

# A Residential School Memoir

Basil Johnston's *Indian School Days*

The publication in 1988 of Basil Johnston's *Indian School Days* initiated an explosion of writing about residential schools in Canada. A narrative re-creation of life at the Garnier Residential School for Boys by one of its "former [. . .] inmates" (11), Johnston's memoir helped mobilize a collective response to these institutions.<sup>1</sup> Since its publication, a great deal more attention has been directed to the residential school experience, a chapter of Canadian history that extended from the 1870s to the early 1980s. In the same year that Johnston's residential school memoir was published, Celia Haig-Brown's *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School* also appeared. A year later, the CBC aired *Where the Spirit Lives*, a film that depicts the devastating effects of an Anglican residential school on an Akainaa (Blood) community in Alberta. Increased media coverage of residential schools followed over the next two years, including an hour-long special by *The Fifth Estate* and commissioned films broadcast on TVO and VISION.<sup>2</sup> A number of books on residential schools appeared, including survivor accounts such as Isabelle Knockwood's *Out of the Depths* (1992), autobiographies such as Rita Joe's *Song of Rita Joe* (1996) and Tomson Highway's loosely autobiographical novel, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (1996), as well as a substantial body of critical writing by Native and non-Native writers.<sup>3</sup> The traumatic effects of residential schooling came to be known as "Residential School Syndrome." This belated attention to accounts of the residential schools produced a secondary effect: skepticism about their purpose and intended audience. Do such accounts serve to purge a dominant culture's sense of culpability or to heal a lingering pain in survivors and Native audiences?<sup>4</sup>

*Indian School Days*, because of its mild, nostalgic tone, could be considered a text that serves the first purpose—that is, of easing the collective guilt for the residential schools. But Johnston’s memoir is a much more resistant text than it might appear. *Indian School Days* intervenes in the historical record with an unofficial version of life in a residential school. “None of the stories recounted in this text will be found recorded in any official or unofficial journals of the Garnier Residential School for Boys,” Johnston writes in his introduction (11). Francis Hart, in his essay, “History Talking to Itself: Public Personality in Recent Memoir” (1979), asserts a similar role for the memoir, distinct from that of institutional history, describing the memoir as “the personal act of repossessing a public world, historical, institutional, collective” (195). “The memoirs are of a person,” Hart further characterizes this genre, “but they are ‘really’ of an event, an era, an institution, a class identity” (195). In her more recent study of the memoir, *Repossessing the World: Reading Memoirs by Contemporary Women* (2002), Helen Buss highlights its value in recording formerly suppressed histories. Her gender-based inquiry emphasizes the appeal of the memoir to those whose experiences and voices have been excluded from official history: “Its concentration on scenes of trauma, initiation, and radical changes in consciousness are performed through the writing, which makes real what the larger culture may not recognize. Set in vivid, scenic recreations of lived experience, the memoir wishes to register as history formerly untold [. . .]” (23). Like critics before her, Buss places the memoir at the junction of history and autobiography. Narrating in a mode that is both historiographic and idiographic, traversing public and local spheres, the memoir “perform[s] the connections between private lives (ones lived by ordinary people who are not direct actors in large events) and the public ideologies that they are both shaped by and resistant to” (Buss 115).

In asserting that the memoir serves writers whose histories have been denied, Buss, however, dismisses the use of the genre by contemporary male writers: “[I]t is women who most often take up the memoir form,” she writes, “for the specific purpose of revising their cultural contexts so that their experience is not excluded” (3). “In doing so,” Buss continues, these female writers “are bringing female gendering to bear on our previously male-gendered narratives of the self and culture” (3). But Johnston, like the female memoirists Buss describes, also uses this genre to recover a “history formerly untold” (23). His work is an instance of a minority male author’s adaptation of this mode, a situation that Buss leaves largely unexamined in her study of gender and genre.

Moreover, Buss argues that the memoir is becoming a predominant mode for female writers because it enables them to explore how their sense of self depends upon community. Contemporary women's memoirs unfold around the narrator's negotiation with her defined community to present a subjectivity and narrative that, in Buss's view, are more relational. "In contemporary times, when 'radical individuality' is becoming more a burden than a blessing, new syntheses of group and individual identity factors are being made," she further points out (4). But while Buss acknowledges these "new syntheses of group and individual identity" that are altering the study of life writing, she tends to overlook the memoir's value to male writers such as Johnston who also wish to articulate a "relational self" (Eakin 43).

