

Economics and Local Self-Determination: Describing the Clash Zone in First Nations Education

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This article examines how economic pressures and political forces act to constrict First Nations' educational self-determination. It is a broad discussion exploring some recent history of how the ideology associated with economic development frames the language of educational possibility in tribal settings. As First Nations continue to create programs that celebrate and promote language and identity, they must negotiate cultural outcomes with agencies and institutions that control funding and accreditation. Proposing cross-border comparative studies and emphasizing a research focus on the recent past, this article examines how local cultural responsiveness was resisted by White institutional hegemony. It narrates the development of a teacher education program at a tribal college with implications for future qualitative studies.

There have been some changes in the writing about First Nations education in the past few years. There seems to be a tendency to describe settings and programs in a way that isolates their discussion from larger economic, cultural, and political concerns. At the same time, I find much of the research lacks the intimate description of real people and places that some ethnographic studies from the 1970s and 1980s contained. The result is that studies of educational considerations in First Nations communities are beginning to sound like either promotional brochures for attracting endowments and grants or thin reports on approaches to integrating Indigenous knowledge. How these economic realities and political forces act to constrict the language of educational possibility for tribal communities is often brought up only as a passing comment or as a caveat about underlying challenges to creating culturally responsive structures and programs. There is a missing analysis, which could tell us more about how cross-cultural negotiations in communities operate.

This article is an attempt to describe aspects of the *clash zone* that animates cultural values and economic attitudes in First Nations collaborations and compromises with dominant institutions. It is by necessity a broad discussion of how economic issues frame the context for imagining cultural outcomes from the education process. It concludes with a narrative of my experiences developing a teacher education program at a tribal college.

A number of factors contribute to the shift in how First Nations community education has been written about recently. First, a vanguard of Aboriginal researchers have voiced some of the community criticisms

about quick and irresponsible research that has been done in the past by non-Native academics. Band councils and tribal cultural committees are often unwilling to participate in research that has no obvious or immediate benefit to the community. Elders and Native leaders are apt to say, "Why should we want you academics to come to our community to tell us what our problems are? We know what our problems are better than anyone." This is a justified response to what has been a cavalcade of researchers and reporters who came to reserve communities to "study the Indians." Swisher (1998) is certainly justified in saying that "Indian People Should be the Ones to Write about Indian Education" given the long history of flawed research from non-Native academics who have not understood the deeper sensibilities of First Nations communities (Lomawaima, 2000).

The quality of research in First Nations education is not improved simply by having Aboriginal people doing the writing. It is improved by a more detailed analysis that includes the perspectives and location of both Natives and non-Natives. One of the central shortcomings of too much of the writing about Native education is the exclusionary focus on "Indians" without looking at the non-Native bureaucrats, administrators, teachers, and community members. Indian education, with some exceptions, including pre-contact tribal practices, has always been about cross-cultural negotiation and power differentials. It is a complex landscape of colliding interpretations of fundamental goals and purposes across the cultural barricades. In short, Indian education is about Indian-White relations. It has been, and remains, the central arena for negotiating identities and for translating the goals and purposes of the cultural Other.

Although anthropologists did not always "get it right" when they did studies of First Nations communities, they often attempted some kind of analysis of the historically embedded economic, political, and cultural goals and values of Indians and Whites that collided at the schools. Examples of these kinds of ethnographies of Indian-White community relations are Gearing (1970), Spindler (1971), Lithman (1984), Deyhle (1995), and Peshkin (1997). Their goal was to describe a cross-cultural setting. It is this analysis of both Indian and White cultural perspectives in education that is often missing from the most recent research. Although this essay admittedly does not qualify as a detailed analysis of a First Nations education setting, it is a beginning, and perhaps a departure point for further research.

Narrating the Political and Economic Realities

Indian-White community relations are involved in a political economy that invisibly circumscribes and frames the language of educational possibility for First Nations. Moreover, knowledge legitimization becomes an arena of conflict in Indian-White relations most intensely when it is framed around *local* narratives of history and identity.

