

From Boarding Schools to the Multicultural Classroom: The Intercultural Politics of Education, Assimilation, and American Indians

By John Sanchez & Mary E. Stuckey

It's hard to be Indian.

—Asa Primeaux, Yankton Dakota Holy Man

Education, as two such different authors as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Henry Adams have noted, is a powerful tool in the service of democracy. Through democratic education, "citizens" may be created where "persons" existed before. Implicit within this practice is the notion that only certain kinds of "persons" are acceptable as "citizens," that there is a mold into which the raw material of humanity may be poured and out of which templates of proper behavior will be produced (Antczak, 1985). While for members of the dominant culture this process may be uncomfortable or boring, it tends to reproduce and reinforce the lessons learned elsewhere: in homes, playgrounds, and places of worship. For those who do not participate, or who do not participate fully in that dominant culture, however, the process is far less benign, far less reinforcing, and potentially far more damaging. From policies designed to help "them"

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become part of the "melting pot" to policies that enforced segregation on those not welcome in the "American" mix, the classrooms of the United States have been crucial sites for the interplay of power and cultural dominance.

No group of American citizens has experienced this process more intensely than have American Indians. From the first days of contact with Europeans, American Indians have been subjected to an impressive array of educational policies and programs designed specifically to eradicate all traces of their resident cultures. While such explicit assaults are no longer a sanctioned part of the national educational agenda, a number of practices remain that produce much the same effect: a devaluing of resident cultures in favor of the dominant American culture. This paper examines these practices, and through them the politics of intercultural communication in the academy via a historical and contemporary analysis of American Indians as the subjects, objects, and practitioners in the American educational system. Through the lens offered by this approach, the potential as well as the problems of implementing multi- and intercultural education will be illuminated.

American Indians as Students

American Indians are complete and separate nations and cultures located within the boundaries of the United States. This year, on the behalf of the United States, the Bureau of Indian Affairs will legally recognize over 500 Indian nations with over 300 separate tribal languages. American Indian nations however, whose populations are finally beginning to grow again after the devastation wrought by Euro-American contact, still only make up about 1.8 million people, less than one percent of the total population.

While American Indians may study the American popular culture, and may even adopt some of the characteristics of that culture, they are rarely completely assimilated into it. Cultural differences remain and Indians defend their right to maintain them (Sanchez, 1997; Swisher, 1998). Despite the fact that many of the most profound differences may have disappeared over the last five centuries (Deloria, 1994, p. 62), American Indians continue to represent a distinct set of cultural attitudes and beliefs. The nature and extent of these differences should have been reasonably clear as far back as 1492, and were certainly obvious when formal education in the European model began on this continent in the 1700s. In observing a meeting between representatives of the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations or Iroquois League) government and that of the Commonwealth of Virginia, for instance, Benjamin Franklin (1794) noted that:

...the commissioners from Virginia acquainted the Indians by a speech, that there was at Williamsburg a college with a fund for educating Indian youth; and that if the chiefs of the Six Nations would send down half a dozen of their sons to that college, the government would take care that they be well provided for, and instructed in all learning of white people. The Indians' spokesperson replied:

"...We are convinced that you mean to us good by your proposal and we thank you heartily. But you, who are wise, must know that different nations have different conceptions of things; and you will not therefore take it amiss, if our ideas of this kind of education happen not to be the same as yours." (p. 28-29)

Nonetheless, the non-Indian culture that came to dominate the United States has continued to insist on acculturating and assimilating its American Indian students. American boarding schools had a serious negative impact on two of the most important aspects of American Indian cultures: language and spirituality. Boarding schools challenged the very make-up of Indian cultures by forcing the tribal languages and the customs they reflected from American Indian children by forcibly separating those children from their families, and by severely punishing those children who deviated from the cultural norms imposed upon them (Adams, 1995). Second, these schools forced the spiritual beliefs that are centuries old from these children and compelled reliance on the Christian religious paradigm (Adams, 1995).

Hampton Normal School and the Carlisle Indian School both provided American-based education for American Indian students (some of whom were actually prisoners of the United States who were offered a choice between incarceration and attending these schools). When American Indian students graduated from these institutions, they had been educated away from their cultural ways (a process sometimes called "becoming civilized"), re-educated in American-based instruction, and taught a trade. As Captain Richard Henry Pratt, famed founder of the Carlisle Indian School, wrote (1987), "I believe in immersing the Indians in our civilization and when we get them under, holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked." Pratt does not appear to have considered the possibilities of drowning his students in the process.

