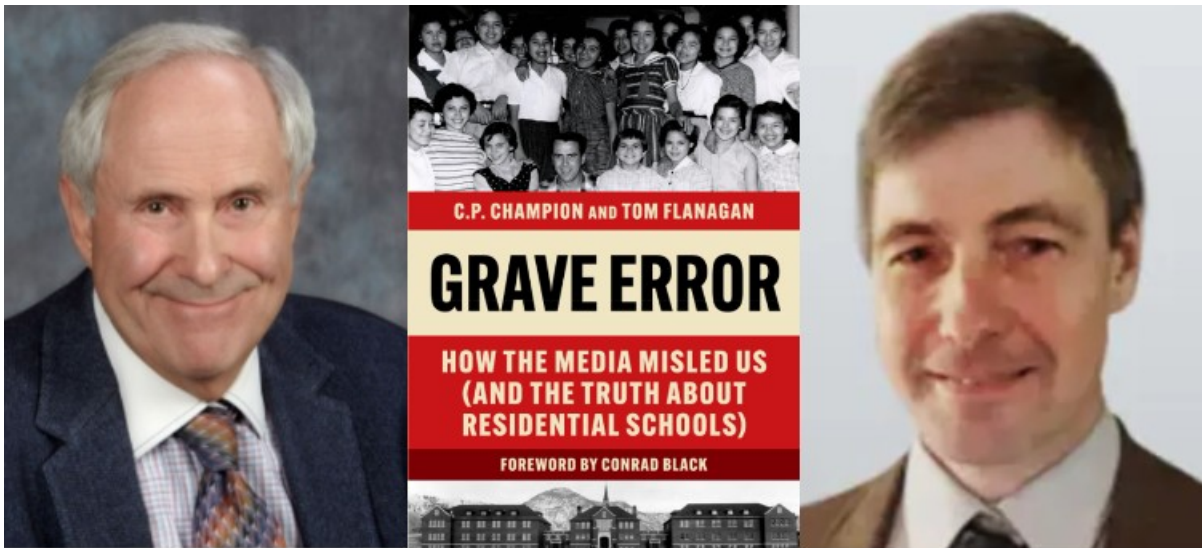


Quesnel city councillors are suppressing the truth, claim the editors of *Grave Error*



Tom Flanagan (left) and C.P. Champion (right) say that the City of Quesnel's actions are undemocratic and an attempt to suppress dissenting opinions (Frances Widdowson/Frontier Centre for Public Policy)

CALGARY, AB: C.P. Champion and Tom Flanagan, co-editors of *Grave Error: How the Media Misled Us (and the Truth about Residential Schools)*, say councillors for the City of Quesnel and the Lhtako Dene Nation are censoring debate and impeding Canadians from accessing authoritative analysis based on solid historical evidence.

Grave Error contains numerous articles by Flanagan, Champion and other academics, journalists, and retired public officials that refute the [false claim](#) that the “remains of 215 children” were found at the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

On March 19, 2024, the Lhtako Dene Nation [wrote a letter](#) to the Mayor and Council of the City of Quesnel saying that "It has come to our attention that a person related to a member of the City's elected [council] has been distributing a book entitled *Grave Error*." The indigenous group complained that the book was “basically questioning the existence of Indian Residential Schools.”



