Manic History

Losing Children, Losing Memory

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ABSTRACT On May 27, 2021, the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation reported the discovery of 215 unmarked graves on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia. Their first response was mourning for the loss of young lives; their second response was melancholia for the loss of the children's names. David Eng and David Kazanjian advocate a "counterintuitive" interpretation of melancholia as "creative," redefining it as the work of mourning that sustains "a continued and open relation to the past." Jeff Barnaby's 2013 film about residential school resistance, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, affirms melancholia as a creative relation to the past for Indigenous people while drawing attention to another agency that allows settler society to actively lose the past. Freud remarks that the "most remarkable" quality of melancholia is the way it turns into mania, which ensues when "the ego coincides with the ego ideal." What if some losses do not make us melancholic but manic? Is it possible to make history by losing history? Settler mania incites Indigenous melancholia by displacing responsibility for children's deaths from church and state to parents who are themselves school survivors.

KEYWORDS Indigenous film and literature, settler colonialism, residential schools, history, post-Freud

May 27, 2021, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reported that the possible gravesites of 215 children had been found on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School near the city of Kamloops, British Columbia. The discovery was made by Sarah Beaulieu, a specialist in ground-penetrating radar.[1] Hired and supervised by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, Beaulieu focused her search on an apple orchard because school survivors remembered being woken in the night "to dig graves there."[2]

The first response to the grim discovery was mourning for the loss of young lives. Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, stated that "there are no words to express the deep mourning that we feel as First Nations people, and as survivors, when we hear an announcement

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like this."[3] Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Chief Rosanne Casimir outlined a plan to honor the children, contact their home communities, and protect their remains.

The second response was melancholy for the loss of the children's stories. In July, Chief Casimir affirmed her community's determination to identify the missing children and called on the Government of Canada and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the Catholic order that ran the school, to share attendance records.[4] But the discovery highlighted the fragility of the historical archive: the CBC reported that according to Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, "'massive ongoing problems' with historical records, including those 'held by certain Catholic entities that they will not release' have made it very hard to understand accurately what happened."[5] As if to confirm the pattern, Turpel-Lafond has since been accused of losing her own history.[6]

There is something about these losses—of children and their stories—that resists being assimilated to the Freudian categories of mourning and melancholia. Freud describes mourning as a reaction "to the loss of a loved person" or of an "ideal" that has taken a loved one's place, but sometimes "the same influences produce melancholia," which is a "reaction" to losses of an "ideal kind," such as a loss of trust in "church and state."[7] In Canada, Indigenous people mourn their lost children in a settler "state" that, in collaboration with the "churches," is not melancholic about losing its history. While Indigenous people endeavor to remember, the state actively labors to forget, as if the loss of history might forestall loss of trust.

In their introduction to the collection *Loss*, David Eng and David Kazanjian propose, against the grain of Freud's legacy, "a counterintuitive apprehension of loss as creative," arguing that the "avowal" of loss can produce "a world of new representations and alternative meaning." They redefine melancholia as a work of mourning that sustains "a continued and open relation to the past."[8] But the losses mourned by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation point to the work of another, unnamed agency that makes history happen by losing history—and then loses that loss. What is this nameless agency that resists the work of mourning and melancholia from the inside?

Paradoxically, it is Freud who points toward an explanation, for it is possible to read Freud in order to read beyond him. In melancholia, he argues, one part of the ego pits itself against the other and "judges it critically" so that people with melancholia view themselves as "morally despicable" and expect "to be cast out and punished."[9] However, self-punishment is what repeatedly failed to happen in settler Canada while residential schools were incurring incalculable losses of young Indigenous lives and afterwards as melancholia descended on grieving First Nations communities. Settler history happened as the loss of history. The settler state did not pause to mourn. Nor did it descend into melancholy. Why not? Where did mourning and melancholia go?

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FIGURE 1. *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (dir. Jeff Barnaby, 2013).

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The "most remarkable" quality of melancholia, Freud remarks, is how it sometimes turns into its opposite, mania. He cannot explain why but suspects the answer lies in the regression of the libido into the ego, which reinforces self-love—that is, narcissism.[10] What if some losses do not make people mournful or melancholic but manic? Can there be a manic nationalism? A manic history? If so, it would be defined not by self-reproach, but by a sense of triumph.

