

PREPARING TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN THE FOUNDATIONS FOR AN ANISHINAABE CURRICULUM

WAABGINOJII / DAVID B. ANDERSON *Seven Generations Education Institute*

ABSTRACT. The current generation of students has not learned Anishinaabe* traditions; students have not been taught in an Anishinaabe context. They are proficient only in the language of the colonizer. In honour of our Grandfathers and Grandmothers who maintained our languages and our traditions, it is up to us to develop a curriculum that respects our Teachings and enables our children to remain Anishinaabe into the 21st century. The lessons of seven generations before us will prepare us for seven generations after us. This paper outlines *mookise*, the new beginning.

COMMENT SE PRÉPARER À ÉDUIQUER NOS ENFANTS DANS
LES FONDEMENTS D'UN PROGRAMME D'ÉTUDES ANISHINAABE

RÉSUMÉ. L'actuelle génération d'étudiants n'a pas appris nos traditions anishinaabe*; ils n'ont pas suivi leur programme d'études dans un contexte anishinaabe. Ils ne connaissent que la langue du colonisateur. Pour rendre honneur à nos grands-pères et à nos grands-mères qui ont préservé nos langues et nos traditions, c'est à nous qu'incombe la tâche d'élaborer un programme d'études qui respecte nos enseignements et qui permette à nos enfants de rester anishinaabe au XXI^e siècle. Les leçons des sept générations qui nous ont précédés nous prépareront pour les sept générations qui nous suivront. Cet article souligne le processus, *Mookise*.

Boozhoo, Aanii, Tansi

Waabginojii indizhinkaaz. Makwa indodem. I begin as I begin each day, by giving thanks to the Creator. I give thanks for my children, for the gifts of the Four Directions, for those with whom I share Mother Earth; the four-leggeds, the winged ones, the crawlers, the swimmers and the two-legged, and for the Life that I live.

* I use the word Anishinaabe to honour all Original Peoples. When talking about specific nations I use specific names: Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Dene. Other terms – Aboriginal, First Nations and Indigenous – are also used as words in English that have specific implications.

I also begin by remembering the Seven Generations Teaching. In our Oral Tradition, we are told that we must remember our Ancestors who for the past Seven Generations have had to ensure that we who are here today have access to original Anishinaabe Teachings. We are also told that everything we do today must be done to ensure that our Grandchildren, Seven Generations from now, will still be Anishinaabe.

In this Teaching, we are told that the Anishinaabeg would survive Seven Generations of oppression. The tyranny of the colonizers was predicted by our Elders, as was the destruction of our language and the suffering our people would endure to ensure that our Teachings would survive. Our Elders, through their teachings in the oral tradition, tell us that our children today are the children of the Seventh Generation and it is time for us to reclaim our Teachings. They also tell us it is time to teach what we know to be ours as Anishinaabe, as Dene, as Haudenosaunee so that there will still be Anishinaabe Seven Generations from now.

For Anishinaabe educators, this means rebuilding our education system in a way that honours who we are, what we know and how we are to teach our children as Anishinaabe. I present a framework for an education system that honours our past and prepares our children for the future. I use what I have learned from my Elders, from the teachings I have received, and from what I have learned as a student and teacher to present this new/old way of designing and teaching in schools today. This framework proposes an Anishinaabe way of teaching that honours our Ancestors and our ways of knowing and learning and that prepares our Children for the next Seven Generations.

The past five hundred years

Canadian government policies have used education as a tool to colonize the Anishinaabe of this land. (We know this has happened in the United States, Australia, countries in Africa, Central and South America, Polynesia and wherever Indigenous Peoples reside.) These policies have been deliberate acts of genocide, racism, manipulation of national membership, destruction of language, mis-education and religious interference. This has been documented in a number of excellent resources from the Anishinaabe perspective by authors such as Dee Brown (1971), Vine DeLoria (1969, 1994), Taiaiake Alfred (1999), and the non-Anishinaabe writers Peter Edwards (2002) and Geoffrey York (1990). These authors have been telling all of us that the policies of the colonizer have had the specific and intentional purpose of eliminating the Anishinaabe physically from our land, mentally from our way of thinking, emotionally from our way of Being and spiritually from our Original Stories. Eurocentric domination has deemed our Anishinaabe way of thinking as “primitive”; they have told us that our

languages are obsolete, that we did not possess Science, Mathematics or Philosophy and that our way of life was at the beginning of their social evolutionary scale. These ideas are all of course false, yet through the materials we receive in school and the expectations that are set forth, these racist and Eurocentric ideas are perpetuated.