Even now, as programs are being developed around traditional cultural perspectives on education, they are framed in the realities of the economic and political power of the dominant society. Ideology is embedded in the appropriations for First Nations education. This is where the *self* in self-determination becomes an issue. Battiste (Battiste & Barman, 1995) views the horizon: "As Aboriginal communities assume control of their institutions or establish new ones, systems will inevitably undergo tremendous stress from which conflicts and collaboration will arise" (p. xix). What is possible to do, and even to think, is directed by a hegemony that is reinforced by the actualities of government and corporate power. Madonna Thunderhawk puts it decisively, explaining that if educators were

actually *educating* the kids in their classroom about, say, the *real* history of Indian-White relations in this country, or the *real* nature of the present Indian-federal relationship, or the *real* meanings of our treaties, or *anything* like that, the feds always retained their ways of putting things back in line ... Of course, the government controlled the purse strings all along. Step out of line and you lose your funding. (Noreiga, 1992, p. 387)

Cajete (1994) has discussed how essential it is that we begin to construct Indigenous education out of a consciousness-raising process similar to Freire's (1972) culture circles. He sees how resource development frames the limits:

In these times, economic survival is associated with accessibility to modern education. Economic development is often tied to the capacity of tribes to be self-determined and self-governed. This capacity is always tied to Western education since it plays the role of gatekeeper to contemporary economic survival. (p. 214)

We need also to gain an understanding of the history of Indian-White relations that continues to define the real barriers to change. These histories are woven with economic conflicts and are melted into the substrata of what can be said and what cannot be said in First Nations communities. They are intertwined with the economic realities that frame discourse. If researchers, Native and non-Native alike, were to sustain attention on these histories and how education in First Nations communities continues to be negotiated around relations with the dominant White society, we would get a more useful description of both the challenges and openings in First Nations education.

The issues of *voice* and *authority* will never be insignificant factors, but research that emphasizes the history of Indian-White relations, rather than a tourist's approach to studying the Indians, would lessen the concern about non-Natives writing about First Nations. However, studies of Indians, with a slightly exotic flavor, are more popular with some publishers than research that exposes the cultural, economic, and political goals and purposes of the White public as it has dealt with Indians. An analysis of the academic infrastructure that precipitates and regulates research on First Nations would provide illumination about what is encouraged and

discouraged. The personal narratives of Native and non-Native academics are intertwined in this complex structure, and although I am not advocating that all research needs to be explicitly autoethnographic, it is a revealing paradox that those scholars who are most self-reflective and willing to identify what authority they possess and what they do not possess often give us thicker descriptions of whole processes with less attention drawn to themselves.

Key to understanding the present context is an emphasis on researching the recent past, the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, where we not only can directly trace the significant programs, policies, and choices that have created the contemporary landscape of First Nations education, but we also have real people to interview about the individual and community responses to policies and events. Because it is so recent and close, this history is often contentious and provokes controversy. However, if we are to take Freire's (1972) work seriously, we must recognize that an historic understanding of the most recently created forms of education and discourse produces the most expansive and powerful consciousness. Freire explained that "the learners' capacity for critical knowing—well beyond mere opinion—is established in the process of unveiling their relationships with the historical-cultural world *in* and with which they exist" (pp. 35-36). For most First Nations communities this historic world is framed around the recent past. The barriers to advancement and cultural renewal in First Nations education are largely formed by the lack of critical consciousness about structures derived from this most recent history.

Comparing and Contrasting Across the Border

One of the richest, but most underused reference points for comparative thinking about Indian-White relations is the border between Canada and the United States. This is especially evident when we examine the economic and educational policies that migrate across the border. In other words, by examining community histories of self-determination efforts in education in the US during the 1960s and 1970s, we often encounter forces and structures that are conceptually similar to emergent controversies and challenges presently confronting Canadian First Nations. In his broad history of Canadian and US Indians, Nichols (1998) proposes, "comparing the rich fabric of human experience in two diverse but neighboring societies provides an opportunity to achieve an understanding of current ethnic issues in both the United States and Canada" (p. xvi). However, he notes, "when measured against the total outpourings of scholars and popular writers, the amount of comparative writing is limited indeed" (p. xv).