Jeff Barnaby's 2013 film, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, stages the dilemma of an Indigenous community mourning intergenerational losses in the wake of the settler mania for losing the history of those losses. The film opens with a traumatic prologue. It is 1969. Burner (Brandon Oakes) and Anna (Roseanne Supernault) are in a kitchen on the fictional Red Crow Reserve. He sits at the table, rolling a joint; she stands by the stove, making toast. Anna's husband, Joseph (Glenn Gould), enters with a case of beer. Burner steps outside and vomits from the porch. The camera turns to show Anna and Joseph's children, Aila and Tyler (Miika Bryce Whiskeyjack and Louis Beauvais) sitting on the hood of a car. The computer-generated image of St. Dymphna's residential school looms behind them.[11] Burner points to it and says, "They cook Indian kids up there for that zombie priest." Tyler asks, "What's a zombie?" Burner dodges the question: "Don't they teach you anything up at that school? Zombies are dead people who come back to life to eat brains." Aila is sketching in a notebook. She draws Tyler a picture. Burner adds that the zombie priests burn the bodies in "the cooker" and let "their smoke" rise up the chimney: "Why do you think so many kids go missing at St. D's, huh?" The zombie emerges as a figure for the past that consumes rather than produces historical consciousness, eats brains instead of educating them. Zombies walk where history gets manic.[12]

Jennifer Henderson points out that *Rhymes* is structured as a series of genre rhymes, scenes that reproduce scenes from films like *Psycho*, *Carrie*, and *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. These genre rhymes are catachrestic zombies that stand in "for that which does not have a proper name in settler Canada."[13] The computer-

FIGURE 2. *Night and Fog* (dir. Alain Resnais, 1956).

generated image of the school rhymes with a shot of the approach to Auschwitz in Resnais's *Night and Fog*.[14] To supplement the lost residential school records, the film borrows an image from the documentary record of the Holocaust.

Anna and Joseph follow Burner out of the house. She helps Joseph into the back seat of their car and gets behind the wheel. He tells Anna to let Aila drive, so she lifts Aila onto her lap and coaches her. Instead of rolling forward, the car backs up and hits something with a sickening thud. Anna gets out to look and finds Tyler under the back wheel. In the morning, Aila wakes to the sound of two men arresting her father and then sees her mother hanging from the rafters of the house. Anna and Joseph fall prey to self-reproach, but it is the state's manic loss of history that prompts them to turn on themselves. They suffer what Julia Boyd calls the "fiction of neglect": the stereotype that Indigenous parents are unable to protect their children. [15] By displacing responsibility for children's deaths from church and state to parents who are themselves school survivors, settler mania, personified by the two agents arresting Joseph, incites Indigenous melancholia. As Jordan Abel explains, "the violence perpetrated by [the] schools" did not stop after the schools were closed" but became "intergenerational."[16] In a voiceover, Aila says she aged a thousand years that day. She became historical in the absence of history. Only now do the credits roll.

The *Final Report* of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada records that the first boarding school for Indigenous people opened in the early seventeenth century near Quebec, but parents hesitated to send their children, and the children who were sent did not stay.[17] John Milloy explains that the residential school era began in 1868, when the Dominion of Canada allocated funds for fifty-seven schools "frequented" by Indigenous children. "Only two

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were residential schools." A decade later, there were four, all in Ontario. After 1870, when the Dominion acquired Rupert's land from the Hudson's Bay Company, the churches "led the way in building the system." The numbered treaties negotiated between 1870 and 1877 included pledges of training and technology to ease the transition to an agricultural economic base. These promises were made at the insistence of Indigenous leaders, but the churches used them as "a lever to move the government to provide funding for schools and teachers."[18] In 1879, Nicholas Flood Davin, journalist and poet, was commissioned to conduct a study of boarding schools in the United States and recommended the construction of four on the Canadian prairies.[19] In 1892, the churches and government agreed on a per-capita funding model: schools would receive an annual per-student grant for an authorized number of students.[20] Underfunding became a feature of the system, partly because parents, rightly fearing abuse, were reluctant to send their children to school.[21] In 1919, under the leadership of Duncan Campbell Scott, the Department of Indian Affairs settled on a policy of compulsory attendance for every child between seven and fifteen, and in 1920 the Indian Act was amended accordingly. The policy, which would remain in force until 1957 (though the last school would remain open until 1997), was to be enforced by truancy officers. The penalties for parents who did not enroll their children included fines and imprisonment.[22]