Anishinaabe people are familiar with the results of listening to and living with these actions. We know that our communities have nearly been destroyed, many of our families are in crisis and many of our parents have forgotten their duties as parents. We know that many of our traditions have been cast aside, forgotten or ignored. We know that the language of our Grandmothers and Grandfathers is being replaced with the language of the colonizer. We know the lessons taught to us by Paulo Freire (1968) when he told us that we have accepted the policies and laws of the colonizers, and we have learned to oppress ourselves.

The education system that we follow today was designed not to teach about our rich languages and histories as Anishinaabe, but to teach the history and languages of these same colonizers. The education system was not designed to teach us that we are Anishinaabe, but indoctrinate us as to how we should embrace the world of the colonizer, be molded into the image they have defined and accept, without question, their ways and our place as second-class citizens. The effects of this anti-Aboriginal curriculum are significant. Our languages are almost extinct and our schools are teaching our children that they are not relevant anyway. Our children, not learning who they are as Anishinaabe, may seek out an identity from other cultures, either the dominant White Culture or mirroring the equally oppressed Black Culture. Many of our children learn that "progress" is most important, that their Grandparents are old and out of touch with the "real world."

If our children, who *are* the Seventh Generation, are to learn, respect and pass on the history and traditions of the Anishinaabe for the next Seven Generations, it is up to us to create an education system that works for us. Our task is to design an education system that is Anishinaabe.

Our Anishinaabe foundations

I have learned from my Elders that we are the Original People of this land and our original instructions come from the Creator through our Creation Stories. Our Creation Stories (Benton-Banai, 1979 for example) tell us where we came from, who we are, what is important in life and how we are to honour the Creator and Creation, all that gives us life. It is from these teachings that we understand our Anishinaabe way of thinking. We learn to honour our individual gifts, we learn to respect the knowledge of our ancestors, we learn to honour all of Creation. When we know our beginnings, we can begin to learn where we are going.

Traditionally, before they could walk, our children were raised by extended families, carried about the community on a cradleboard. From infancy, children were taught the "big story," the abstract messages of our being. They learned to listen and to observe. They watched how the whole community worked as a group to ensure the survival of all. They listened to the teachings of the Elders, the words of their Mothers and Grandparents. They were exposed to many abstract ideas. It is the work of each individual child to take these abstract concepts of Creation, community, family, individuality, and concretize them into meaningful relationships with the people, the land, the animals and the elements around us all.

The Anishinaabe Life Path Teaching (Jim Dumont, 1976, 2002) tells us that there are Seven stages we all go through in life. Beginning at Birth we learn about our world from the cradleboard. We then learn to Walk for ourselves and after our Walking Out Ceremony, we are able to experience Creation. This period of learning is followed by the Fast Life, not with racing cars, but with Ceremony, to discover our own Vision and Gift. Only then do we look for and choose a Mate to move through Life with, build a home and start a family. As a Young Adult we continue to learn and master the skills we need as adults caring for our family. We also begin to find our place as a member of the whole community. As an aging Adult we develop our leadership skills as a parent and community member. We continue to learn and grow as a vital part of the community and our family. Finally, in our Old Age, we see that people come to us for advice and knowledge that we are able to share with individuals and the community. We also prepare ourselves for the final stage, crossing over, back to the Spirit World. This process is a Life Path for everyone born here on Turtle Island. If we skip over a stage, we cannot progress. If we skipped over a stage, we will have to go back and relearn it. The same is true for our children. If they did not receive a proper beginning, then steps must be taken to enable them to learn the lessons they missed. This is an important point as we look at Anishinaabe curriculum. Planning for this type of learning is an Anishinaabe expectation, not a provincial expectation. Ensuring that all students have opportunities necessary for their own development as an essential part of an Anishinaabe curriculum, separate from a Eurocentric curriculum, will secure the teachings for the next Seven Generations.