Notions about community and self in life writing are linked not only to gender but also to culture. In her essay, "First-Person Plural: Subjectivity and Community in Native American Women's Autobiography," Hertha Sweet Wong examines how the use of the terms "relationality" and "community" in Native writing differs from feminist formulations. Wong identifies context as a key factor in determining notions of community, a qualification with obvious relevance to the type of identity formation at work in *Indian School Days*. Within the setting of the residential school, Johnston and his classmates acquire a sense of community that is familial and gender-specific. Wong suggests that the invocation of community by Native writers can be a conscious strategy to "resist the official tragic narrative of Indian loss and disappearance" (173). Here Wong's and Buss's studies converge: both emphasize how the articulation of a collective identity can be a way to resist silencing, alienation, or imposed identity.

Despite its often light-hearted tone, *Indian School Days* contains an undercurrent of resistance—a resistance traceable to the "contradictory" version of history it presents. Johnston's extended description of the students' defiance of the priests' authority, his subversion of official discourses, and his affirmation of collective solidarity all serve to articulate a collective identity in opposition to the residential school system. Johnston's collective identity also represents a challenge to the theme of cultural defeat so frequent in conventional narratives of post-contact Native life.

"**S**panish!"—thus begins Johnston's memoir. "In its most common applications the word refers to a citizen of Spain, and his or her language, and evokes romantic images of señoritas and dons, matadors and conquistadors, flamenco dancers and Don Quixote, castles and courts

of inquisition” (1). A word clearly unfitted to the northern Ontario village bearing the name, its derivation is the subject of local legend. Johnson re-tells a commonly told tale of a group of Anishnabe warriors who, around 1750, traveled south into Spanish-occupied territory. Enraptured by the Spanish women they discovered in their foray, the warriors took home with them one “winsome señorita” who then married an Anishnabe chief, named the village, and bore descendents bearing the name Espaniol (5).

Although Johnston casts doubt on the plausibility of this history, it nonetheless serves an important function at the beginning of his memoir. In a role-reversal that runs counter to the process of acculturation typically depicted in colonial chronicles, this inverted conversion tale depicts a Spanish subject adopting an Anishnabe way of life. For Johnston as for his classmates, “Spanish” evokes yet another, stronger set of associations: “It was a word synonymous with residential school, penitentiary, reformatory, exile, dungeon, whippings, kicks, slaps” (6). “Spanish” becomes a synecdoche for the residential schools sustaining the town—St. Peter Claver’s Residential School for Indian Boys (later re-named Garnier Residential School) and St. Joseph’s Residential School for Indian Girls. Downstream from this village, whose “mixture of French, English, Irish, Scottish, half-breeds, full breeds and one Syrian” all “liv[ed] more or less peacefully with one another” (3), are two Indian reservations whose fishing waters were contaminated by the nearby paper mill, whose “affairs and prospects were governed by an ‘Indian agent’ who ruled with an autocratic hand and ill-informed dedication,” and whose “present [. . .] was grim, and the future scarcely better” (4). Disturbing the veneer of the otherwise sleepy Leacockian town of Spanish is the recognition that “what kept the village from extinction [was] ‘the school’” (1). The school provided both entertainment and industry for Spanish, the latter fact disturbingly evident in Johnston’s reminder that the students were under the guardianship of the Minister of Mines and Resources.

These introductory pages of *Indian School Days* cast Johnston in the role of historian, sorting through multiple histories and inserting a new, previously unrecorded account of Spanish. The inverted conversion tale functions as a *petite histoire* or local history of how the village got its name. More importantly for the historical focus of his text, Johnston brings this local history into dialogue with his classmates’ perspective, for immediately following the playful anecdote is Johnston’s more serious commentary on the fear that “Spanish!” evoked in Native children. The señorita’s romantic

captivity recedes as Johnston discusses the real incarceration that he and his classmates experienced. A more critical Johnston emerges, as the forced confinement of Aboriginal children becomes the focus of his introduction. Alternating between anecdotal and argumentative styles, moving from storyteller to historian, Johnston corrects the local accounts of this place with the particular experiences of his classmates.