The central action of the film unfolds in the shadow of Scott's compulsory attendance policy. It is 1976. "Popper," a despotic truant officer whose name connotes both paternalism (Pop) and Catholicism (popery), runs St. Dymphna's as a criminal cartel. Aila (Kawennáhere Devery Jacobs), now a young woman, sells drugs to pay a "truancy tax" that exempts her from attending school. Joseph has just been released from prison. She accompanies him to the woods where Anna is buried.[23] While he looks for her unmarked grave, Anna appears beside Aila, just out of the camera's depth of field. Her blurred image rhymes with the conventional image of the zombie, the film's stand-in for the loss of documentary history. Anna asks Aila why she no longer visits her. "I don't need to come here to see you," Aila answers, not looking at her. Suddenly, by the magic of editing, Burner, the character who conjures up zombies in history's absence, is standing in Anna's place. Watching Joseph, he quips, "He's gonna be wandering for a while."

Joseph tells them he dreamed he saw Anna walking beyond the grave. He worries she cannot rest because, like the children at the Kamloops school, there is no record of where she was buried. "Because they buried her without a name," he explains in Mi'kmaw—significantly, not English—"she walks around."[24] The verb-phrase "to bury" means not only "to put to rest" but "to hide or conceal." Joseph hints that Zombie-Anna will keep walking until the history she replaces comes to replace her—until her name is restored to her remains.

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FIGURE 3. *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (dir. Jeff Barnaby, 2013).

The contrast between grounded Aila and wandering Joseph marks an intergenerational divide. Loss, for Aila, is creative. Her art sustains her relation to the mother who taught her to draw. Joseph mourns Anna interminably because the traces of her loss have been lost, too, not by accident but triumphantly, for whoever buried her (presumably Catholic "priests") buried the traces of her burial too. He mourns so that church and state do not have to.

Henderson explains that, historically, the role of the gothic mode in Canadian cultural production is to project "settler-colonial violence to a distant past and specific sites" as a way of protecting audiences "from a more thorough and troubling reckoning with the legacies and continuities of settler colonialism."[25] Her critique rhymes with this passage from the TRC's report:

> Too many Canadians know little or nothing about the deep historical roots of these conflicts. This lack of historical knowledge has serious consequences for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and for Canada as a whole. In government circles, it makes for poor public policy decisions. In the public realm, it reinforces racist attitudes and fuels civic distrust between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.

The most serious gap "arises from the incompleteness of the documentary record," which means the number of the children "who died at Canada's residential schools is not likely ever to be fully known."[26] Not only were the deaths of children undercounted. School authorities actively destroyed documents, including health records. "Between 1936 and 1944, 200,000 Indians Affairs files" went missing. The records that do survive lack "detail" because schools reported deaths without naming the dead. "It was not until 1935 that Indian affairs adopted a formal policy on how deaths at the schools were to be reported and investigated."[27]

When Freud resumes his discussion of mania in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, he explains that normally the ego ideal (a newly coined technical term for conscience) imposes limitations on the ego, and the ego infringes upon them. In the regression to narcissism, however, the ego "coincides with the ego ideal." Consequently, mania launches the ego into "a mood of triumph and self-satisfaction, disturbed by no self-criticism." The triumphant ego takes

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pleasure in "abolishing" inhibitions as well as "feelings of consideration for others" and "self-reproaches."[28] The mood of triumph signals that, "after having previously ruled it with especial strictness," the ego ideal has been "resolved into" the ego. It is a "festive feeling," he adds in *Totem and Taboo,* of being free "to do what is as a rule prohibited."[29] In *The Ego and the Id,* he likens it to a rebellion against "a constitutional monarch."[30]

Henderson argues that in the constitutional monarchy of Canada, "Residential School Gothic" produces a sense of manic triumph over "a tyrannical power" that, historically, Protestants have located in the Catholic church: "The Gothic mode of dramatizing residential schooling actually reaffirms the central presuppositions of a late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century liberalism which defined itself against the 'backwardness' of perverse and tyrannical power. In this reaffirmation, the attempt to reckon with what is regrettable in Canada's past reproduces elements of a triumphal liberal and Protestant imaginary."[31] It is the triumph of being relieved of memories of events that might wound the settler ego and give occasion for self-reproach, of achieving a coincidence of ego and ego ideal.

