued to run away from this home. At age thirteen he revealed that this man had been sexually abusing him. He would not testify against his adoptive father in court because this man had threatened him with physical violence. Cameron stayed in this home five more years after he had revealed the sexual abuse. At the age of eighteen he left the home but still remained in the city of Wichita. After he turned nineteen, he went on a drinking binge, broke into the home of his adoptive father and beat him to death with a baseball bat. Ironically, he served a fifteen year sentence for this murder in Stoney Mountain Penitentiary north of Winnipeg. His whereabouts today are unknown, but it is assumed that he has returned to the Sioux Valley reserve to try and pick up the pieces of his life.*

*These stories are found in *The Dispossessed* by Geoffrey York.

Lisa and Cameron's stories are only a few of the thousands of stories that have yet to be written and published. There are many more adopted children out there with similar stories. We cannot say that *all* of these adoptions turned out the way that Lisa and

Cameron's did. What we can say is that these stories let the wider North American population know that there are Aboriginal individuals and communities that have been consistently victimized in this way with dehumanizing consequences that include: culture shock, identity crisis, psychiatric problems, prolonged grief, drug and alcohol problems, uncontrollable anger/rage and a myriad of other symptoms resulting from sexual and other kinds of abuse.

How This History Changes Christian Mission

We have just briefly reviewed a one hundred year history of the Church's involvement with Aboriginal people. We have looked at causes and dehumanizing effects of this interaction on Native individuals and communities, especially the on-going effects of RSS and white middle-class adoptions. In light of all of this history between the Church and Aboriginal communities, how should the Church proceed from here? In recent years, all of the major denominations in this one hundred year history have apologized and made some attempt at monetary reparations (Milloy, *Epilogue*). Do these apologies and reparations fulfill the Biblical mandate for restoration? Is the Church's response what Scripture envisions for all nations? What do Native people think about their own restoration?

As long as racism is a core expression of the Church, the *systemic* problem of racism will continue to affect Native communities and block their full and complete restoration. The Church must continue to ask itself some tough questions. The first question to ask is: Are formal apologies combined with financial restitution the *final* elements of reconciliation and restoration? It doesn't appear that apologies and money are going to restore the trust that has been broken between the two races. Apologies and money do not constitute a relationship. A majority of Native people still see Christianity and Christians in this light:

- They still regard the Church as the government agent (co-conspirators)
- They do not trust the Church nor the government
- They are suspicious of attempts by the Church to "help"
- Christianity & Christians are seen as a threat to the survival of their Native spirituality and culture

The second question to ask is: Does the Church realize the state of its reputation among Natives? A majority of Natives in Canada think that the Church is a co-conspirator, cannot be trusted, and that any help that the Church offers has a built in agenda (hook) to further destroy Native community and spirituality by replacing it with European based culture and Western Christianity.

How can the non-Native Church in Canada try to overcome these obstacles?

Here are some starting places:

- Don't assume a knowledge of Native people's wants or needs. Ask
- Change mission policies to meet felt needs of Natives

- Give money to rebuild Aboriginal communities and economies (\$for repatriation)
- Listen and learn from Native leaders about what is important in their spirituality so that the person of Jesus Christ is understandable according to the Native worldview

If the Church is *serious* about regaining a relationship of trust with Aboriginal people, they will do this work. The Church needs to more strongly reflect the *person* of Jesus Christ among Natives. Their approach must be primarily life changing rather than merely doctrinally correct or financially sound. Native people recognize a loving Jesus. They recognize the Scriptural values that are consistent with the Native worldview. Serious tensions arise when the Church confuses their Western Anglo worldview as being synonymous with Scriptural values; where “manifest destiny” is passed off as God’s will; where Churches employ heavy-handed evangelistic techniques to “win souls” and where the Church insists that Natives immediately assent to a series of propositional truths which are the sole property of the Church.

We offer these worldviews and Scriptural values for your comparison and discussion.