Johnston's choice of memoir for his residential school account allows this mingling of anecdotal reminiscence and historical revision to continue throughout his text. Using the discursive elasticity of this genre—"a style that is at the same time narrative and essayistic, descriptive and imagistic, factually testimonial and anecdotally fictive" (Buss 2-3)—Johnston depicts the daily operations of the residential school with both humour and incisive criticism. The memoir also offers Johnston a flexible perspective. As Marcus Billson points out, the narrator of a memoir moves freely among the rhetorical stances of participant, spectator, and historian (271). Francis Hart further refines this description by referring to the memoirist as a "collective spectator" (204), an observation with particular resonance for *Indian School Days*. "In setting down some of the stories," Johnston writes in the introduction, "I have had to rely on my own memory and on the memories of my colleagues," whose names he proceeds to list (11). More than an expression of authorial gratitude, this statement calls to mind the polyvocality of Isabelle Knockwood's residential school account.<sup>5</sup> By emphasizing not only the collectivity of this experience but also the collective retrieval of it, *Indian School Days* testifies to a shared, communal history rather than an individual experience of exclusion.

Johnston's acknowledgement of his colleagues' contributions is also a way of authenticating his representation of events. By allowing the perspectives of his classmates to corroborate his own, Johnston outmanoeuvres some of the judgments often levelled at the memoir. "Because of their dependence on narrators who are never fully impartial," Buss notes, "memoirs have been considered to be both bad history (which assumes objectivity) and inferior literature (which prefers narratives that show rather than tell)" (xv). Johnston, however, strives for fairness in his depiction. At the same time, he eschews the expectation, indeed the possibility, of impartiality: "This account of Garnier covering two periods, 1939-44 and 1947-50, is as accurate as memory and affect and bias will allow," Johnston states. "I hope as well that it is fair" (11). As "personal revelation of the event" (Hart 204), memoir makes no claims to objectivity. The memoir attempts to recreate instead the

texture of daily life in a way that gives history a real, lived dimension.

Memoirs often focus on a segment of the narrator's life, an experience or event that holds wider, historical import: "Titles such as memoirs of *my* times, memoirs of San Quentin, memoirs of a girlhood among ghosts, reflect on that ambiguous genitive" (Hart 195). By titling his account, *Indian School Days*, Johnston takes the reader to a place and experience that are both generalized and specific. It might also allude to *Glengarry School Days* (1902), Ralph Connor's popular turn-of-the-century memoir of a rural Ontario boyhood. *Indian School Days* suggests a similar kind of nostalgic reminiscence, a quality characteristic of the memoir generally. As Billson observes, "The memoir expresses the memorialist's strong sense of loss for a past which he reveres and misses" (261). Particularly relevant to Johnston's work is Billson's observation that this nostalgic mood prevails "even when that past is one of disappointment and failure" (268). Memoir attempts to recapture "the special, unique, never to be repeated character of the past" (261). Though this description might seem ill-suited to a narrative that revisits an entire youth spent in the residential school, it does capture the fondness with which Johnston looks back on his and his classmates' shared experience. In concentrating on the roguish behaviour of the students—antics that enlivened their daily lives while enabling their psychological survival—Johnston resists what Gerald Vizenor calls "hypotragedies"<sup>6</sup> or what Donald Bahr refers to as "victimist [. . .] history."<sup>7</sup> Instead, Johnston emphasizes the collective solidarity that he and his classmates formed in this environment, a sense of community that was not broken by the personal and social trauma they experienced.

"Were it not for the spirit of the boys, every day would have passed according to plan and schedule, and there would have been no story," Johnston asserts (47). This statement, presented alongside a schedule of the residents' daily routine, draws attention to what unfolded outside the structure of the residential school's operation. The "spirit" that Johnston attempts to capture is the spirit of resistance, the boys' adeptness at defying the priests. At night in the dormitory, Johnson recalls, there were "muted whispers commingled with muffled giggles" (46). On one occasion, upon overhearing the patriotic sentiments of two supervising German prefects, the students exact their own punishment:

There was always someone awake, someone to hear, someone to whisper aloud, "Nazi"; and the word "Nazi" echoed and re-echoed throughout the dormitory. "Who says thees?"