Although it operates in the gothic mode, *Rhymes* resists gothic triumphalism through its rhymes with other texts in the visual field. Two of these rhymes occur after Popper's goons steal the money Aila has saved to pay her truancy tax. She is locked in a cell in the basement of St. Dymphna's, where her hair is cut and her clothes taken away. The sequence mimics a genre highly prized by residential school administrators: the transformation photograph. "As generations of residents learned," explains J. R. Miller, "hair and costume were primary targets for adults intent on socializing the younger generation to their customs."[32] Arriving at school could be more "traumatizing" than leaving home. Years later, survivors continue to mourn the loss of their hair and clothes, which were metonymies of everything else they lost at school. [33] To the missionary gaze, the most "dramatic evidence of assimilation" was the before-and-after photograph. The "most striking" example was the portrait of Thomas Moore: the "before" photo showed him with "long, braided hair" and "traditional Plains clothing"; the "after" photo triumphantly displayed him with "short hair and a military-style uniform."[34]

Earlier, Aila pays a visit to her drug-supplier, Grandmother Ceres (Katherine Sorbey). Ceres is a school survivor too (which means there are three generations of survivors on the reserve). Speaking in Mi'kmaw, she tells Aila a story about the wolf and the mushrooms. While she is telling it, the film suspends its moving-picture format and rhymes instead with the graphic novel. The camera scans a panel of black-and-white drawings, as if animating pages from Aila's sketchbook. The English subtitles serve as captions. A starving wolf wanders through a ruined cityscape and stops before a tree. Hungry and hallucinating, he sees children hanging from its branches. He shakes them to the ground and, mistaking them

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for mushrooms, eats them. His eating, however, is manic, for when he "comes back to reality," he starts eating himself. He not only eats children, therefore, but eats the fact of eating them. The rhyme reminds the viewer that the history of residential schools did not happen and then get lost. Losing history was how this history happened. Nor did it happen only once. History had to be lost repeatedly, compulsively, for history to happen. Perhaps the most maddening example is the Bryce-Scott affair, which unfolded in the years preceding and following the First World War.

In January 1904, Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce was appointed Medical Inspector for the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1907, on "instructions" from the Minister of the Interior, he authored a *Report on the Indian Schools of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories*, which reviewed conditions in thirty-five schools in the prairie provinces. He recounts the history of this report in *The Story of a National Crime*, a pamphlet published in 1922 with the stated aim of creating a record of "events" about which the public "knows nothing." What Bryce found in 1907 was "that 24 per cent. of all the pupils which had been in the schools were known to be dead, while of one school on the File Hills reserve, which gave a complete return to date, 75 per cent. were dead at the end of the 16 years since the school opened." The primary cause of death was tuberculosis. Poor ventilation in "old-fashioned," overcrowded buildings fostered the spread of the disease. He called for "an immediate remedy."[35]

Bryce's report loudly attracted the attention of the Canadian media. On November 15, 1907, the Ottawa *Evening Citizen* declared, "Schools Aid White Plague—Startling Death Rolls Revealed—among Indians—Absolute Inattention to Bare Necessities of Health." The *Citizen* noted that "Dr. Bryce's description of the schools shows them to be veritable hotbeds for the propagation and spread of this disease."[36] On November 23, the editor of *Saturday Night*, adopting the role of ego-ideal, scathingly reported that "Indian boys and girls are dying like flies" and condemned the "situation" as "disgraceful to the country."[37] Yet the editor foresaw that the history of these "events" would eventually be lost: "[Bryce's] report is printed, many people will scan the title on the cover, some will open it, a few will read it, and so the thing will drift along another year. And so with the next year, and the year after. Such will be the course of events . . . unless public opinion takes the question up and forces it to the front."[38] In 1910, James MacArthur, the Indian Agent at Duck Lake, north of Saskatoon, remarked that "[no one] responsible can get beyond the fact that those children catch the disease while at school in a building whose every seam and crevice is, doubtless, burdened with Tuberculosis Baccilli."[39]

In 1909 Bryce was asked to investigate the "health of children" in schools around Calgary, where he found tuberculosis "equally" present in children of "every age"

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and "an excessive mortality rate" in those "between five and ten years of age."[40] Fifteen years later, he lamented that his "recommendations" for reducing transmission of airborne disease, such as routine medical inspections and improved ventilation, "were never published and the public knows nothing of them."[41] He had failed to interrupt the future-oriented march of manic history.