Rather than transfer the tendency to do sweeping studies of policies to the comparative realm, we should be looking at how local settings produce rich stories and data. The close-up look at communities and the

power imbalances that animate cultural negotiation are generally missing. Cook-Lynn (1998) may have gotten it right, saying,

too often the need to be polite to one another, the desire for civility in academic discourse and vocabulary, the fear that we will be reproached for offering a dissenting view are just another way of saying that everything is all right when we know it is not. (p. 7)

This kind of climate, she says, "restricts the space in which Native thought (particularly Native political thought) can develop and thrive" (p. 7).

We miss crucial ingredients in communities if we fail to account for how those distinct economic forces and policies drive the educational ethos. Senese (1991), who focused on the Rough Rock Demonstration School at Navajo, takes a direct approach in his analysis: "We may look again at federal Indian education policy and see development, and at federal Indian economic development and see education" (p. xv). Further to the point, he quotes Deloria (1991) in trying to show the weave of economics and the language of possibility:

The means were "actual appropriations, what the dominant society is willing to put into Indians or any other minority group. The [intention] is the ideology behind why we do it—and so I don't believe you can talk about Indian education without talking about the place of the Indian in American society." He went on to argue that any study of Indian education has to challenge the ideology behind the education. (p. 113)

In later writings Deloria becomes more explicit about the precarious relationship between the dominant economic doctrine and Indian education, offering a caveat:

We are led to believe that we are prepared to exercise self-determination because we are now able to begin to compete with the non-Indian world for funds, resources and rights. But we must ask ourselves, where is the self-determination? What is it that we as selves and communities are determining? We will find that we are basically agreeing to model our lives, values, and experiences along non-Indian lines. (p. 56)

A Lummi Elder, telling me her opinion of the local tribal college, put it in her own words saying, "I suppose you could take Seattle Community College and plop the thing down on an Indian reservation, but that's not really what we wanted." Price (1969, quoted in Senese, 1991) traced this situation:

Demoralization by too rapid assimilation had become the major problem for Indian policymakers and a problem, which was to be alleviated by the establishment of culturally sensitive institutions. Yet these institutions also would mimic those found in the mainstream of White America... Indian self-determination through community control of education was a continuation of the dominant conception of "reservation as campus"—to be terminated when the graduates all attained a sufficient degree of civilization. (pp. 113-115)

Cross-border comparative studies that emphasize how development and self-determination create and constrict educational conversation could open up fresh lines of inquiry and insight. Ruminations about how resource economics and First Nations community character contour each

other are not new. Smallface Marule (1984) speculated on why there was such a contrast in leadership and community character related to sovereignty between British Columbia and Alberta First Nations. She attributes differences to Alberta First Nations having "greater resources and greater individual wealth, they are acquiescing to the system that the Canadian government has imposed because they are afraid of losing what they have" (p. 40). She goes on to explain how these economic circumstances and choices have created contrasting governmental and educational compulsions in how First Nations envisage possibilities. Offering further comparisons between Latin American and North American contexts she concludes that self-determination in Canada and the US is problematized by an economic dependency cycle: "We are locked into the non-Indian economic system. We are hooked on consumerism" (p. 39). Comparative approaches to these systems can open up a broader and more detailed vista.

The pattern that is presently being played out in First Nations communities in BC shows a remarkable similarity to events in the recent history of Indian-White relations in Washington State. In BC White pressures and resistance confound First Nations' self-determination. Indian-White relations have become a social and political stewpot brought to the boil by controversies over the Nisga'a treaty, fishing rights on the Fraser, land claims, logging issues, and a litany of others. At Lummi the anti-Indian backlash era of the 1970s and 1980s included many of the same kinds of clashes. Efforts to construct public school curriculum that accurately reflected the moral and political outlook of traditional Indian people, particularly as a way to illuminate treaty rights, were repelled and resisted by non-Native teachers, administrators, and politicians. In both BC and Washington State, the controversies about First Nations control of economic resources has created the template for educational discourse.