"Nazi," in the north corner.  
 "Who says thees?"  
 "Nazi," in the south end.  
 "Who says thees?"  
 "Nazi." (46)

"Eventually," Johnston adds, "[Fathers Buck and Kehl] stopped talking to one another in the dormitory and finally learned that it was better to grit their teeth and to bear whatever names the boys called them" (46-47). Because of the anonymous and collective nature of these acts, they were difficult to punish. *Indian School Days* recounts many similar situations in which the students challenge the priests' control.

In showing the irony and quiet transgression behind the boys' conduct and apparent obedience, Johnston also undermines the official discourses of the school. The most pervasive of these institutional discourses is Christian doctrine. When the boys were ordered to "Kneel down and say your prayers," Johnston notes that "We prayed, imploring God to allow us release from Spanish the next day" (45). Johnston recounts with similar skepticism and mockery the boys' tutelage in confession: "Every Thursday night there were confessions to be made, regardless of guilt or innocence" (54). He recalls the boys' organized efforts at avoiding the severe priests:

Of [the four] confessors fathers Richard and Belanger were to be avoided. When the confessors entered the confessional, therefore, the boys quickly formed lines outside the cubicles of the "easy" priests who, for penance, directed penitents to say "One Our Father, one Hail Mary and one Glory Be. . . ." (54)

On occasions when the stricter priests could not be avoided, the boys claimed neither to be free of sin nor to have sinned too much. "Three was a good number," remembers Johnston, "neither too pious nor too dissolute. 'I fought three times during this past week' was credible and acceptable" (55). What the boys learn from such rituals is not innocence or forgiveness but how to avoid the priests' harangues. "Sinner and innocent alike," Johnston sardonically reflects, "we soon got the hang of confessing" (55).

Outside the confessional, the boys are continually reminded of their inherent guilt. Johnston recalls his lesson in original sin when he and a classmate are mistakenly accused of smoking:

Father looked astounded as I gave my testimony [of innocence] and then, like a lawyer who has caught a witness in a lie during cross-examination, frowned in triumphant indignation, "Oh-ho! So you were smoking, were you?"  
 "No, Father."  
 "How many puffs?"

"I wasn' smoking."  
"Two. How many puffs?"  
"But I wasn' smoking."  
"Four. How many puffs?"  
"I didn' take none."  
"Eight. How many puffs?" (160)

Johnston's representation of the exchange in courtroom terms—"testimony," "lawyer," "witness," "cross-examination"—suggests that a criminal-judicial discourse supplemented the Christian one within the school. The questioning continues until Johnston realizes the situation: "At last what Father Hawkins was doing seeped into my skull. He didn't believe me, and he was doubling the number of lashes he was going to deliver on my hands for each untruth that I uttered. I was to be punished for truth instead of being rewarded" (160). "Not wanting sixty-four lashes," Johnston concedes, "I blurted out, 'I took a puff'" (160). The priest responds with the following admonition: "When are you going to learn to tell the truth? It's one of the lessons that we try to teach you, but if you cannot learn the easy way, then I guess you'll have to learn it the hard way" (160). These anecdotes call attention to how the disciplinary practices of this institution often ran contrary to the principles it purported to instill.

Johnston's critical commentary extends to the political rhetoric justifying the operation of residential schools. He quotes Reverend Wilson, a residential school proponent: "We don't wish to un-Indianize them, but for their own good induce them to lay aside the bow and fish-spear and put their hand to the plough or make them wield the tool of the mechanic" (7). These "civilizing" sensibilities justify assimilationist policies: "[W]e want them to become apprenticed out to white people and to become, in fact, Canadians" (7). (The economic interests served by this stance are clear: the type of work that Native people are encouraged to take up is limited to trades and service jobs.) But "to become [. . .] Canadian[. . .]" did not mean straightforward enfranchisement but rather assimilation and indenture.<sup>8</sup> Education was recognized as an important tool of assimilation,<sup>9</sup> an instrument capable of ensuring, in Duncan Campbell Scott's words, that "there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed in the body politic" (qtd. in Haig-Brown 27).