Many parents have lost this tradition and within the structures of the current education system, our children have begun life very differently. Non-Aboriginal schools are based on an educational psychology that assumes that we must start children with the concrete, and then let them move to the abstract (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). This Eurocentric psychology suggests that children be allowed the freedom to explore and choose. The result is that children are allowed to run around freely and grab at everything. They are not taught about what these things are, or how we use

them. The result is that children do not learn self-control or to appreciate the things around them or the life that exists in their environment. They learn to grab, and want to grab for More. This is not the Anishinaabe way. Our way is to teach the whole child, teach mental, physical, emotional and spiritual beings.

As Anishinaabe we have always placed great value in each individual born into our community. We know that each child is on loan to us from the Creator. We have traditionally honoured our children through ceremonies; our children receive their Spirit names so the Creator can recognize who they are. These names reflect the gift that each individual possesses. Our communities were given Clans so our children know they are not alone in the world but have other beings around them to help teach and care for them. How do our schools and our classrooms honour these children, their Clans and their Gifts?

If we ignore these Teachings, we ignore our truth. Accepting non-Anishinaabe knowledge as our own teaches us to be someone we are not. Returning to our Anishinaabe teachings is a difficult step as we encounter Aboriginal parents, teachers and educators who have learned well the lessons of the non-Aboriginal way of "School." They believe that we must impose classroom management techniques on our students. They demand that we accept provincial learning expectations and standardized tests ahead of the Gifts our Anishinaabe children bring to the classroom. If the education system does not recognize the abilities our Anishinaabe children bring to the classroom, our children will quickly learn that the system does not honour them, and they will remove themselves from that system. They do this not only by dropping out of school, but also by behaving in ways that stop their own learning, by deliberately defying the "school rules" and by rendering useless the standardized tests deemed so important. As teachers we often interpret these behaviours as simple disobedience or even defiance of our authority. We should be looking at these behaviours as defiance of a system of rules and imposed knowledge that fails to honour and teach these students as Anishinaabe students.

Our Teachings tell us that Anishinaabe People have been on this land since the First Sunrise. Schools teach a "theory," a non-Aboriginal "theory" that has been used as an excuse for stealing our land, for treating us as less than human, and regarding us as people who were never "civilized." The Bering Strait Theory is just that, a theory, yet schools and textbooks treat it as "fact." The English language is often deliberate in its attempts at defining other people, and as Rupert Ross (1996) has shown us, we need to recognize the power that each word has. The Bering Strait Theory seems like a fact because we do not talk about the details involved, that is we must accept evolution, we must accept that Africa was the birthplace of all mankind, and that men and women migrated over an eon to inhabit the lands around

the world. This is the theory. It is still speculation, Eurocentric scientists tell us that it is so close to being proven that we can accept this as fact. When I talk to Elders, however, they have an Anishinaabe explanation for how we were created, where we were created and even about which way people migrated . . . not east into North America as the Bering Strait Theory states, but west to the other lands around the globe FROM this land.

We have learned from Vine DeLoria (1994) and others that in the 16th century the Roman Catholic Church decreed that we did not have a "soul" and thus were subhuman. The Pope declared North America as "Terra Nullius," empty of beings who are children of God, and therefore the land could be claimed in the name of a foreign monarch. As our Anishinaabe children hear this in school, do they also learn about the great things their ancestors accomplished? Do they learn about the ways in which we interacted with the land? Do they learn to hear the songs the trees and rocks sing? Do they learn about our great transportation systems of roads and waterways, our canal and irrigation systems, our trade routes and market economies? Textbooks ignore the Anishinaabe ways of the land, or consider the teachings as Myths or primitive traditions. What student wants to be part of a culture that is primitive? Even updated texts ignore the technological, scientific and social achievements of the First Nations of North and South America. Instead they continue to perpetuate the misconception of the "simple" things of the simple people, and portray as artifacts our Teepees, our Kayaks and Canoes in comparison to Castles, Armies and Armadas. If we do not teach our Anishinaabe children that they are descendants of a rich and honourable heritage, where will they learn it? If we do not teach our children our Anishinaabe Worldview, where will they learn this?

The Spirit of the Anishinaabe has been challenged for over five hundred years. We have been told that our songs are "evil," that our ceremonies are the work of the "devil" and that our ways are animistic at best, demonic at worst. We have been taken by the hand and led into religious orders that have taught us that we must believe in ways that do not honour this land, our Mother the Earth. When we learn the true nature of the "spirituality" of other lands we learn that they have truths similar to our Anishinaabe ways. But we have also learned that the dogma of their Churches is something man-made, systemic and often far removed from the original teachings they received in their own land. The Spirit of our Anishinaabe children is not honoured or nurtured in a non-Anishinaabe classroom, and our children suffer because of it.