While the present tendency is to relegate this attitude and the practices it engendered to the distant past, as many in the global community believe that these schools and the cultural paradigms that they inflicted upon American Indian children have vanished, this is not the case. In 1998, the American public educational system generally continues to educate American Indians without concern for American Indian beliefs and customs, and continues to teach them to rely on the dominant culture in order to best "survive in the modern world." That dominant culture continues to believe that non-Indians do not need to learn about American Indian cultures in order to insure their survival. One Chippewa student, who attended boarding school between 1954 and 1960, describes her experience with forced assimilation:

The beatings we received at boarding school were often. They were done with belts, rulers, and hands. There were no questions before or after them. Sometimes when someone ran away, they were beaten with a rubber hose and their heads shaved. Afterwards they were paraded in front of other students. I equated my treatment with being Indian and concluded that sadness, hunger, pain and loneliness were an Indian's natural state and that I was unworthy of fair or just

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treatment. I believed that I should be ashamed of myself—not angry. I took other peoples' values and opinions as facts. (Powell, 1997)

The American Indians who pass through these schools were and are sometimes no longer considered full members of their tribal cultures by those who continue(d) to participate in those cultures (Little Star, 1991). Further, few of them were or are able to work on or near their home reservations, as they were and are trained for work not available on the reservations (Boyers, 1997). Yet these students, often unprepared for and frequently unable to live on their home reservations, were and are also not fully accepted into the dominant culture, leaving them no place to go, and no place to feel completely at home.

Many Indians have thus continued to prefer their own style of education to that of the dominant American culture. Because that culture is often ignorant and/or uninterested in the consequences of these preferences, American Indian children continue to suffer because of the immense difficulties that continue to plague their families and communities. A good number of these children are and will continue to be drop outs or "push outs" from the American educational system until these conditions improve—a change that depends upon the non-Indian communities' abilities and willingness to arrive at a better understanding of contemporary American Indian cultures (Indian Nations at Risk Task Force, 1991, p. 1).

There is mounting evidence of the centrality of American Indian culture to American Indian educational success (Cajete, 1994; Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Reyhner, 1992). In the last twenty-five years, tribal schools on American Indian reservations have been growing steadily, and now the power to make curricular decisions has been transferred from the state to the tribes. This growth, while steady, is also slow, and in 1998 most American Indian children remain in non-Indian controlled public schools and are taught by non-Indian teachers. In grades K-12, about 8 percent of American Indian students currently attend non-Indian controlled public schools, and that number is on the rise (Charleston, Hillabrant, Romano, & Stang, 1992, p. 7-8).

The consequences of the resulting lack of culturally appropriate education are both clear and depressing. Achievement levels of American Indian students continue to lag far behind their potential (Pewewardy, 1992): 52 percent finish high school, 17 percent attend college, 4 percent graduate from college, and 2 percent attend graduate school (Meyers, 1997, p. 58). The drop-out rate for American Indian children is twice the national average, with some school districts reporting drop-out rates approaching 100 percent (Hatch, 1992, p. 103). More than members of any other group, American Indian children believe themselves to be of less than average intelligence.

Too often, American Indian children are believed to be, and are treated as the problem, which more likely resides in the consequences of the approaches, assumptions, attitudes, and curricula that are embedded in the American educa-

tional system. The knowledge, skills, values, and interests of Indian students are too often ignored or devalued in favor of strategies aimed at enticing these students to conform to mainstream education (Cajete, 1994, p. 188). Assimilation continues to be prized as a goal far more than the academic success of American Indian students.

Thus, the decision of whether to maintain a tribal identity or to assimilate into the dominant culture is one that members of American Indian cultures must address at a very early age, and must continue to address for their entire lives. While there is evidence that students who can walk in both worlds, who can use their traditional values to inform their educations in non-tribal contexts, do better in school and have more stable lives as well, educational institutions currently do little to help students in the process of such transculturation (Huffman, 1993).

The irony is that while individual Indians are practically forced to adopt the mores of the dominant culture, that culture also places a premium on having traditional American Indian cultures available as a focus for academic study. Because schools themselves fail to reinforce the cultural differences that university professors and their graduate students study so assiduously, the cultures are in danger of disappearing.

