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# Cultural and sexual victimisation of Canadian aboriginals

Monica Davis, 17 February 2008, Sunday

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THOUSANDS OF Canadian Aboriginal Residential school survivors have received proceeds from a multi-billion dollar class action lawsuit, where the churches and government shared the blame in a multi-generational orgy of sexual predation, physical and mental abuse and even murder. While many have claimed their part of the settlement, others claim they have been wrongly denied participation in the suit, and still others never bothered to claim the money, because they just don't want to drudge up the painful memories.

For nearly 200 years, the United States and Canada have sought to eliminate the 'Indian Problem' with a series of military, educational and genocidal policies, which were designed to eliminate aboriginal people in North America as a viable threat to the Crown and to American society. In addition to a military campaign that lasted generations, both countries sought to deculturalise natives through a series of educational and religious policies, which attempted to dissolve native culture by removing native children from their families and tribes.

The ensuing policy of removal put aboriginal children in government and church run 're-education camps', where they were forbidden to use tribal languages, forced to adapt to 'western' religions, adopt 'white' clothing and hair styles, while being trained that their culture was bad and that the white man's 'civilisation' was better.

In the course of their 'mission' to turn aboriginal school children into 'civilised people', the school authorities often resorted to a level of brutality, which was nothing less than war, war perpetrated within church and government sanctioned educational facilities.

The Reservation Boarding School System was a war in disguise. It was a war between the United States government and the children of the First People of this land. Its intention was that of any war, elimination of the enemy. The reason this war is difficult to recognise is because it was covered by the attractive patina of a concept called 'Manifest Destiny.' Manifest Destiny was a philosophy by which the white European (sic) invader imagined themselves as having a divine right to take possession of all land and its fruits. (Sonja Keohane, "The Reservation Boarding School System in the United States, 1870 –1928")

A 1922 report by Dr. Peter Bryce, former medical inspector for the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) claims that the death rate of these schools was unimaginable — and was also suppressed by the Canadian government. Bryce claims that there was a

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