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Review of *No End of Grief: Indian Residential Schools in Canada* By Agnes Grant

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No End of Grief: Indian Residential Schools in Canada. By Agnes Grant. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1996. Appendix, bibliography. 310 pp. \$22.95 paper.

Agnes Grant's work is a useful and interesting addition to the literature on residential schools in Canada. As a clearly written synthesis of a selection of existing works, it provides an introduction to the schools which would be useful as an undergraduate class reading. The book's thirteen chapters are divided into four sections: Introduction, History, Conditions, and Consequences. Each section is introduced with a tantalizing photograph of the former Birtle Residential School taken in 1990. These prompted me to make comparisons to schools that I know and left me wanting to know more about Birtle.

The text follows the increasingly familiar format of many works on residential schools with chapters on traditional education, the role of church and state, life within the schools focusing on health, staff, and curriculum; and the most interesting section examining the impacts of the school in terms of language, resistance, and abuse. In particular, the chapters dealing with the effects of the school personnel's actions on language and abuse were some of the more focused presentations of those phenomena that I have encountered. The book also incorporates some slightly obscure documents, notably Inspector Martin Benson's 1897 report from the Manitoba Archives and George Caldwell's 1967 report on nine Saskatchewan schools.

While the author has not really succeeded in her efforts to piece together an overview of Indian Residential schools in Canada, her book certainly is a useful contribution to the present body of knowledge. What she has done is to give some significant pieces from a somewhat random selection of writings about specific schools from a range of contexts and times. If I have a major disappointment, it is that *No End of Grief* does not produce much new in the way of analysis and did not problematize the units of analysis the author employs. For example, I searched in vain for a statement on what Grant meant by the term "resistance." Indeed, I found that it was an assumed category encompassing appeals to the government, students, cultural production, and their refusal to comply with school expectations. I found the introductory section on the significance of cutting children's hair unusual and quite fascinating, but I also noted traces of romantic essentialism. J.R. Miller's recent work *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (University of Toronto Press, 1996) is far more comprehensive as an overview of Canadian residential schools.

Overall I found the book a good read and a useful contribution to the literature on Canadian residential schools. Grant's long-time work with aboriginal teacher education has

given her a strong foundation from which to present her views.

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