Economic Development and Education at Lummi: The 1970s

Throughout the 1970s the Lummi reservation was bustling with activity as a result of the "War on Poverty" programs coming out of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and other agencies of the federal government. The development programs all had educational components attached to them, and the education funding that was provided was fixed to vocational training toward jobs that the government viewed as suitable. Simply put, all tribal economic development programs that were supported by federal monies were required to have a training and education program designed to produce "suitable" administrators and technicians. The Lummi newspaper *Squol Quol* was launched from a journalism class provided by a Community Action Program grant. After-school tutoring programs were established on the reservation, and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) provided money to train teachers and counsellors.

These federal education economic development projects built up the confidence of the tribe and helped Lummi gain technical skills and political sophistication. The Lummi became more assertive with regard to issues of tribal sovereignty and sought to reform not only the curriculum, but also the context in which the curriculum was delivered in the local public school. They challenged the Ferndale school district in 1976 for the right to receive the \$32,000 dollar federal Johnson-O'Malley contract funds directly from the BIA instead of having the money channelled to the state and then to the Ferndale district.

In 1976 the tribe proposed a contract where Lummi would be in control of personnel and curriculum for the Indian education program at Ferndale. However, the superintendent and the school board refused to allow the Lummi educators to work in the school because their credentials and curriculum were "not appropriate" (Marker, 1995, p. 97).

One of the goals of the curriculum from the Lummi standpoint was to inform both Native and non-Native students about the context of treaty rights—particularly those related to fishing. The Lummi educators wanted to use texts that gave an explanation of controversies such as the Boldt decision,¹ offering both Native and non-Native perspectives. From the superintendent's point of view, though, the curriculum might not be appropriate because it was framed around an economic resource issue instead of a neutralized and stereotyped version of Indians. The educational conditions for Lummi students in the classrooms was tense during this era, and the legacy of suppressed and open classroom hostility is still foregrounded by tribal leaders as an explanation for ongoing educational challenges. Willie Jones, recently elected Lummi tribal chairman, gave an interview to the *Bellingham Herald* (Thorne, 2000) where he referred to the historic effects of the Boldt decision on school climate as central to understanding the present educational and economic troubles of the tribe: "There was a backlash, they called us dirty Indians ... Our kids suffered in the school systems. It toned down from that point, but it goes up and down" (p. A-5).

One of the most acclaimed projects of this economic self-determination era was the Lummi aquaculture project, to which millions of federal dollars were committed. This program established the School of Aquaculture that eventually became Northwest Indian College.²

Self-Determination and the Tribal College

Tribal colleges are fairly recent attempts to solve a number of problems in Indian education. They have been mostly successful in ways having to do with providing postsecondary education to rural reservation communities. In some instances they have played a role in cultural revitalization; in other situations they have been merely pallid versions of mainstream vocational training and community college courses. They are tangled locations that defy simple descriptions. However, reports about

tribal colleges tend to give a thin account of a much more complex situation. As mentioned above, these accounts tend to be of the success-story variety. We lack critical ethnographies of these settings. In many ways it is ironic that the tribal colleges are some of the most invisible sites on the terrain of First Nations education, as these are significant openings into micro-worlds of cross-cultural negotiation about curriculum, standards, administrative approaches, and accreditation. Ambler (2000), editor of the *Tribal College Journal*, quoted a reader who observed the deficiency in the publication's offerings: "Too much PR—not enough reporting, analysis, discussion of tribal education issues.... an effective fundraiser and PR magazine, but it does not reflect the constructive critical discussion on which strong development of the colleges depends" (p. 3). The Carnegie Foundation's two-year study of tribal colleges (Boyer, 1989) observed, "graduation, continued education, and employment rates are not well documented. The need for sound research is urgent" (p. 87).