American Indian students, as members of ethnic cultures, must too often choose between success in their own cultures or success in the dominant culture. Some Indian students who follow standard school practices that lead to academic success are perceived by their peers as adopting a non-Indian frame of reference, as "acting White," behavior that is understood as inevitably leading to the loss of cultural identity, abandoning American Indian people and their struggles, and joining the enemy (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986, p. 1-31).

The challenge facing American Indian communities is to retain their distinct cultural identities while preparing members for successful participation in a world of rapidly changing technology and diverse cultures (Indian Nations at Risk Task Force, 1991). Success in both arenas remains difficult to achieve.

The Subject of American Indians

As subjects of traditional academic discourse, American Indians are both ubiquitous and invisible. They do not have a place in the Smithsonian Institution's American History Museum, but they are prominently displayed throughout the Museum of Natural History, along with the other original inhabitants of the continent, the otter and bison. They are present in many history books as "savages" and obstacles to the inevitable "winning of the West," but they seem to disappear from those books with the turn of the twentieth century. Despite some progress in this area, it remains a serious problem (Mihesuah, 1998). In fact, an enormous amount of what people believe that they "know" about Indians is learned from the mass media, not in the nation's classrooms (Sanchez, 1997).

This fact of American educational life is changing, although slowly, as more

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American Indians enter and survive in the academy, and as they push for greater recognition and more accurate and balanced views of national history and culture. But “American Indian” history and issues, like those dealing with others of the nation’s other cultures, are also likely to be segregated into programs of American Indian or Ethnic Studies, or in classes on anthropology. Rarely are they included in regular curricula of political science, music, theater, English, or journalism departments.

Both where Indians appear in the curriculum and what is taught about them have political implications. As Leslie Marmon Silko (1996) has said, “The U.S. government used books in their campaign of cultural genocide. Thus the representation or portrayal of American Indians was politicized from the very beginning and, to this day, remains an explosive political issue” (p. 22). To the extent that anthropologists and other students of American Indians generate and understand knowledge through categories that define American Indians in non-Indian cultural terms, they may contribute (intentionally or not) to the destruction of those cultures. To attempt to understand a set of cultures in terms that are foreign and potentially hostile to those cultures is a potentially destructive act; to the extent that the “knowledge” thus produced filters through the dominant culture, the potential for destructive consequences increases exponentially (Mihesuah, 1998).

It is no longer controversial, or even particularly interesting, to discuss the early days of American anthropology in this context. Certainly, Vine Deloria, Jr. has made the problems and issues clear (1969, 1973, 1995). Many scholars agree with Deloria that there have been serious problems with the way anthropological work has been conducted (Berkhofer, 1978; Bird, 1996). However, often there is a shadow argument accompanying this apparent recognition of past error. Implicit in this widespread belief in the “bad old days” of scholarship on American Indians is the argument that things are different now, that the present scholars are more responsible, more culturally sensitive, more sympathetic to the people that they study, more alert to the possibilities of misinterpretation (Farrer, 1991; Stockel, 1991).

This is no doubt true. Yet scholars of all ethnicities may still use analytic categories derived from non-Indian experience, that describe and analyze Indian experiences in ways that can be destructive of those experiences. Often there is little choice, given the requirements of the academy (Churchill & Jaimes, 1988; Duran & Duran, 1995; Jaimes & Noriega, 1988). Consequently, some scholars argue that American Indian Studies ought to be thoroughly reformulated, and begin with new premises and new vocabularies, based on the understanding of American Indians,

...not as feathered novelties unique to North America, but as nations of indigenous people sharing certain experiences with the indigenous peoples around the world.... This revelation, in turn, leads unerringly to the adoption of a certain analytical vernacular: colonialism, neocolonialism, decolonialization, settler states, internal colonialism, cultural imperialism, underdevelopment, direct and indirect economies, center-periphery theories, marginalization, self-determination, autonomy, and sovereignty. (Churchill & Jaimes, 1988)

There is some evidence that such a reformulation is occurring (Bird, 1996; Jaimes, 1992), especially as more American Indian scholars are entering the academy. Multicultural elements are becoming incorporated more fully if also contentiously as part of the academic curriculum, and are being increasingly recognized as an important part of how we go about doing research. A series of discussions on "H-Amindian," an internet discussion forum on the study of American Indians, prove useful in highlighting the issues involved.

