



CATHY BUSBY

RECONCILIATION / COINCIDENCE

BEYOND ANXIETY · MAN AGAINST HIMSELF · SEX WITHOUT FEAR · THE SERMONS OF
THE REVEREND DAVID BUSBY · THE SHAKING OF THE FOUNDATIONS · THE STRUGGLE
OF THE SOUL · TWO ESSAYS ON ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY · YOUR GOD IS TOO SMALL

Carcross Community Education Centre, Yukon, Canada, 1975

ART & SOCIAL JUSTICE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY NEW YORK 2010

RECONCILIATION/COINCIDENCE

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, 1956-57

My father, Edward David Busby (1928-1994), was an Anglican minister, and moved from Toronto to do his MA at UTS in 1956-57. While there he acquired the books and compiled the small binder of sermon notes displayed here and listed on the front of this folder. Throughout his life, he was driven to help people and to create systems and policies that would improve social conditions, modeling this through a Christian paradigm that he held dear.

CARCROSS INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, 1911-1969

The Anglican Church and Canada's federal government operated the Chooutla Indian Residential School, later known as the Carcross Indian Residential School, housing up to 150 students at a time. Emphasis was on reading, writing, arithmetic, physical fitness, as well as obedience and cleanliness: as Principal Cole put it in 1957, the school assisted students "to grow strong physically and mentally and, above all to love their God." This school was one of 138 such institutions now recognized by Canada's Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

THE CARCROSS COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE, 1972-79

On my dad's suggestion, I joined Project Yukon in 1974, a summer work program jointly funded by the Anglican Church and the federal government. One of our postings was at the Carcross Community Education Centre, the former Carcross Indian Residential School. While working on the restoration of the building, I decided to stay for grade 11. The community was home to 90 people: 'parent members' who were the teachers, students and workers. Our vision was of a place of mutual respect and trust where First Nations and non-First Nations students, staff and parent members would live and work together as equals. It was a ground-breaking 'counter-cultural' experiment, and a pivotal life experience for me.

CANADA'S APOLOGY FOR INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS, 2008

Both the Church and the federal government have now officially acknowledged that these schools were attempting to assimilate Indian children and, as it was put in the landmark federal apology, "this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country." The apology was followed by the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, www.trc.ca) in June 2010. Through the process, former Indian residential school students and their families are recording their painful stories of separation from family members, loss of language and culture, and many forms of humiliation and abuse.

In witnessing the TRC's process, I'm re-evaluating and reconciling my year at the former Carcross Indian Residential School. It's now clear that this system weakened generations of First Nations children who were forced to live in this building. And yet, the Carcross Community Education Centre was ahead of its time in re-inhabiting the building and re-imagining it as a community that encouraged the participation of all its members. However, the Community collectively didn't know what to do about the building's history and so it largely ignored it.

On display at UTS are a sampling of books that would have fortified my dad's views and helped to shape the actions of his vocation. They encouraged his progressiveness, yet, like the residential school system, they were limited to a Christian model.

Cathy Busby
Halifax, October 2010

see: www.cathybusby.ca; *We Are Sorry*, a pagework, Visual Arts Nova Scotia, 2008; *Sorry*, Whitehorse, 2009; *We Are Sorry*, Melbourne, 2009; *We Are Sorry*, Winnipeg, 2010; *Taken*, Beijing, 2009; *We Are Sorry*, Artists and Activists #10, Printed Matter, 2010.