

Kevin Annett vs. Russell Means, Leonard Peltier, and Me

— Or What's Real – by Anna von Reitz

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Over the course of the past two years I have had many, many people come to me wanting to accost me and tell me about Kevin Annett and his effort to expose the mistreatment and genocide of Native American children while in the care of "Indian Residential Schools" in Canada. These people were newly awakened to the issues— but they are not new issues.

These people have also wanted me to take stands against various accused public figures and to help Annett and my answer is always the same:

I explain to them that I have every sympathy for the victims, but that there is something fishy about Annett and his efforts— something lopsided, something that doesn't ring true, because what he does is not even-handed and so, he doesn't aim at real justice. What good is it, I have asked, to try to cure one injustice by creating another injustice?

This has led to numerous arguments in which I have been cast as the bad guy, possibly a racist, someone of questionable moral fortitude because I haven't jumped on the bandwagon and given Annett a stamp of approval. My Shinola Sensor has once again been proven right, as Annett has been exposed as a fraud.

That doesn't mean that the issues he raised are fraudulent— far from it. I would ask his disillusioned supporters to remember that now.

These crimes he brought to light have been festering for at least as long as I have been alive, and growing up in Wisconsin seven miles from a Winnebago Indian Mission, I have known about them almost as long. Indeed, the misery and suffering of these children, like the misery and suffering of their parents and grandparents, is no secret. Like the incarceration of Japanese Americans in Internment Camps during World War II and the public seizures of German-American businesses and private property during World War I, it is all part of the Dirty Uncle Sam History we don't talk about. Yet, millions of people know. We just pretend not to.

Was Kevin Annett simply that one person among the millions whose moral convictions were strong enough to take a stand while the rest of us stood silent? Or was he an agent provocateur hired by the Banksters to defame religious institutions? Does it even matter?

The same people who wanted me to support Annett are now chomping at the bit ready to condemn him and discount everything he said and did. The same people who too hastily accepted him as a champion and put their faith in a largely bogus organization, now want to throw the issues he raised away, too, and I am left in the odd position of once again saying, "No....."

Native Americans have been subjected to systematic physical and cultural genocide on an unimaginable scale. That is the fact and we not only know it, we need to face it. What happened in the residential schools throughout Canada and the US is scandalous, yes, but it is only a fraction, a terrible, poignant, heart-breaking fraction of what has gone on here in America.

Once you see these issues in all their ugliness and cruelty and senselessness and ignorance, you become members of the Secret Suffering Club. You become bound by your knowing. You and everyone else who is aware of what happened wonders —what can be done?

And the answer always comes back the same: you can do nothing about the past. You can't raise lost children from the dead. You can't retrieve lost languages. You can't make up for such losses. Ever. You see the fall leaves swirling through the autumn sky, dropping on the silver surface of a flowing stream and you know in your heart that whatever might have been is gone. The songs of these

children are unsung. Their paintings will never hang on walls. Their children will not sit beside you and look up at the sky and wonder....and all of that and so much more is gone, never to return.

No amount of money can repair it. No amount of punishment or condemnation of the guilty can make it right. Nothing on earth, nothing that men can do or say, can ever change it.

What is the value of a man like Kevin Annett, now despised by his former supporters as a fraud because he faked the whole ITCCS set up and trials?

Listen up, please, because this comes from someone who never got dew-eyed over him in the first place— the value of a man like Kevin is that he makes the rest of us look at things we'd rather not see. He brings attention to the hidden festering places in our own souls. He reminds us of the very real suffering of others and the culpability of our society and our institutions which have both created and allowed such misery.

More than almost anyone can imagine, I understood Russell Means when he issued his interview called, "Welcome to the Reservation." He said it because he knew that we have all been enslaved by the same vicious criminal syndicate operating the "United States, Inc." that has mistreated the American Indians for five centuries.

I understand Leonard Peltier, too, locked away by a self-interested corporation with no more granted authority to hold him captive than PEPSICO, yet still trying to bequeath a positive vision of life and love to future generations, still trying to save planet earth from inside his prison grave.

These are men who do not cry-baby uselessly about the past because they know they can do nothing about the past. They don't bother to ask for "justice" because they know that there is nothing that can ever make up for what they've lost. These men are brutally, unflinchingly fair and honest, because they are burned clean of all that the world can say or promise—and yet they serve the same purpose as a Kevin Annett.

They remind us of the cruelty and criminality that we have fostered and institutionalized. They call upon us to wake up, own our share of the problem, and take action in the only time and space that is real — this blessed moment called, "Now".