Anglo-American Worldview

- our way is the best way
- the world and various forces (illness/death) can be controlled by human beings
- basic problem is ignorance and the solution is more information (education)
- technology/technique is moving us toward perfection**
- our faith in human ability to correct and control is virtually boundless
- history is evolutionary. We are in a steady movement from inferior societies to our own
- change is better than stability, conquest is better than holding a position, and the new is better than consolidating the old
- our “superior” way of life will be the ascendant way for others
- the good of the individual is more important than the good of the group
- success (material/numerical, etc.) is the goal and failure must be avoided at all costs
- scientists are our new priests and prophets. Science is our true religion. That means that scientific education is the great hope for our nation and the world¹²

Native Worldview

- group has supremacy over the individual; values are learned collectively
- harmony of individual with the tribe

¹² Kraft, Charles, *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*, pp. 164-165. ** See also Jacque Ellul in *The Technological Bluff* about whether technology will save humanity and the planet or be the direct cause of its demise, pp. 1-19. Secondary thesis states the computer is replacing human work force and is direct cause of human unemployment. C.S. Lewis writes along the same technological vein in *The Abolition of Man*. See Chapter 3 and ‘Man’s Conquest of Nature’

- harmony with the tribe and the land
- harmony with the land and the Great Spirit (monotheism)
- harmony in the timelessness, predictability, and transcendence of nature
- nature respects all things (wisdom in nature is feminine- Mother Earth)
- collective sharing, cooperation, noninterference in the affairs of others
- present-time orientation
- preference for explaining natural phenomenon according to the supernatural
- deep respect for elders (that which is old and traditional)¹³
- children and elders are the most precious commodities and signal prosperity
- present day decisions and events have future ramifications out to the 7th generation

Christian Scriptural Values

- There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism (Eph. 4:5)
- Wisdom is also feminine-*sophia*: broad and full intelligence (Prov. 1:20-21)
- The Christian community is the locus of moral formation-learn love (I Cor. 13)
- The individual believer is part of the Body of Christ worldwide (Rom. 12:4-5)
- the promise of entering God's rest (*shalom* or universal harmony) still stands from ancient times and is fulfilled in Christ (Heb. 4:1)
- Human beings are to have dominion (rule by kingly love) over the earth (Gen. 1:28)
- Christians are commanded to "make disciples" all over the earth (Matt. 28:19).
- the family is to participate in mutual submission (Eph. 5:22-6:4)
- Communal values are: harmony, sympathy, love, compassion, humility (I Pet. 3:8)
- the church must have ecclesiastical oversight (elders) (I Tim. 3 &5)
- the property of Christians is communal and collective (Acts 2:42-44)
- Salvation is the gift of a loving God to the whole world (John 3:16)
- Jesus Christ is coming again to make a new heaven and earth (I Thess. 4:16-17)
- Love of money is the root of all kinds of evil (I Tim. 6:10)

Discussion Questions

- Which characteristics do Natives use to describe the Church?
- Which characteristics do the Church use to describe Native community?
- Which values enable racism?
- Which values would eliminate racism?
- Which values do Natives and the Church hold in common?
- Can our differences be overcome by common values?
- How can trust be rebuilt employing Native values within the Christian community?

¹³ Salett and Koslow, (editors) for National MultiCultural Institute, *Race Ethnicity and Self*, p.173

Exploring answers to these questions involves personally and corporately challenging long held biblical interpretations and worldviews that may be racist. The outcome to this difficult work will be the determination of areas of acceptance or rejection by the Native communities the Church hopes to serve. We suggest that you go the first kilometer and find Native people to talk to in determining your answers. Don't sit in isolated committee meetings trying to figure this out.

Summary

In light of this history between Native people in Canada and the Church, there is extensive resistance to the Christian religion and European based education in many Aboriginal communities. That is proven by the fact that in the last five hundred years of missionary effort to North American Aboriginals by the Europeans, only 2%-4% of the aboriginal population admits they are Christians* and eighty percent of Aboriginals in Canada do not have a high school education.**¹⁴ Just by these statistics alone, European-based education and Western Christianity have been a complete failure.

The Church must face the grievous fact that trust has broken down and may not be easily regained. Some Natives may reject the Church even before an attempt can be made to integrate strong traditional Native values and practices from a Christian perspective. The Native community does not accept professional caretakers who are there to "fix the Native problem." A weekend "Inner Healing Seminar" will not instantly heal the effects of RSS or adoptions. Native people do not want to be the project of well-intentioned people. Native people deserve to keep their dignity and pride.

We don't want the Church in Canada to be without hope. The Church is vital in repairing our common history. Local churches can create local solutions through mutually respectful partnerships that honor boundaries. Some Native communities will accept the attempt to integrate their traditional values and practices but only if the Church proves they can be trusted in an egalitarian relationship.

One of the most vital partnerships is repatriation. Many Aboriginal children are still missing. Isn't the Church in the business of finding that which is lost? Repatriation takes money. Isn't the Church also in the business of collectively sharing their resources?