One of the most difficult issues currently facing scholars is the question of who should speak for members of communities that are generally marginalized. The easy answer, that only members of those communities can speak for themselves, is fraught with problems: Does a scholar have to be a member of a specific group to study them? Which members of the group in question get to be authoritative, and who decides? Is it legitimate to deny non-Indians the chance to learn about other cultures?

Most scholars are not willing to say that only an Indian can legitimately study American Indian issues, or that only a Cheyenne can study the Cheyenne. Yet there is also consensus that regardless of intentions, tribal connections, and/or experiences, a non-Indian or a non-Cheyenne cannot speak for or as an Indian or a Cheyenne; that there is a level of cultural appropriation that one always risks in writing about cultures that are not one's own, and that these issues must be taken very seriously. One scholar on the list noted that in their view, "Obviously anyone can write history about anything; but there is something wrong when too few voices of the people who made the history in the first place are drowned out by those of the people who aspired to displace them—no matter what the good will on any side" (H-Amindian, 1997).

In addition, scholars writing on H-Amindian expressed concern over a tendency among academics of all ethnicities to write as if there is an Indian perspective, or even one singular tribal perspective; that the tendency to simplify for analysis' sake may lead to greater problems that it overcomes. American Indian communities, like other human communities, have diversity of opinion and of experience; scholarship must also reflect that diversity. But again, the question is how to do that while appreciating the limited nature of source material (especially for historical research), and while wanting to demonstrate respect and concern for the communities involved?

A related issue, and one that has been the subject of a fascinating series of exchanges on H-Amindian, is the question of how to incorporate oral history into historical narratives, of how to include "Indian perspectives" within the existing corpus of academic understanding, which has long been dominated by written interpretations of historical events. It is clear that the discussion has moved past the question of whether American Indian sources could or should be consulted, and to the more difficult questions of how and with what intention are they to be consulted. One participant in the discussion wrote that, "Clearly, oral and written records are both important. To try to describe one or the other as 'equal to' or 'better than' the

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other ignores the more fundamental questions as to how they are different and what are the strengths and weaknesses of each for historical research" (H-Amindian, 1997). Deciding upon the "strengths and weaknesses of each" is no small task, and is one that the next generation(s) of historians will be addressing.

For scholars of American Indians, these questions have important ethical, as well as empirical and methodological implications, not least because scholarship has political implications, and the act of research is a political act (Allen, 1993; Blair, Brown, & Baxter, 1994; Rigsby, 1993). One Indian contributor to the H-Amindian discussion wrote that she believed that,

Aboriginal people can and should direct the future of historical research. People are not going to stop studying us, so why not show them how to do a better job of it? Encourage the use of oral tradition, oral history, analysis of Native languages by Native linguists, and encourage Aboriginal peoples to use and study historical documents from non-Aboriginal sources like archives. The Aboriginal perspective on non-Aboriginal written sources is unique and invaluable to communities and scholarship in general. (H-Amindian, 1997)

As this quote illustrates, the tensions in studying American Indians are important ones, as scholars from a variety of backgrounds attempt to incorporate alternative views of American and world history into the corpus of knowledge recognized as canonical. The debates over how to proceed are in themselves healthy and important, as scholars seek for ways to respectfully and accurately portray those who have been traditionally relegated to specific and ideologically determined roles. But the dangers of falling into different ideological traps are also present, and the best check on this tendency is to have increasing numbers of American Indians present in the academy, to speak for themselves and to provide critiques of others who speak about them.

Yet this puts an enormous burden on an already burdened group; poorly represented in the academy, acting as mentors for those Indian students at their institutions, serving on a disproportionate number of committees, and attempting to earn tenure and promotion, the expectation is that American Indian scholars are all experts in "things Indian," whether their particular area of study is physics, education, or journalism; that they will serve as ambassadors for "their people," however broadly defined, and however ill-equipped they may feel for the task (Garrod & Larimore, 1997). The subject of American Indians is intimately connected, then, with the issues surrounding American Indians as participants in academia.