Johnston's position on enfranchisement and assimilation is developed in successive stages of the text. In the introduction, he quotes from his valedictory speech where he appears to extol the value of enfranchisement: "The *Sudbury Star* of June 8, 1950 reported that I had said in my closing remarks



as valedictorian: “Only through having the courage to continue our studies and determination to use the talents we have for advancement can our Indian people become true citizens of Canada” (12). The community newspaper, a regional institution representing the dominant culture of Northern Ontario, is eager to depict the “Indian” as already assimilated. Johnston quickly corrects this view: “We were ‘wards of the Crown,’ not citizens of Canada. [. . .] It was not until 1960 that Indians were allowed to vote in federal elections in Canada” (12). Still, the impression that Johnston leaves here is of the necessity, indeed the desirability, of enfranchisement—the liberal assumption that gaining full citizenship would place Aboriginal people on an equal footing with other Canadians. Near the end of the text, however, Johnston undermines this impression. He returns to his valedictory address once more, prefacing it with the same statement: “It was reported by the *Sudbury Star* that I spoke as follows [. . .]” (241). Later, to a classmate’s question of how he “got all those fancy ideas,” Johnston admits that the speech was written not by him but by one of his instructors (241). Even though he loses the speech before addressing the audience, he describes having the good fortune of Father McKenna’s text “projecting [. . .] on my mind’s memory screen” (242). This revelation of authorship unsettles the reader’s confidence in the statements Johnston made on that day. In this closing section of his memoir, Johnston confirms that the possibilities for individual and collective expression within the residential school were few. Even the exemplary valedictorian at the end of his tenure was not entrusted with the opportunity to represent himself and his classmates.

On several occasions, Johnston questions the suitability and effectiveness of the instruction offered by the residential school:

St. Peter Claver’s existed for two reasons. One was to train Indian youth for some vocation. [. . .] Alas, while there were some accomplished farmers and shoemakers, no graduate went into business; the trades for which we had been trained were rendered obsolete by new technology. The school’s other purpose was to foster religious vocations by frequent prayer and adoration. But all the prayers, masses, novenas and benedictions could not overcome the natural resistance of most boys to a career in holy orders. The school produced neither tradesmen nor priests. (26-27)

This criticism of education in the residential schools is not uncommon. Lee Maracle writes of her sister “spen[ding] years praying at convent school, cooking delicious pies and ironing the starched paraphernalia of the nunnery and the priesthood along with dozens of other Native girls. She left school at fifteen, functionally illiterate” (38). Isabelle Knockwood makes a similar

observation about the male students in her school: "Because so much time was spent in hard physical labour, few of the boys developed more than minimal educational skills" (56). One of Knockwood's former classmates reveals that, "[u]pon discharge, I was not even able to fill out a job application without help" (56). Left with this impression of the dubious effectiveness of the residential school, one cannot but help read Johnston's dedication "to all the prefects and priests and teachers who tried to instruct us" as somewhat ironic (11). "Tried to instruct us," rather than "instructed us" is the phrasing Johnston chooses here, implying not only that the educational program failed, but also that the attendant political objectives of neutralizing and "absorbing" Native subjects into the body politic were not achieved.

Johnston balances his criticisms, however, with a reminder of the relationships he and his classmates formed in their environment. It is this solidarity, invoked later in life, that occasions the telling of this story. Johnston begins the first chapter by describing a reunion with some of the former residents of the school: "It was an evening of recollection, of reliving the days in Spanish by recalling not the dark and dismal, but the incidents that brought a little cheer and relief to a bleak existence. I share some of these with you" (11). Johnston's affectionate recollection of this time is a way of writing against "aesthetic victimry," as Vizenor calls it. Equally significant is the way in which this assertion of solidarity counters theoretical formulations of the "social dimension of trauma," the view that "trauma damages the texture of community" (Erikson 187). In "Notes on Trauma and Community," Kai Erikson defines collective trauma as a "blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality" (187). Erikson further describes the effect of collective trauma on social relationships: "'I' continue to exist, though damaged and maybe even permanently changed. 'You' continue to exist, though distant and hard to relate to. But 'we' no longer exist as a connected pair or as linked cells in a larger communal body" (187). Yet Johnston affirms the bonds that his community of peers formed within the often denigrating environment of the residential school.

Johnston's assertion of collective solidarity writes against the impression of these institutions as creating only social disruption and fragmentation within Native communities. Because subsequent accounts have been much more explicit in their condemnation of the residential school, Johnston's memoir seems perhaps a milder or more modulated response. But Johnston's narrative remains subversive, not simply because it was one of

the first books to deal with the residential schools, but because it uses the memoir as a form of resistance.