Bryce held Duncan Campbell Scott personally responsible for preventing "even the simplest effective efforts to deal with the health problem" of Indigenous people "along modern scientific lines."[42] Bryce had explicitly advised the department to take over administration of the schools and "turn them into sanatoria" under his direction. Instead, the department negotiated with the churches to increase the per capita grant and set standards for diet and ventilation.[43] In a letter to the Minster of the Interior on March 16, 1911, Bryce warned that Scott was orchestrating a passive genocide and, to cover it up, "is counting upon the ignorance and indifference of the public to the fate of the Indians."[44] Scott was promoted from accountant to deputy superintendent general in 1913, and within a year Dr. Bryce was replaced by Dr. O. I. Grain.[45]

Was Bryce right? Did Scott and the department oversee a policy of passive genocide? Milloy cautions that Bryce's criticisms were partly motivated by the failure of his own career ambitions.[46] He openly expressed bitterness at being passed over for the position of deputy minister of health, and he uncritically endorsed the department's policy of eugenic engineering, which, he proposed in 1906, would give Indigenous people "an advance in general intelligence of how to live, through the invaluable admixture of white blood."[47] Long before Bryce filed his report, however, the department was already "fully aware" of the danger posed by tuberculosis. In 1908, F. H. Paget confirmed "what was already a commonplace, the connection between the condition of schools and the ill health of children, particularly through tubercular infection."[48] In addition, Bryce's allegation of "criminal disregard" finds support in documents "created after he left the Department."[49] In 1920 and 1922, Scott commissioned Dr. F. A. Corbett to survey schools in western Canada, effectively repeating the work Bryce had done years earlier. "Corbett found that little had changed."[50] Significantly, he noted that the "deplorable" conditions in schools could not be exclusively attributed to budgetary constraints or the virulence of tuberculosis. The churches and the state had sufficient funds for improvements but chose not to make them.[51] Milloy concludes that "in those hundreds or thousands of deaths (extant records do not allow an accurate count) the churches, Department and government shared complicity. The disease and deaths and the cause of them were known to all."[52]

Strikingly, Bryce, in 1907, and Corbett, in the 1920s, were echoing a complaint that Father Albert Lacombe, a missionary who triumphantly advocated assimilation through education, had voiced in 1890 about conditions at the Kamloops Industrial

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School. The inspector of schools, J. A. McRae, went to investigate. He confirmed Lacombe's concerns and "added one of his own," linking "building design" to "the health of the pupils." The *Toronto Empire* noted that the position of the hospital room beside the school room was "calculated to spread infection."[53] So the missionaries knew. The department knew. And the public knew. How was this knowledge made and lost repeatedly from the 1890s to the 1920s? How could the public "know nothing" about what was "known to all"?

Northrop Frye, the midcentury Canadian critic who emerged a generation after Scott, proposes that the "social" function of poetry is to express, "as a verbal hypothesis, a vision of the goal of work."[54] It is in literature that we frame the world we propose to build. Scott began publishing his poetry while on his way to becoming the senior administrator in charge of "Indian Affairs" in Canada—along with stories, essays, a play, an unpublished novel, and a column in the *Toronto Globe*. Some of Scott's poems express, "as a verbal hypothesis" and goal of work, the disappearance of Indigenous people through a policy of "systematic assimilation."[55] One example of his poetics of vanishment is the poem "Indian Place Names," which opens with these lines: "The race has waned and left but tales of ghosts, / That hover in the world like fading smoke / About the lodges." In this fantasy, although the "dusky folk" are "gone," they have left their names—"Kamouraska, Metapedia / And Metlakahtla"—to the settler state.[56] The poem inflicts the sort of loss that is so devastating for Joseph in *Rhymes*. Scott buries the dead but keeps their names for the state he is working to build.

