
Honoring Our Children weaves together lessons learned over decades of tireless work on indigenous education in 11 chapters by 16 contributors. The second in a monograph series published by Northern Arizona University Press emphasizing culture-based education, this volume adds to the insights collected in 2011’s Honoring Our Heritage and delivers on the promise of sharing culturally appropriate approaches for teaching indigenous students.

The editors define culture-based education as seeking “to accomplish the melding of Indigenous and Western knowledge and pedagogy to improve school experiences for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students” (p. ix). It is appropriate then that the book is dedicated to the memory of Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley, a Yup’ik scholar who dedicated much of his life to this endeavor, inspiring educators globally. Indeed, the book takes up the challenge that was his life work—to “create a crossroad for Indigenous and Western epistemologies to meet.” Many of the contributors have been working in indigenous education for a significant length of time as practitioners or researchers, and the chapters draw on this wisdom to make a collection of writings that is deeply informed and thought-provoking.

The book opens with “Listening to Lives: Lessons Learned from American Indian Youth,” a compelling plea from Donna Deyhle to move beyond damage-centred research. Drawing on her past three decades working with Navajo children and their families, the author shares six critical lessons learned. These lessons offer insight into the “visions and desires” of Navajo students. One important take away noted by the author is that Navajo students want a close “transformative learning relationship with their teachers” (p. 6). The theme of indigenous students working with the educators in their lives instead of rejecting them recurs throughout the book.

In “Indigenous Education Renewal in Rural Alaska,” Ray Barnhardt guides us through the transformation that has taken place in indigenous education in rural Alaska over the past 15 years. It is inspiring to learn about how communities have led efforts to redefine formal education in line with local ways of knowing. “Principles of Indigenous Education for Mainstream Teaching” is an essay that is timely, relevant, and desperately needed in teacher colleges. In this chapter, George Ann Gregory considers how principles of indigenous education can be applied to mainstream classrooms. Using personal experience gleaned from 25 years working in American Indian education,
and drawing on work by leading scholars such as Gregory Cajete and Vine Deloria Jr., Gregory demonstrates the importance of finding each student’s gift. She emphasizes the use of observation, professionalism, real objects and tools, practicums, apprenticeships, and having Elders/treasures and older students as teachers.

Other chapters focus on particular curricular interventions that embed language and culture in the teaching of core subjects. One, by Christine K. Lemley, Loren Hudson, and Mikaela P. Terry, begins from the metaphor of planting corn to describe how “your language will feed you” and outlines a fascinating approach to embedding oral history in a Diné high school. Another by Evangeline Yazzie details how an extensive archive of historic photographs of the community’s ancestors taken by missionaries has been reclaimed to teach about traditional Navajo housing, travel, food and clothing using the language. An inspiring example of Lakota language and culture for the teaching of mathematics in K-8 classrooms is provided by David Sanders.

Although nearly half of the book’s examples come from Diné territory—not surprising given the location of the editors and the press at Northern Arizona University—there are two contributions providing a sound foundation of the schooling situation for First Nations people in Canada. One of these details education for the areas covered by the numbered treaties (most of Western Canada excluding British Columbia) and the other gives an overview of efforts to achieve self-determination of education for First Nations people in Canada, through a process of cultural reclamation in schooling dubbed “nourishing the learning spirit.”

This book is critical reading for students and scholars of indigenous education, particularly those who are policymakers, curriculum leads, or new or experienced teachers and principals. Informed as it is by many years of practice and research, this volume will give anyone involved in advancing indigenous education inspiration to continue and ideas to ruminate on and digest before returning to the field to make real change. It is a fitting Festschrift to the man it seeks to honor, Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley.

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Development practitioners working with Indigenous and local communities should take a leaf out of Sonya Atalay’s excellent (albeit somewhat long) and thorough *Community-Based Archeology: Research with, by and for Indigenous and Local Communities.* Although the author’s focus is on archaeological research, the values, principles and methodologies of genuine community-based participatory research (CBPR) that she introduces and details are applicable to all academic and applied fields where researchers and practitioners (Indigenous or non-Indigenous) are working with local communities. Examples beyond archaeology could range from research in climate change to water conservation projects, to cultural tourism initiatives. Unfortunately in many instances, development, conservation and research projects/programmes/initiatives are: 1) not formulated with local needs, desires and priorities in mind; 2) not articulated or designed by the communities which will be impacted by them;