

Book Review

Reply to Ezra Anton Greene’s review of *Inuit, Oblate Missionaries, and Grey Nuns in the Keewatin*, published in *Anthropologica* 63.1 (2021)

Frédéric Laugrand
UCLouvain

In the latest issue of *Anthropologica* 63.1 (2021), Ezra Anton Greene provided a review of our book *Inuit, Oblate Missionaries, and Grey Nuns in the Keewatin (1865–1965)*. Greene rightly points out that with our choice to opt for the use of multivocality, we show how interpretations and views are complex and how they differ depending on generations. One can agree or disagree in apprehending history as a living narrative. However, a point raised by Greene is highly problematic and deserves some clarification to avoid any misunderstanding from their review. In contrast to what Greene infers from reading our part 3, we do not suggest sexual abuses did not happen in Chesterfield Inlet Residential school. We provide different views and perceptions. We intentionally inserted various testimonies recorded by Peter Irniq in Igloolik. They are strong and hard to read. Elders’ perceptions are different and were to be presented. We only provided the views from Ollie and Lizzie Itinnuaq as they were living in Chesterfield Inlet at that time (299–300). But, we write very clearly, on page 310, “Sexual abuse at the residential school at Chesterfield Inlet traumatized those who suffered it, and its victims are still coming to terms with their experience.” Of course, sexual abuse is not specific to Chesterfield Inlet residential school, but we suggest that Inuit experienced this as part of a more general process of abuse, the breaking-up of familial and social relationships, and the destruction of their culture (309). This is a key point. We did interview former residents and survivors of sexual abuses at the very beginning of this project (see Acknowledgement, xiv), and at the request of Dr. Susan Sammons, from the Nunavut Arctic College at that time. Alexina Kublu and Julie Rodrigue conducted many of these interviews for our project. And similarly, the list of students was a request from the College and, we believe, a good addition. We have decided to wait until an agreement was met between the former students

of Chesterfield Inlet and the Church, and once this was done, we inserted it in the book. At a time when information is highly necessary to understand the colonial history of Canada, we decided to present such a list with an historical context, and that is what our book is about. We hope it will show how much anthropology can be trusted, and provides a useful approach to better understand past and contemporary issues.