Journalist Bordewich (1996) gives us perhaps the most detailed sketch of the dilemmas and struggles of a tribal college and community in his depiction of Little Big Horn College and the Crow community in Montana. However, Bordewich's popular literary writing renders the White people two-dimensional and offers the expected solo spotlight on "the Indians." We need more critical analysis of these sites where self-determination and educational possibilities are constructed and negotiated out of what Fine, Weis, Centrie, and Roberts (2000) have called "the micropolitics of managing differences ... across axes of historic separation and stratification" (p. 135).

Stories of Experience and Context

We must begin to acknowledge that our own experience is at the same time both personal and academic; at a certain point it becomes unnatural to try to separate them. Our understandings of the themes in First Nations education must be placed in context. My efforts to emphasize local culture and history as a central component of the teacher education program at Northwest Indian College at Lummi gives a window onto how tribal colleges become arenas of ambivalence about the goals and purposes of education. Like all tribal colleges, Northwest Indian College reflects the reservation community and particularly its history of Indian-White relations. The college has grown from its days as the Lummi School of Aquaculture into a comprehensive community college housed in a combination of semipermanent and portable buildings. The faculty comprises almost entirely non-Native instructors who live in Bellingham or other towns away from the reservation. Although the board is made up of Lummi tribal members, the president has been until now a non-Native. The college has recently appointed a Navajo tribal member as its first Aboriginal president.

The college is located near the center of the reservation on the site of the 1910 Lummi day school. The library is housed in the original day school building. In 1996 I became the Teacher Education Director at Northwest Indian College. In many ways I had never left. While I was completing my PhD at UBC in Vancouver, I lived in Bellingham and continued to participate in activities in the reservation and the college community. Before graduate school I worked at the college getting the Lummi high school started; while in graduate school I wrote education curriculum for the college. I had come back to the tribal college to start a teacher education program that could use some of the research and successes of Native teacher education programs such as those at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks and UBC's Native Indian Teacher Education Program. More than anything else I wanted to build a program that would use local knowledge, culture, and history. I viewed this project as a way to credential Native teachers while raising consciousness about Lummi history, identity, language, and educational possibilities.

I visited Bill James, Director of the Lummi Language Program and member of the tribal cultural committee, to seek a name for the program. Bill suggested the word *oksale* (pronounced ahk-sa-luh), which means teacher. I talked with Elders and community members and made frequent visits to the tribal school to get perspectives on community issues and needs to frame the design of courses and the overall scope of the program. Students signed up and began attending the new classes. I gave orientation sessions to faculty emphasizing how a teacher education program and the accompanying bachelor's degree would transform the campus. Two of the most advanced students were selected as program assistants. They worked long days with me putting the required curricular and administrative structures in place. We hired faculty, ordered books and journals for the library, computers, desks, and chairs, and essentially assembled a teacher education program from the ground up. Most important, we invited local Elders, parents, and traditional knowledge specialists to participate in the conversations about goals and purposes. It was this emphasis on the local knowledge and history that proved problematic when I sought collaboration with an established university to obtain accreditation and credentials.

The Oksale program was started from a federal grant from the US Department of Education. The grant itself was confusing and contradictory having been written with the primary focus on special education training for Native classroom teacher aides. Although it mentioned the possibility of a bachelor's degree in education for the students, this was a long-term outcome that would require students to attend nearby Western Washington University's Woodring College of Education. The grant mentioned no special provisions for Native students to be admitted to

Western's teacher education program, although some Western faculty members did write letters of support for the project.

The special education provision allowed the grant to be operated out of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. This avoided the appearance of a federal or state conflict in Washington State's exclusive control of teacher accreditation. As grants are competitive, those institutions that write applications appealing to government officials' beliefs about what Indians are like and what tribes need are most likely to win the award. The image of tribal communities having a large number of children with developmental disabilities and learning handicaps is a familiar and expected assumption of federal administrators and funding agencies (Mehan, Hertweck, & Meihls, 1986). It is a stereotype that gathers money.