We are Anishinaabe first

We have been taught that we should not trust our Elders, that we should forget our own ways and simply accept the laws, the religion, the governmental structures taught to us by the colonizers. So we have "Indian" people

in government offices handing out “Indian Status” cards, running programs for “Indians and Lands reserved for Indians.” We have Chiefs and Band Councils who have replaced our Traditional Chiefs and Elders.

To make this oppression viable, the new “Indian Way” often subjects our Elders and our Ceremonies into false activities to justify the legitimacy of these oppressive ways. We are creating division amongst ourselves, between those who hold the traditions and those who have gained a position in this oppressive system. The government of Canada (and the United States) supports those who have been elected into local governments and who are in positions of authority. The government continues to demand that our schools follow provincial curriculum and oppression in our own classrooms.

These structures are intended to keep our Anishinaabe ways secondary to the imposed structures. Today we hear a strong message from our Elders in the Lodges across this land that these oppressive structures cannot last much longer. We are learning that it is time to remove these structures and create our own Anishinaabe ways.

We are Not the Other; we are Anishinaabe. In the Oral Tradition, this is the message we have been told and are to tell our children and ourselves. This is also the lesson we need to begin with when we plan our education systems. We are only now beginning to believe in ourselves again as Anishinaabe. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) has shown us the many ways in which Anishinaabe People around the world are shedding the oppressor’s ways and are re-discovering our Anishinaabe Ways. The examples of people and projects around the world are impressive, as many have begun to assert their own Creation Stories and knowledge.

We have economic, spiritual and educational barriers to cross. These barriers are imposed on us by the oppressor to keep us from our Traditions. Our struggle is to celebrate the Gifts that we have been given.

Economically, multinational corporations are collecting and patenting the Gifts we received from the Creator, and they are calling them “Theirs.” In Canada this began with acetylsalicylic acid, a gift that saved the lives of Jacques Cartier and his men when they were sick in Hochelaga. Now it is called Aspirin and the Abenaki People are not even credited with the original use of this medicine. The colonizers saw this gift as simply willow bark, a substance whose ingredients could be removed from the original natural environment and manufactured. In its chemical form, it could be packaged and sold in their legitimate marketplace, a drug store. Our Elders continue to remember the Teachings needed to collect and administer this medicine, and it is still used today in Anishinaabe Health Centres. However, not all Anishinaabe have been taught that it is OUR real medicine

and many of us still are unsure of the knowledge and ability of our Medicine People. We don't trust the validity of our own teachings.

We have learned not to trust most of what has sustained us since that first sunrise. Our Medicines, our Knowledge, our Spiritual Practices, our Languages and our Communities have suffered. The rebuilding process is taking place as described by Tuhiwai Smith (1999) and Anderson, Horton, Horton and Wilson (2002) as Anishinaabe People redefine the colonizer's institutions and create Anishinaabe Institutions. Schools have become essential in all Anishinaabe communities, but developing Anishinaabe curriculum has been difficult. Trusting in our ways, our language, our knowledge and our spirit is difficult in the face of local and provincial (state) standards. The task for the children of the next Seven Generations is to re-define the foundations of education and develop an Anishinaabe Curriculum.

Schools are an imposed institution used to systematically instill the values and pass on the knowledge of those who operate them. Everything from establishing the length of the school day, the school year and when children have recess is imposed on the children to teach them regulation, indoctrination, routine and submission. As Kohn (2000) and Postman (1996) have indicated, schools are not healthy places for any student and, in North America, the result is that only a small number of individuals are successful. As for the rest, they drop out of school, become inactive in their community and focus on consumerism. Anishinaabe children are telling us they are not learning the lessons of their Grandparents, they are not learning their own language, and they do not know where they belong in a society of consumers. It is up to us to design the curriculum, to make the changes and accept the challenge of teaching our children who they are as Anishinaabe.