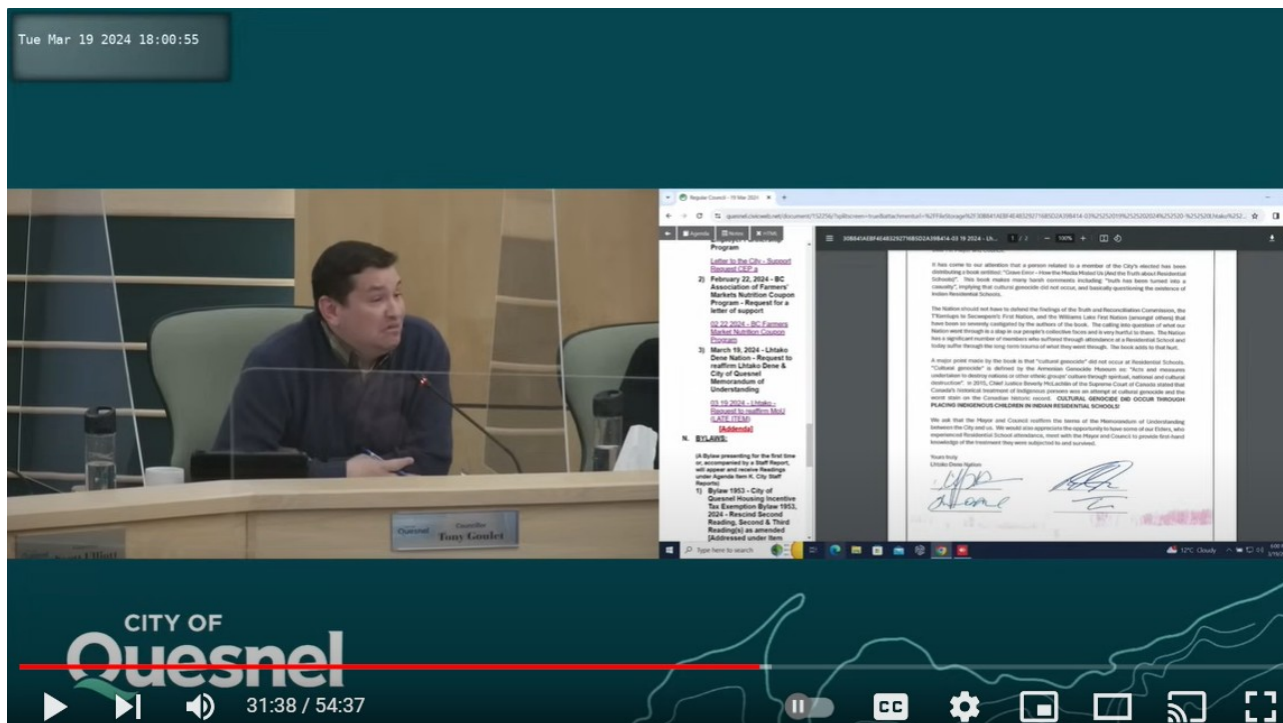
Despite the fact that there is absolutely nothing in *Grave Error* that questions the existence of Indian residential schools, Council members voted unanimously to denounce the book.

Councillor Tony Goulet was particularly vocal in expressing opposition to *Grave Error*, a copy of which had been given to his mother:

I did receive the book through a third party, and through my mom actually, who went to a business in town, and the book was given to her with my dad sitting right next to them. And as you all know my dad did go to residential school and was an attendee in residential school. So it came from my Mom. She took it, she read it, she called me, and she said, "I can't read it anymore". She read the first maybe 100 pages or so and just put it down. She gave it to me to have a look at and read. I did read it from the beginning. I too had to put it down. . . . I continued to read the book. I read it from cover to cover. It is very one-sided. It is an opinion of somebody who wrote the book, so we have to take that into consideration.

There are several problems with Goulet's statement. Although Goulet told Council members that they all knew his father had gone to a residential school, Council members apparently have no such knowledge. In response to direct inquiries, Council members have not been able to say which residential school his father attended, or whether his father attended a residential school at all, and Goulet himself refuses to provide that information.

Moreover, despite claiming he had read the entire book, Goulet erroneously asserted that *Grave Error* denies the existence of Indian residential schools, which it clearly does not. He also maintained that the book consists of the one-sided opinion of "somebody who wrote the book," whereas *Grave Error* is a collection of essays by numerous well-informed professionals, and is based on historical records, not personal opinion.



One of the editors of *Grave Error*, Tom Flanagan – a professor emeritus at the University of Calgary - asserts that the person who gave Tony Goulet's mother a copy of *Grave Error* “is a private citizen, and it is very strange for the councillors to claim that she should not be able to share a book with others because she is related to a member of the council.”

C.P. Champion, editor of *The Dorchester Review*, which publishes articles about Canadian history, including the history of residential schools, argues that the councillors’ actions show that “they are hostile” to the truth. “In order to understand history, citizens need access to different points of view, and the evidence that underpins them. The councillors for the City of Quesnel are fearful and may not realize they are suppressing the disputational process, preventing the truth from coming out.”

“Elected officials, news reporters and influencers should have the integrity to read *Grave Error* for themselves, and make up their own minds. Canadians at large have a right to question false narratives,” Champion says.

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