American Indians as Participants

The academic exploitation of American Indians goes beyond treating them as the subjects of academic discourse, and also affects individual American Indians as participants within that discourse. As Deloria (1995) says, "The push for education in the last generation has done more to erode the sense of Indian identity than any

integration program the government has previously attempted" (p. 14). The academy trains scholars in specific rhetorics, and is invested in protecting those discourses (McCloskey, 1983). Thus, those writing from different perspectives, or with different methodologies or styles, will be sanctioned by representatives of the discipline in question (Blair, Brown, and Baxter, 1994). The results for American Indians has often been less the promulgation of Indian perspectives as increasing numbers of Indians are successful academically, and more "a generation of technicians and professionals who happen to be of Indian blood" (Deloria, 1995, p. 14).

Those who know this and still attempt to legitimate their writing as "academic," even if differently "academic" from the standard linear approach, will likely be told not just that their work does not fit the governing paradigm of academic writing, but that it is "bad" writing. As Carole Blair, J. Brown, and Leslie A. Baxter (1994) note, "Academic writing...is regulated by clear norms, usually among them a refined, ahistorical, smoothly finished univocality [that displays] as little as possible the circumstances and activities of production" (p. 383). Further, "issues of institutional or professional power are deemed superfluous to the substance and character of our scholarly efforts" (p. 383). Controlling the style of writing facilitates control of the content of that writing, which in turn functions to maintain the hegemony of those who dominate the academy as well as the dominance of the culture in which the academy is embedded (West, 1993). Controlling the production of "knowledge" can thus be seen as equivalent to and reinforcing of the control of other means of production throughout the society (Allen, 1993; Rigsby, 1993). Academic writing is thus a means of perpetuating colonialization (Duran & Duran, 1995).

The argument that there is but one standard of "good" or even of "appropriate" writing is an argument for hegemony (Elbow, 1991), not just in the academy, but in the broader world outside of it (Tomkins, 1996). As Peter Elbow (1991) argues, "...in using a discourse we are also tacitly teaching a version of reality and the student's place and mode of operation in it. In particular we are affirming a set of social and authority relations" (p. 146; emphasis in original). Members of the academy are trained to want "results," to prefer academic writing that fits the mold of expectations. Less consideration is given to the possibility that what are generally understood as "results" may be only one possible definition; that the process of creating, discovering, and transmitting knowledge may be appropriately and usefully conceived of in a variety of ways.

Recently, for instance, an article was submitted to a professional journal. That article was written specifically to contrast American Indian and more mainstream views and practices of leadership, and in so doing, relied upon presenting those views using both an Indian narrative style and one more consistent with standard academic prose. As with most articles, this was sent out to three scholars for review, and while two of them expressed both sympathy for the project in general and qualified support for its eventual publication, the third did not. The reviews, like the general comments offered by the journal editor, were neither malicious nor ill-

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informed; from the tone and content it appeared that they all were oriented toward improving the final product rather than preventing its publication on ideological or other grounds.

More interesting than this rather standard recitation of the life of a journal article however, are the particular comments and criticisms that this piece received. The authors were taken to task, albeit sympathetically, for failing to conform to the forms and standards of academic research; they were criticized for including a brief discussion of spirituality in a paper ostensibly dedicated to rhetoric and leadership, as such an inclusion would demand far more time and space than allowable in a journal-length article; and they were reminded that “readers are going to look for some traditional forms in your work.” Suggestions for revision included the addition of more subheadings to better orient readers; “a stronger internal structure”; and the inclusion of additional academic sources.

What is particularly interesting about this is that even those reviewers who wish to support the inclusion of marginalized perspectives and approaches in academic journals are still constrained by the formal expectations of the discipline. It is difficult to judge the quality of work that does not conform to the standards most academics are trained in; it is difficult to know what is “good” and what is “bad” scholarship when the research at issue specifically questions the prevailing standards of judgment. And certainly, the “unconventionality” of a particular piece of research is, by itself, no reason for its publication.

This admittedly small example points to the difficulties that academics from marginalized or non-dominant cultures face as they work inside the academic system. Not only is the burden of translation always on them, not only are they the ones expected to become fluent in the language used by the academy with no expectation that there will ever be interest, much less fluency, in their preferred mode of communication, but the standards of the academy are themselves so ingrained that even challenges to those standards must in some ways conform to them. In learning the language of the academy, American Indian academics face the possibility of losing some of their fluency with their own; they risk losing their ability to be “at home” in their resident cultures, even as they seek to open spaces for that culture in the wider arena (Garrod & Larimore, 1997).