An Anishinaabe curriculum

An Anishinaabe curriculum will reflect the teachings of the four directions. In this model the four directions are presented as follows. From the **East**, where the sun rises giving us light, we have our Language. From the **South**, the place of growth, we accept our Ways of Knowing. From the **West**, the place of our Ancestors, we honour the Spirit of our children and our teachers and from the **North**, the place of wisdom and strength, we have our Anishinaabe Knowledge,

We begin in the **East**. . .

giving thanks to the Sun for bringing us the light of each new day. Words contain the essence of who we are and what we know. Each of our languages is different, yet each contains knowledge and value that reflects who we are. As I personally struggle to learn Anishinaabemowin (Anishinaabemwin when I am in Southern Ontario) I am amazed at the rich texture of ideas contained in each word, each phrase and sentence. I am discovering that

one needs to be a Poet in English to talk the same way as Anishinaabe speakers. As I learn to name the things around me I understand why there are so few nouns in Anishinaabemowin, and so many verbs. The world is alive, and it is the activity and interactions of the world about which we talk. The concepts that are supported through the Anishinaabe language are different from the English translations.

Two issues arise with regard to language, honouring Anishinaabemowin in the classroom and the use of English as a language of instruction.

In schools the Anishinaabe languages are treated as second languages and the support for them is inconsistent. In Ontario, there are policies stating that Native as a Second Language instruction should occur using qualified Native Speakers in programs that consist of forty minutes per day at the primary and junior levels and thirty minutes a day at the intermediate level. In high schools, Native as a Second Language is an alternative to the French language requirement but few schools offer an extensive language program. Only in Aboriginal-run locally based schools is Anishinaabemowin given the status of First Language or the Language of Instruction. There are several immersion programs across Canada that have successfully supported or re-introduced the Anishinaabe Languages.

Schools in Kahnawake and in Oneida focus on language retention (personal communication with parents and school personnel, 2002). In both schools there is parental and community support for the language program, and students are once again hearing and speaking their language. The first step is deciding that our languages are important and that our children need their Anishinaabe language *first*, not as an add-on or extra program, but as an essential part of their education. It will take all of us, the whole community, to accept the responsibility of re-learning our language and making it strong in our schools. If our children do not learn their language, then they will not learn to teach their children and all language will be lost within two generations.

The second language issue deals with the use of English in the classroom. Ross (1996) has taught me to be careful in the English words I choose when I speak. This is a very difficult thing as the English language contains so many words that are judgmental in nature, words which are used without regard for actual meaning or intent. When a teacher tells a student "I really like the way Bonnie is doing her work," not only is she saying that she does not like the way everyone else is doing their work, but that they all should be doing what Bonnie is doing, not what they are doing. Embedded in the teacher's words is the teacher's authority to determine what is correct and who in his or her opinion is actually doing it. Students spend many hours, years even, trying to figure out what makes their teacher happy so that they will be identified as the "good student," doing what the teacher likes.

Anishinaabe parents agree that our children need to learn English and the curriculum of Canadian culture; the issue is to not accept the dominance of their ways at the expense of ours.

Then to the South. . .

where we gain the strength to grow and nurture our Anishinaabe Ways of Learning. The cradleboard enables young infants to look at, listen to and process their environment. We bundle our children to give them the security they need to experience life. While they are bundled and carried around the community infants learn from observation and listening. The bundled children feel the same security they felt while in the womb and are able to adjust to their new surroundings and to experience life on this plane.

As our children grow older they have their "Walking Out" ceremonies to honour the fact that they are now able to move about on their own, that they are becoming independent. Children continue to learn by watching and listening but are now able to investigate using their hands and feet. Traditionally, a young child will not grab at things and try to put them into piles. They have learned about the tools and materials and actions around them from their observations. As toddlers they have ideas about how things around them and how people around them work. Young children will validate their understanding by doing, which either confirms their understanding or leads them to further observation. This scaffolding process enables children to confirm their observations about how things work. In this manner, the traditional process for learning is demonstration, observation, processing and then manipulation, which lead to understanding. In schools today the process is different. Students are encouraged to manipulate materials, then observe the results, process the information and demonstrate their understanding through manipulation. These very different processes lead to different ways of understanding the world.

We also recognize that students learn differently. We have known for many generations that there are non-academic ways of learning. In recent years, non-Aboriginal writers have also acknowledged these differences in learners. Howard Gardner (1993) offers the idea that we are all smart; smart in different ways. His proposed Intelligences span the human experience, from Musical, Bodily Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Linguistic, Mathematical/Logical, Naturalistic and Spatial to Existential and Spiritual (1999). Gardner describes how to shape our teaching by providing different kinds of learning opportunities, opportunities that echo our traditional ways of learning. Using the different intelligences, teachers can move from a standardized classroom to a more traditional teaching environment that honours all learners.