I "reinterpreted" large sections of the grant to make it fit the needs of the fledgling teacher education program. The non-Native administrators of the tribal college were worried that if I stretched the federal goals and purposes of the grant too far, we would be in jeopardy of losing the funding completely. Much of the college's funding comes from "soft money." However, I was resolved to put in place a program that would reflect community needs and values. My goals were similar to those of the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators (1999) who ask teachers to "incorporate locally appropriate cultural values in all aspects of their teaching" (p. 4). The Department of Education grant had no space for representing local cultural values and highlighting recent local history. It was an arduous task to reconcile seemingly contradictory educational goals, but I found ways to mediate the grant language and continue integrating community perspectives into the program.

Part of what constrains the language of educational possibility in First Nations communities is the unwillingness of agencies to fund projects that might appear to be in competition with an economic or educational enterprise in the surrounding White community (Senese, 1991). The recent history of neo-conservative attacks on federal support for tribal economic development frames this issue.³ A Lummi community member told me, "For years now, we've been asking for federal support to start our own fish processing plant; something we really need. But, the government won't do it because it might compete with the White commercial processors who make a lot of money buying our fish now." So it was that the Oksale teacher education program was viewed by some faculty and administrators as competing with the one in place at Western Washington University just seven miles from the tribal college. More specifically, the question was raised at the university: Why wouldn't Indian students simply attend Western to obtain teaching degrees? However, Western's college of education was not admitting or retaining Lummis or other Coastal Salish students despite a transfer agreement with Northwest Indian College. It was spurious to suggest that this program would be

competition, because it would attract students who would not have been served by Western anyway. The perception of Western's unchallenged institutional and political dominance had established a context where Native students struggled to imagine a teacher education program that would not force them into the culturally unfriendly environment of Western's mainstream education courses.

Aware of the university's history of skepticism and indifference toward tribal educational imperatives, I still met with the Dean of Education and two senior faculty members to discuss the possibility of Western collaborating to provide accreditation and certification. They proved an unfriendly audience. Aside from asserting an inventory of notions about maintaining "standards," they were most unwelcoming to the suggestion that local culture and history were vital aspects to a First Nations approach to teaching and the self-awareness that must accompany teacher training. The university is implicated in the local history of tensions between Indians and Whites in the region (Marker, 1999).

The Dean and senior faculty members saw a discussion and analysis of forces related to this local history as counterproductive both to their goals of maintaining a premier institutional image, and to asserting categories of standards that protect their interests; such interests are usually corrosive to tribal values. These "standards" must be viewed as situated within what Apple (1999) has referred to as "institutionalized and increasingly marketized hierarchies of legitimate knowledge" (p. 345). Such hierarchies are constructed around discourses that privilege an abstract and globalized view of educational goals and values. Local knowledge, particularly tribal knowledge, in the institutional gaze is generally viewed as either irrelevant or trivial. In this case the local perspective on Indian-White relations needed to be contained and neutralized by the university because it had such disruptive power as a public narrative, exposing institutional hegemony. To include this local narrative and analysis as part of a process for decolonizing First Nations teacher education students was seen as both unnatural and incomprehensible to the education department.

Although it was frustrating to have the ideas of cultural responsiveness disregarded so coolly at the university, the students and the Lummi community were constant in their support and enthusiasm for the program. The students and I were undaunted because of the energy and vision coming from Elders, parents, and community members. I eventually secured collaboration from another institution, Washington State University (WSU) in Pullman (350 miles away), and the program received more secure funding from a Kellogg Foundation grant. Since I left the college the program has survived a succession of four directors in three years. Much of the original program I put in place has been changed from a focus on cultural responsiveness to one emphasizing technology, classroom management, and instructional methodology. Although Lummi lan-

guage, culture, and history are no longer significant aspects of the curriculum, the Oksale program persists, and the first cohort of six students graduated this year. Although the program is seen as a success because it has graduated credentialed Native teachers, it has not yet integrated tribal values into the educational structure. These values must be affirmed by acknowledging and respecting the local culture and history of the land on which the college is located. This is yet to be realized in the core of the program because its structure has evolved to become simply a mainstream education product delivered at a tribal college.