Conclusions

The educational system in the United States, charged with the production of worthy and responsible citizens, has ever worked to eradicate American Indians and their cultures (Adams, 1995). This process has three forms: the containment of American Indians as students, the definitions of American Indians as subjects of academic discourses, and the construction of American Indians as rhetors within the academy.

The issues throughout are clear, the implications could not be more important,

and the solutions remain evasive. Through the treatment of students, the academic study of American Indian nations and cultures, and the requirements of academic discourse, the conqueror's culture intends to render American Indian nations the agents of their own colonialization. Whether the actual site of this process is the boarding schools of the nineteenth century or contemporary schools and universities, whether the mechanisms of grading and the culturally specific design of such "universal" examinations as the Scholastic Aptitude Test have largely replaced beatings and blatant humiliation, little else has actually changed. School children and college students—American Indians as well as non-Indians—are still too often being taught that integration into the nation is the necessary condition for acceptance, and that this integration requires the debasement and outright rejection of individual identities as members of separate—and sovereign—nations.

Before American Indians may fully participate in the national democratic process they too frequently must cast off their cultural values, don the cultural values of the dominant society, and risk marking themselves as counterfeit in the eyes of their tribal culture and in the eyes of the members of the dominant society. This, of course, disallows their full participation either in the dominant society or among their own people. Too often, then, American Indians must choose between marginalization within the dominant culture or within their resident cultures.

While this picture is bleak, it is not inevitably so, and there is some cause for hope, if little for rejoicing. Increasingly, American Indian scholars are taking their places throughout the educational system, and alone, together, and with non-Indian colleagues, are working to foment changes in curricula, teaching styles, and research.

Changes in curricula include expanding our understanding to include "Indian" history into "American" history, "Indian" literature into "literature," and so on. Equally important, changes mean incorporating Indian perspectives on their own experiences, contemporary as well as historical, regardless of whether those perspectives mesh with or challenge prevailing perspectives.

Changes in teaching styles imply teaching teachers both the importance of and the techniques associated with culturally appropriate education. It also means continuing and increasing programs designed to get more Indian teachers into the classroom, and giving them greater control once they are there. Given that the majority of educators are presently non-Indian, it is imperative that they be given tools for appropriate education.

One way to accomplish this is to mandate four semesters of diversity and multicultural courses in colleges and universities for preservice K-12 educators. Allowing at least one full semester or quarter for each of the four main groups of ethnic cultures that reside in the United States would increase the educators' ability to teach about those cultures with knowledge and sensitivity. Preservice teachers would be required to complete this course successfully in order to earn administrative or teacher certification in their field(s), and inservice teachers would be required to complete this course successfully in order to earn tenure and/or promotion.

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Additionally, an increasing number of Indian educators are turning their talents toward consulting—both on curricula and as presenters in schools. Programs that involve bringing indigenous peoples into schools on their own terms can help foster self-esteem in Indian students as well as helping non-Indian educators bring Indian perspectives to their students.

The Internet can also be a valuable source of information about Indian cultures, for many Indian nations have home pages and make information about their cultures and histories available via electronic means. As an increasing number of schools become connected to the web, the students and faculty of those schools are enabled to reach out to other cultures and to use technology to bring those cultures to their students in ways that were not previously possible.

Another important change would be the widespread adoption of revisionist history texts. These books may be among the most important tools in broadening our understanding of and becoming more realistic about American Indian and other cultures. Today, students are still being taught that Columbus discovered America, that the only influences on the founding of the United States were European, and so on. Texts that teach the fact that Columbus never set foot on what is now American (i.e., United States) soil, that the framers of our Constitution were aware of and knowledgeable about the confederacy of the Six Nations peoples, and that American Indian cultures continue to influence that dominant culture would go a long way in providing a context of respect for non-dominant cultures. Such emphases would also contribute to the pride and self-esteem of American Indian students, and help to keep them in schools rather than driving them from schools.

Changes in research involve listening more consistently and much more carefully to the voices of Indian scholars and other Indian people, providing spaces for them to speak in ways that are comfortable and appropriate, even in “mainstream” journals, rather than just in those outlets that are designated as “Indian.” Most importantly, it means listening to and being guided by Indians rather than dismissing or coopting their insights and ideas.

To the extent that these changes take hold, to the extent that the structures and content of American education become less hegemonic and more reflective of the diversity that comprises the American polity, the possibilities increase that the educational system will serve as a support for American Indian cultures rather than as their committed enemy.

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