As bureaucrat in charge of "Indian Affairs," Scott had broad authority to put his poetic hypotheses to work.[57] He looks back on his career in his autobiographical pamphlet *The Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*, prepared for the Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations in late 1931, just before his retirement in March 1932. It is a record of manic losses—of history, culture, and life. Julia Boyd observes that Scott's vanishment poems present Indigenous children as "always already neglected and threatened" and their parents as "powerless to protect them."[58] Yet, incredibly, ten years after Bryce accused him of failing to protect school children, the poet-administrator claims that he "saved" them. He loses this history, ironically, in the chapter entitled "Historical": "They fell a prey to tuberculosis and other maladies hitherto unknown to them. For a time it seemed that they were doomed. But the Government determined that the race should be saved."[59] Years earlier, Scott had introduced the word *doom*, as a verbal hypothesis, in his sonnet "The Onondaga Madonna," a eugenic portrait of a "woman of a weird and waning race" and her infant child, "the latest promise of her nation's doom."[60] Historically, critics have struggled to reconcile the poet who framed the doom of Indigenous children in verse with the administrator who engineered their doom in school.[61]

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Scott himself sees no shame in claiming to be the children's savior. He takes credit for Bryce's appointment while neglecting to mention how he silenced Bryce's criticism. Not only does he show no shame, but he insists there is "no reason" to be "ashamed": "The Department of Indian Affairs has no reason to feel ashamed of its medical service from a remedial standpoint. No appeal for medical treatment from a Canadian Indian goes unheeded, and no expense is spared to give the sick Indian the benefit of the best medical and hospital care available."[62] In 1925, Freud said a repressed idea can enter into consciousness as long as "it is negated." However, Scott's "no" is not "the hall-mark of repression," as Freud puts it, but a symptom of manic triumph over history.[63] In his chapter on "Tuberculosis," Scott blames Indigenous people for contracting a disease that he knew to be spread in poorly constructed and maintained buildings: "The Indians have not the background of education and experience to take full advantage of the knowledge of public health available at the present day." Next, Scott manically contradicts what he has just said about access to health care: "It is regretted that it is not possible to report more progress in combatting this the most important of diseases among Indians. The necessity far exceeds both the facilities and the funds available."[64] First he boasts that no appeal went unanswered. Then he protests there were neither facilities nor funds to answer every appeal. Nowhere does he mention Corbett's warning, in a report he himself commissioned, that he was not doing what he could with the funds that he had. To facilitate the poetic-administrative project to assimilate Indigenous people into the white body politic, Scott assimilates the ego-ideal to the ego. He ends by foreseeing a time when "the Government" will reach "the end of its responsibility" and fully triumph over the claims of conscience, "as the Indians progress into civilization and finally disappear as a separate and distinct people, not by race extinction but by gradual assimilation with their fellow citizens."[65]

In her recent dissertation, Madeleine Reddon echoes Eng and Kazanjian in asking whether "the loss of an attachment" can be read not as "a lack or negation," but "as an uncomfortable fullness" that persists "long after a traumatic event of separation has passed."[66] She finds an example in Abel's long poem, *NISHGA*, which pieces together his personal history as an intergenerational residential school survivor negotiating the settler state's manic loss of residential school history. Toward the end of the poem, the reader comes across a screenshot of a Google search on the topic of "how to kill yourself"—an alarming indicator of melancholia. Other, related screenshots follow: "Thinking about Suicide?" and "Are There Any Painless Suicide Methods?" The sequence gradually loses focus until it becomes illegible. Then a blurred image of trees on a lawn appears, followed by images of buildings. The new sequence gains in focus until a clear photograph of a cornerstone emerges, bearing this inscription: "Coqua-leetza Industrial Institute 1989." Above

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it is a second stone bearing a second inscription: "Coqualeetza Institute. This stone was laid by Duncan Campbell Scott, Litt. D., F.R.S.C. of Ottawa on July 23, 1923."[67] These are the foundation stones of the residential school that Abel's grandparents attended. The sequence comes to rest in a stony block of text:

> I remember renting a car so that I could drive out to the Coqualeetza Residential School. So that I could finally stand in the place where my grandparents had stood. So I could finally be in the place that changed our lives forever. But when I pulled up, I realized that I had been here before. A year ago. For a conference. I had stood here on the grounds where the Residential School used to be and not known it. I had been in this place before and not understood the role that it played in my life.[68]

Abel arrives at his family's history only after surviving the loss of residential school history. Scott has appended his signature to this foundational loss.

