

Editorial

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She:kon Skanen:ko'wa!

The development of culturally relevant learning opportunities that address the needs of primary and secondary school Indigenous students is a task that has been undertaken by many educational jurisdictions in Canada. Many such developments have been facilitated through the efforts of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples working at the university and community levels. Because of the increasingly specialized nature of educational programming and curricular development, many have developed an appreciation for the potential that exists for cooperative efforts between faculty members at universities and community members in the development of such resources. The importance of such cooperation, espoused by many organizations that fund research, is predicated by the idea that when unique manifestations of localized culture and language are to be researched for the purposes of improving living conditions for Indigenous peoples, the most appropriate sources for that knowledge are the people themselves. When attempting to establish programmes of research in the area of Indigenous education, university researchers are frequently expected to establish cooperative partnerships with Indigenous community members such as Elders and other community-based individuals and groups in order to ensure that the cultural, linguistic, and historical perspectives of the people in question are adequately reflected. Although university faculty may be well versed in research methodologies and knowledgeable in educational theory, many university faculty members do not necessarily possess the traditional knowledge of particular Indigenous communities or the practical knowledge that may be developed by in-service teaching professionals in schools that serve Indigenous students or strive to incorporate Indigenous education.

In addition to culturally relevant research, many faculties and colleges of education in Canada have created space in their teacher development programs for Indigenous education. A perceived need for culturally relevant pedagogical training that facilitates the development of aptitudes and skills necessary for the delivery of Indigenous education has led to the appointment of professors and other staff with backgrounds in this area. Many institutions have developed elective and compulsory courses to support teacher development in the area of Indigenous education. School districts and community groups have begun to appreciate the need for undergraduate teacher education and in-service professional development that provides opportunities for training in Indigenous education. The value for the integration of Indigenous perspectives in primary and secondary school programming has informed school district programming, ministerial requirements for graduates of teacher education programs and curricular development, and priorities for faculties and colleges of education. As Indigenous history and issues become more relevant to primary, secondary, and post-secondary education, the scholarly exploration of Indigenous education has become an increasingly important area.

It is with similar importance that I offer this prelude to Part II of special issue of *in education* on Indigenous education. What follows are a variety of scholarly pieces that explore, affirm, and celebrate aspects of Indigenous ancestry, languages, and experiences that can inform academics and others of important histories and issues. In partnership with the Canadian Association for Studies in Indigenous Education, the scholarly work reflected in these articles is explored with the intention of informing the advancement and improvement of education for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Nia:wen Ko'wa

Frank Deer