The Church has a great opportunity to establish trust and relationships of equality with Native communities across Canada. Can there be any restoration greater than restoring lost children to their families? (Matt. 18:14)

¹⁴ Russell, George, *Native American FAQ Handbook*, **1990 *Native Literacy Research Report*. A 1982 *Report by Education and Social Development Branch of Indian and Inuit Affairs in the 1991 McPherson Report on Tradition and Education* contended that first contact with AmerIndians by Europeans revealed a well established pattern of education to ensure cultural continuity and provide life skills necessary for future roles in Indian society. Report also indicates that failure of European based education is due to the perception by Native people that its content and context are irrelevant and totally useless for life skills needed in a Native community. Geoffrey York maintains that where Native schools are managed by Native leaders with a strong Aboriginal content and context which includes their language and customs, children on reserves are attending these schools regularly and making progress. See *Dispossessed of Canada* (pp.269-271) and the Shamattawa Cree as one example of this growing trend.

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Addendum

Stories of Repatriation-Manitoba

Albert's Story

Albert was born on the Swan Lake Reserve in Southwestern Manitoba. He was removed from his home sometime around the age of three because of an alcoholic situation. He was relocated by the Manitoba Children's Aid Society in 1970 and spent fifteen years in the home of an abusive adopted family in Deer Creek, Minnesota. In 2002 he went on a symbolic seven-day walk with another adoptee from the Ontario border to the steps of the Manitoba Legislature to raise awareness about the ongoing struggle for adoptee compensation. Albert has vowed to continue to battle his personal problems resulting from abuse and the "broken bonds with family and culture." He also plans to advocate for compensation for adoptees and "hopes more adoptees will come forward—somewhere along the line, there's hurt and anger, and that has to come out."¹⁵

Tracey's Story

Tracey was born in a Métis community in Northern Manitoba to a Saskatchewan Annishnabe mother and a non-Native father. In 1967, at the age of five months, her mother took her to the Children's Aid Society to be looked after until she got back on her feet. The Aid Society assured Tracey's mother of her safe return but instead they placed her in a foster home and facilitated her adoption to a white couple at age two. Tracey grew up full of insecurities and uncertainties. She also had extreme separation anxiety. She constantly tried to "fit in" and "struggled for acceptance." Affection was withdrawn if she misbehaved. She remembers "crying myself to sleep" and "eating supper alone." She started running away from this home at age twelve. From age twelve to sixteen she was put in "countless foster homes, group homes, rehabilitation centers, correctional facilities and a state mental hospital." At age sixteen her adopted family denied any responsibility for her. On February 15, 2002, she was reunited with her birth mother, sister and brother. Her reunion went well. She discovered she had seven sisters, something she had always longed for. Tracy has these words for other adoptees: "I am but one voice among thousands. Although many of our memories are painful I encourage others to come forward and share their experiences. Together we can heal. To those of you who are still lost, you are not alone and will never be forgotten."¹⁶

¹⁵ Lemoal, Dan, *The Drum*, Article: Little Solace for Adoptees (Oct. 2002)

¹⁶ Weaver, Tracey, *West Central Streets*, Article: Journey Back Home (Mar/Apr 2003). The Children's Aid Society has its historic roots in the Christian Church. Many agencies of this type acted independently in regards to personal policies but with Government sanction by way of non-interference. Government funds to do this work were customarily allocated to these societies and therefore constitutes a working relationship between Church and Province to bring this situation about.

Albert and Tracey's stories are only a few of the thousands of stories that have yet to be written and published. There are many more adopted children out there with similar stories. We cannot say that *all* of these adoptions turned out the way that Albert and Tracey's did. What we can say is that these stories let the wider North American population know that there are Aboriginal individuals and communities that have been consistently victimized in this way with dehumanizing consequences that include: culture shock, personal and corporate identity issues, psychiatric problems, prolonged grief, drug and alcohol problems, uncontrollable anger/rage and a myriad of other symptoms resulting from sexual and many other kinds of abuse.¹⁷

¹⁷ According to the *Southern Manitoba Repatriation Program*, only 434 adoptees have been reunited with their Aboriginal and Métis families to this date. That means that out of a possible 3,000 adoptees in Manitoba, (Judge Kimmelman Report) there are about 2500 still missing. According to the email site 'aboriginalsocialwork.ca/scoop' the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA-Canada) estimates the total of status Indians adopted during 1960 to 1990[3] to be about 11,132. The authors of this paper contend that to be a mathematical absurdity. The lowest number of Aboriginal and Métis children adopted out nationwide must be in the area of 27, 000 and the highest number could be 55,000 or more. Roseau River Reserve which is about an hour's drive from downtown Winnipeg is missing 100 or more children. Whole families are nowhere to be found. The effects of these adoptions are widespread and constitute large gaps in Aboriginal and Métis communities all across Canada.