In many ways the ability to offer teaching credentials has become a kind of economic resource. Because First Nations communities throughout the northwest region all experience shortages of certificated Native teachers, it becomes an economic resource for the Lummi community if tribal students come to Northwest Indian College to study and obtain a teaching certificate. Teacher education is not simply education, it is access to a field controlled by institutional gatekeeping mechanisms that have historically excluded First Nations people. Moreover, the economic benefits to the Lummi community through increased employment and growth of the college as a result of the expanding teacher education program are obvious, especially if the program emphasizes Lummi language and history.⁴ It was the program's potential as an economic resource combined with its historical consciousness-raising approach that was resisted by the local university. The presumed competition from the Oksale program was less in a direct fashion, but more in how it raised questions that challenged the university's marketable image of cultural inclusiveness.

Local Knowledge and Community Self-Determination

Both the federal grant that began the Oksale program and the local university's discourse about teacher education were predicated on broad, abstract psychological language that emphasized educational "outcomes" from particular "methods" without examining underlying assumptions about culture or reality. Both were intentionally generic. Institutional indoctrination that ignores the distinctiveness of the local tends to erode community as it propels graduates to seek careers in institutions away from the reservation.

An Aboriginal approach to teaching and learning would emphasize how knowledge and sense of selfhood come from a concrete place. Deloria (Jensen, 2000) puts it succinctly: "You have to remember that the Indian relationship to the land is not abstract, but very particular, tied to one piece of ground" (p. 13). As the standards and demands of teacher education become increasingly oriented toward technocratic goals, and as teacher training becomes more marketized as an educational commodity, it will be increasingly difficult for tribal perspectives to be integrated into the process of credentialing teachers.

Conclusion

Although this article is not the detailed critical ethnography called for earlier, it is a beginning and can illustrate some points of reference that need further examination. It is critical that we conduct qualitative studies of settings where First Nations enter into collaboration with mainstream institutions. An Aboriginal discourse affirming local language and culture, which has a history of power relations, will be contradicted by economic pressures from institutions and funding agencies. To assert a genuine self-determination First Nations educators must increase their consciousness of "how discourses both construct and are constructed by, political/epistemological moves" (Apple, 1999, p. 344). Moreover, without showing respect for the local history, language, and traditions of the place where they are studying, Native students can internalize a generic image of what it means to be an Aboriginal person. This can increase their sense of alienation and marginalization. It is the distinctiveness of the local sense of place that animates meaning and ideology from an Indigenous perspective. It is inevitably this local knowledge and perspective that is so contentious to the dominant institutional structures. First Nations must increase their ability to unravel the ideology from the economic resources as they affirm an Indigenous education that honors the deepest sense of learning from the connections of the culture to the meaning of the land.

Notes

¹In 1974 federal judge George H. Boldt determined that by the 1855 Point Elliot Treaty, Puget Sound tribes had granted the White settlers the opportunity to catch 50% of the salmon, reserving the other half for themselves. This reallocated the fishery and provoked a storm of protest from White fishermen. Native students in public schools felt much of the most intense backlash of racism.

²See Deloria (1978) for a detailed examination of how the aquaculture project and eventually the tribal college were framed in the tension between the language of economic development and community-based education. Acknowledging the disruptive effects of government cuts to the project's education funding, he was nevertheless enthusiastic about the possibilities of the venture: "Of the projects developed in Indian country during the whole decade of the frantic 1960s, the most outstanding and promising to date—and certainly the most innovative—has been Lummi aquaculture" (p. 138).

³See Esber (1992) for a description of how the federal government promoted entrepreneurial capitalism while denigrating Indian self-determination as "socialistic." Funding agencies must be cautious not to provoke backlash from local White communities who are often resentful about perceived special benefits that Indians receive.

⁴Collier (1988) gives an excellent historical overview of how Rough Rock Demonstration School at Navajo had a transformative effect on the community's economy. He also chronicles how government funding cuts eliminated work for community members with traditional knowledge and discouraged local cultural input into the school.

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