While many writers have used memoirs to celebrate great acts of history—in CBC parlance, the “heritage moments” that contributed to the making of a national identity—Johnston returns to a dark and shameful moment in Canadian history. However, he imbues his record of the residential school experience with nostalgia and affection for his fellow students and their capacity to resist this institution’s uncontested authority. His complex representation of the residential school is a way of asserting interpretive sovereignty over his experiences. Retelling this segment of his life in a way that resists cultural scripts is one of the ways that Johnston recuperates, or “repossesses,” his past. Memoir, as Hart describes it, is “the autobiography of survival” (195), of living to tell about “an event, an era, an institution” (195). It is fitting, then, that Johnston ends his memoir with a statement by a fellow classmate, whose defiant declaration, “We toughed it out, didn’t we? They couldn’t break us down, could they?” (243), reinforces this text’s spirit of collective survival and resistance.

## NOTES

- 1 I do not mean to suggest that Johnston’s was the first narrative account of the residential school. Jane Willis’s *Geniesh: An Indian Girlhood* (1973) was an earlier instance of the residential school narrative in Canada. Written in the tradition of the boarding school autobiography, *Geniesh* centres on Willis’s youth spent in this institution and its deleterious effects on her life afterward. Willis’s text received very little critical attention following its publication and eventually fell out of print. Maria Campbell’s *Halfbreed* (1973) and Anthony Apakark Thrasher’s *Thrasher: Skid Row Eskimo* (1976) discuss their adolescence in residential schools, but this experience is not the primary focus of either book.
- 2 Mary Jane Miller documents this surge of media attention in her essay, “*Where the Spirit Lives: An Influential and Contentious Television Drama about Residential Schools.*”
- 3 See, for instance, Agnes Grant, J.R. Miller, Judith Ennamorato, and John S. Milloy.
- 4 This issue is raised by Roland Chrisjohn and Sherri Young in *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School in Canada* (1997). Written in reaction to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), this work intervenes in the “Standard Account” that emerged from the proceedings on residential schools. Young and Chrisjohn criticize the rhetoric of healing and the pathologizing of “residential school syndrome,” which in their view have neutralized discussions of legal recourse and monetary redress.

Other critics have turned their attention to the child welfare system in Canada and claim that the disproportionate removal of aboriginal children from their families is a continuation of the residential school legacy. See Patrick Johnston’s *Native Children and the Child Welfare System*, Bradford Morse’s “Native Indian and Métis Children in Canada and Victims of the Child Welfare System,” Patricia Monture-Angus’s “A Vicious

- Circle: Child Welfare and the First Nations” (in *Thunder in My Soul*) and Robert Bensen’s introduction to *Children of the Dragonfly: Native American Voices on Child Custody and Education*.
- 5 Knockwood also acknowledges the contributions of her classmates in her account. Like Johnston, she emphasizes the collective significance of her writing and dedicates the book to her colleagues. Her work creates a context for a collective witnessing that draws on the memories and impressions of her former classmates. Knockwood explains that the inspiration of her text came from other survivors who shared her pain. “I began to feel that I was carrying their pain, as well as my own, around with me,” she writes (10).
- 6 From “A Postmodern Introduction” (*Narrative Chance* 11).
- 7 “Just as dichotomized, binary, or Manichean reasoning once served as justification for imperial domination,” Arnold Krupat summarizes, “so, too, is it often retained today to justify that form of postcolonial revisionism that produces what Donald Bahr has called ‘victimist . . . history,’ a very specific form of narrative which ‘tells how one people was damaged by another’” (316).
- 8 The assimilationist undercurrents of enfranchisement also reverberate in *Out of the Depths*, where Knockwood reproduces school policy: “In the primary grades, instill the qualities of obedience, respect, order, neatness, and cleanliness. . . . As students become more advanced, inculcate as near as possible in the order mentioned, independence, self-respect, industry, honesty, thrift, self-maintenance, citizenship and patriotism. Discuss charity, pauperism, Indian and white life, the evils of Indian isolation, enfranchisement . . .” (Knockwood 48).
- 9 The 1969 White Paper on Indian Affairs recognized education as a primary tool of assimilation. The National Indian Brotherhood (now the AFN) responded in 1972 with the document “Indian Control of Indian Education” (Monture-Angus 93). Under the Indian Act, enfranchisement was also mandatory for those who received a university education (Tobias 42-48).

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