What feeling goes with losing your family's history? Is it mourning? Melancholy? Mania? There are no quotations in Freud's repertoire for where Abel is now.[69] "I didn't know how to feel," he confesses, "about not knowing the first time."[70]

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Notes

1. Dickson and Watson, "Remains of 215 Children."
2. Sterritt and Dickson, "This Is Heavy Truth."
3. Dickson and Watson, "Remains of 215 Children."
4. Sterritt and Dickson, "This Is Heavy Truth."
5. Dickson and Watson, "Remains of 215 Children."
6. See Harp, "Unravelling Story."
7. Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 243, 245.
8. Eng and Kazanjian, "Mourning Remains," 5.
9. Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 246.
10. Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 253, 258.
11. Dymphna was a seventh-century Irish saint. At fourteen, she took a vow of chastity, but when her Christian mother died, her pagan father wanted to marry her. She fled and built a hospital for the poor, but he found her and beheaded her—another missing, murdered child (Catholic Online, "St. Dymphna").

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12. Barnaby, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, 1:22–4:30.
13. Henderson, "Residential School Gothic," 43.
14. Resnais, *Night and Fog*, 9:11.
15. Boyd, "'Fugitive Visions,'" 144, 156.
16. Abel, *NISHGA*, 64.
17. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 50.
18. Milloy, *National Crime*, 52–54.
19. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 55–56.
20. Milloy, *National Crime*, 62–63.
21. Milloy, *National Crime*, 67–68.
22. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 70; Milloy, *National Crime*, 70–71.
23. Barnaby, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, 43:30.
24. Barnaby, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, 46:39.
25. Henderson, "Residential School Gothic," 51.
26. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 8.
27. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 90.
28. Freud, *Group Psychology*, 131–32.
29. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 140.
30. Freud, *Ego and the Id*, 53, 55.
31. Henderson, "Residential School Gothic," 51.
32. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 194–95.
33. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 38–39.
34. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 196, 199. See also Milloy, *National Crime*, cover.
35. Bryce, *Story of a National Crime*, 3–5; Bryce, *Report on the Indian Schools*, 17–21; Milloy, *National Crime*, 78.
36. *Evening Citizen*, "Schools Aid White Plague," 1. Milloy dates the publication of this article to Saturday, November 16, 1907 (*National Crime*, 91).
37. *Saturday Night*, "Front Page," 1; Milloy, *National Crime*, 91.
38. Milloy, *National Crime*, 101–2.
39. Quoted in Milloy, *National Crime*, 78.
40. Bryce, *Story of a National Crime*, 5.
41. Bryce, *Story of a National Crime*, 3–4.
42. Milloy, *National Crime*, 95; Bryce, *Story of a National Crime*, 13.
43. TRC, *Honouring the Truth*, 96–97.
44. Bryce, *Story of a National Crime*, 6.
45. Milloy, *National Crime*, 95.
46. Milloy, *National Crime*, 95.
47. Bryce, *Story of a National Crime*, 15; Dominion of Canada, *Annual Report*, 276.
48. Milloy, *National Crime*, 82–83.
49. Milloy, *National Crime*, 97.
50. Milloy, *National Crime*, 98.
51. Milloy, *National Crime*, 100–101.
52. Milloy, *National Crime*, 77.
53. Milloy, *National Crime*, 79.
54. Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 106.

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55. Salem-Wiseman, "Verily," 121–25; Bracken, *Potlatch Papers*, 202–8. When I wrote about Scott's vanishment poems twenty-five years ago, I saw in them the action of an interiorizing national memory, but there was something strangely jubilant about them that I could not explain.
56. Scott, *Poems*, 22.
57. Salem-Wiseman, "Verily," 136–39.
58. Boyd, "'Fugitive Visions,'" 144.
59. Scott, *Administration*, 2.
60. Scott, *Poems*, 230.
61. Salem-Wiseman, "Verily," 120–21, 129.
62. Scott, *Administration*, 18–19.
63. Freud, "Negation," 235–36. Boyd traces Scott's manic displacement of self-reproach onto Indigenous people; see Boyd, "Fugitive Visions," 149–51, 156.
64. Scott, *Administration*, 20. Yet he has already said his department was responsible for education; see Scott, *Administration*, 14.
65. Scott, *Administration*, 27.
66. Reddon, "Inheritances," 57.
67. Abel, *NISHGA*, 191–229; the photograph appears on p. 227.
68. Abel, *NISHGA*, 232.
69. Erdrich, *Round House*, 307.
70. Abel, *NISHGA*, 237.

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