

Christine Miskonoodinkwe Smith

These Are the Stories: Memories of a 60s Scoop Survivor

Neyaashiinigmiing, ON: Kegedonce Press, 2021. 149 pp.

In *These Are the Stories: Memories of a 60s Scoop Survivor*, Christine Miskonoodinkwe Smith of Peguis First Nation and the daughter of a Saulteaux mother and a Cree father delivers a poignant and deeply personal account of her life as a Survivor of the infamous Sixties Scoop—a painful chapter in Canada's history that forcibly separated Indigenous children from their families and cultures. Smith's narrative is a powerful testament to resilience, identity, and the enduring strength of the human spirit.

From her early childhood to her journey towards healing and self-discovery, Smith unveils the raw emotions and profound challenges she faced because of the Sixties Scoop. Through vivid prose, she invites readers to bear witness to her experiences, enabling a connection with a broader history of Indigenous displacement and the fight for cultural reclamation. Smith's storytelling is candid, heartrending, and ultimately, hopeful.

The heart of the narrative revolves around Smith's quest to weave together her story of what happened to her and her family as they were brutally disrupted by the Sixties Scoop. Her storytelling captures the nuanced emotions of loss, confusion, and a pervasive sense of displacement many survivors grapple with. The reader is taken on a journey alongside Smith as she embarks on a path of reconnection, driven by an unwavering determination to piece together the fragments of her life.

One of the book's most remarkable aspects is Smith's ability to weave her journey into a broader societal context. She delves into the historical and cultural factors that paved the way for the Sixties Scoop, shedding light on the systemic injustices Indigenous communities endured. Through her lens, readers gain a deeper understanding of the long-lasting effects of these policies on individuals and communities.

Smith's prose is imbued with a sense of urgency, encouraging readers to confront the uncomfortable truths of history and its ongoing reverberations. Her storytelling serves as a call to action, inviting readers to reflect on their roles in supporting reconciliation efforts and advocating for justice.

The themes of resilience and cultural reclamation are central to Smith's narrative. As she navigates through healing challenges, she emphasizes the importance of community and the strength that can be drawn from shared experiences. The relationships she forms along her journey become pivotal to her growth and transformation, underscoring the healing power of unity and shared identity.

Throughout the narrative, Smith raises essential questions about identity, belonging, and the meaning of family. Her exploration of these themes invites readers to question their assumptions and biases, fostering empathy and understanding. As Smith grapples with her complex emotions towards her adoptive family, who treated her as a prisoner rather than a daughter, readers are prompted to consider the intricate dynamics of family, survival and resistance.

These Are the Stories is a testament to the human capacity for resilience, adaptation,

and growth in adversity. Smith's narrative voice is unwavering and authentic, inviting readers to witness her triumphs and setbacks with equal empathy. The book is a testament to the power of storytelling as a vehicle for healing and change.

Reflecting on the impact of *These Are the Stories: Memories of a 60s Scoop Survivor*, I am left with a deep appreciation for Christine Miskonoodinkwe Smith's bravery in sharing her story. Her book is a compelling account of survival, resilience, and the pursuit of identity in the wake of cultural erasure. Through Smith's narrative, readers are challenged to confront their assumptions, biases, and roles in supporting the healing and reconciliation of Indigenous communities. *These Are the Stories* is a decisive contribution to the literature of personal growth, historical reckoning, and the unyielding spirit of those who refuse to be silenced by history's injustices.

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Stacie Brensilver Berman

LGBTQ+ History in High School Classes in the United States since 1990

New York: Bloomsbury, 2023. 296 pp.

Stacie Brensilver Berman's book, *LGBTQ+ History in High School Classes in the United States since 1990*, opens with a staggering admission from filmmaker David France, director of *How to Survive a Plague* (2012)—the acclaimed documentary about early history of the AIDS epidemic and the start of the political group ACT UP. During an interview with Berman for this book, France explained that he received little support from educators he initially approached about trying to include his documentary in schools. As a result, Berman writes, France "stated he has 'no idea' how teachers might use this film in their classroom" (1, emphasis added). This small but powerful statement perfectly encapsulates the timeliness and necessity of Berman's study of the history of how LGBTQ+ history has (or has not) been included in US schools over the past thirty years. For France is surely not alone in his summation that teaching LGBTQ+ history in K–12 educational settings can often feel (and be) tricky, controversial, and even impossible.

Berman's book is ambitious in scope, but as such offers important connections that help to illuminate why the teaching of LGBTQ+ history in schools has and continues to face certain challenges. The first half of the book (chapters 1–5) traces the history of the teaching of LGBTQ+ history in schools alongside other historical currents and trajectories. While the second half of the book does two things. First, it offers a case study exploration of how these debates have occurred in California (chapters 6 and 7) and an analysis of interviews Berman completed with teachers who teach LGBTQ+ history (chapters 8–10). It could be argued that each of these sections could be expanded into their own books and thus given more space to further texturize and theorize the arguments therein. Namely, first half of the book could