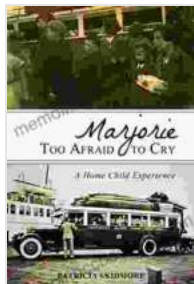


# Unveiling the Heartbreaking History of Home Children in Canada



## Marjorie Too Afraid to Cry: A Home Child Experience

by Barbara Calamari

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2089 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 304 pages





## **A Dark Chapter in Canadian History**

For over a century, from the mid-1800s to the 1930s, Canada was complicit in a shameful chapter of history involving the immigration of thousands of British Orphanage Children under the guise of a benevolent program to provide homes for orphans and destitute children. However, this "Home

Child Experience" turned out to be a harrowing journey marked by abuse, exploitation, and the systematic assimilation of cultural identity.

### **The British Orphanage Crisis**

The roots of the Home Child Experience lie in the Victorian era of Great Britain, where rampant poverty and industrialization resulted in a severe overcrowding of orphanages. In an attempt to alleviate this crisis, the British government, through philanthropic organizations, arranged for the emigration of children to various British colonies, including Canada.

### **Canada's Role in Child Immigration**

Canada, eager to populate its vast wilderness and provide cheap labor for industries, welcomed these young immigrants. The government endorsed the program, and religious organizations, such as the Catholic Church, played a pivotal role in transporting the children to Canada.

### **The Harsh Realities of Home Child Life**

However, the reality these children faced upon arriving in Canada was far from the promised paradise. They were often met with harsh conditions, physical abuse, and psychological trauma. Placed in foster homes and institutions, many were forced into servitude as farm laborers, domestic servants, or factory workers.



### **Cultural Assimilation and Loss of Identity**

Beyond the physical hardships, the Home Child Experience was also a concerted effort to assimilate these children into Canadian culture. Their names were often changed to English or French, and they were forbidden to speak their native languages or practice their customs. This systematic

cultural erasure left many children feeling lost and disconnected from their roots.

## **The Catholic Church's Role**

The Catholic Church played a substantial role in the Home Child Experience, transporting and placing thousands of children in its institutions across Canada. While some Catholic organizations provided good care, others were marred by allegations of abuse and neglect. The residential school system, infamous for its horrors, was part of this larger context of child emigration and cultural assimilation.

## **Uncovering the Hidden Stories**

For decades, the stories of Home Children remained largely hidden, buried beneath layers of shame and secrecy. However, in recent years, survivors and their descendants have come forward, shedding light on this dark chapter of Canadian history. Books, documentaries, and research projects have uncovered the harrowing experiences of these children, bringing long-overdue attention to their plight.



## **The Legacy of the Home Child Experience**

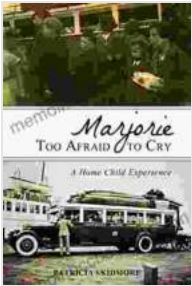
The Home Child Experience left a lasting legacy on Canada. It exposed the country's complicity in child exploitation and its willingness to sacrifice the well-being of vulnerable children in the pursuit of populating and assimilating its workforce. Moreover, the cultural assimilation policies of the program had long-term consequences for the identities and well-being of these children and their descendants.

## **Towards Reconciliation and Healing**

Today, there is a growing recognition of the need for reconciliation and healing in relation to the Home Child Experience. The Canadian government has issued apologies, and compensation programs have been

established for survivors. Furthermore, efforts are being made to preserve and honor the stories of these children and to ensure that this history is not forgotten.

The Home Child Experience is a somber and uncomfortable chapter in Canadian history. It reveals the dark side of immigration and exposes the systemic failures that allowed for the abuse and exploitation of vulnerable children. By acknowledging this history and listening to the voices of survivors, we can work towards reconciliation and healing, and prevent such injustices from happening again.



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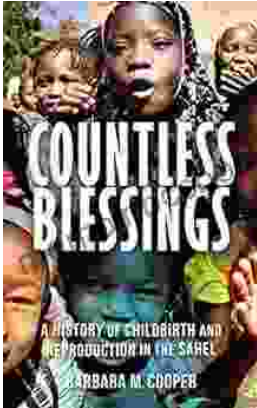
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