Jeanne Gibbs (1995) observed classrooms across the United States and discovered that the best learning environment occurred when teachers honoured their students and provided co-operative learning opportunities. Gibbs' work is called *Tribes; a cooperative learning environment*. Although she was not initially aware of how similar her program was to traditional Aboriginal teaching methodologies, she now acknowledges this fact. Students learn to help each other in their learning: co-operation is better than competition for the betterment of the whole group.

Rediscovering Anishinaabe forms of learning means designing learning opportunities that allow our students to watch, to listen, to process and try and then to reflect on what they have accomplished. In this methodology, there is no best way. In their own reflections they learn that others accomplish the task in different ways; all ways are acceptable and encouraged. The ways of learning are multiple; the only standard is that everyone is honoured for learning. The teacher in an Anishinaabe curriculum mediates the student's learning and provides rich language for processing. Mark the contrast to leveled learning groups in which students learn to see themselves as ahead or behind their peers. This comparing and grading creates hierarchies, not community, and has long-term consequences for self-esteem.

The role of the teacher is vitally important. The first task of the teacher is to plan a variety of learning opportunities for students. This requires a great deal of thought about materials and goals for the activities. It requires cooperation with colleagues in a rich community of educators in the Anishinaabe ways. Opportunities are provided for students to first observe, then reflect, then to engage in what they are learning. Students also require follow-up activities so they can continue to use these skills or demonstrate deeper understandings. Finally it is up to both the teacher and the students to show what they have learned, how they can be evaluated.

To the West. . .

the place of our Ancestors, the Spirit of who we are as Anishinaabe. Here we remember the Spirit of our Teachings and the Spirit with which we were given our Gifts. In Anishinaabe Way we were given the Teachings of the Seven Grandfathers. In Haudenosaunee Way we were given the Teachings of Peace, Power and Righteousness. Local schools across this land will use their own teachings of respect, honour and peace.

The teaching of the Seven Grandfathers tell us that we are to learn and live with these seven gifts, the Gifts of Wisdom, Respect, Humility, Truth, Honesty, Bravery and Love. Within each of these gifts we are to acknowledge our past and our future. Each of these gifts affects our Minds, Bodies, Spirit and Emotions. As young people we see how our parents and Elders exemplify each of these Gifts. We learn that we are to act in each of these

ways: Brave enough to try, yet Humble enough to know that we have received assistance along the way. Wise enough to know but Honest enough to know what is Truth, Care for each other, Respect all of Creation and Love unconditionally all things given to us by the Creator. These are lessons that take a whole lifetime to learn; yet each of us begins at birth to learn. The task of Anishinaabe schools is to create the role models and an environment where students can practice each of these Gifts.

The Haudenosaunee teachings of Peace, Power and Righteousness (Alfred, 1999) are similar to the Anishinaabe. Each individual is to find their gift and the true nature of their being in each of these teachings. We all strive to find the Peace within our selves and our community. We find the Power that has been given to each of us to complete the tasks and face the challenges that confront us. We also learn to do our work and honour Creation with the Righteousness that we see around us, the righteousness of all Creation.

There is a growing number of non-Aboriginal writers who are working to awaken teachers and educators to honour the spirit of both teachers and students. Parker Palmer (1998), Jack Miller (1999) and others recognize the need to honour Spirit within the classroom. They echo our call to include Spirit in our planning, to honour Spirit in each child and to adopt a curriculum that builds community and respect throughout our schools.

And in the North. . .

Wisdom awaits those who walk with their Elders. Our Teachings, our Ceremonies, and our Elders are the repositories of this knowledge, which has been with us since the First Sunrise. We do not classify, simplify, organize, categorize, quantify or dissect knowledge the same way that Eurocentric methodologies have done. Gregory Cajete (1994) and Joseph Couture (2000) have shown us that the scientific method did not exist in the Anishinaabe lexicon or in our practice. The Aboriginal Way of Knowing is not to differentiate among the sciences, to separate history from mathematics or philosophy, nor to take the physical away from the mental. The Anishinaabe world is a unity of all things. We acquire knowledge from many sources: dreams, visions, the natural world, listening, observing and feeling the world around us.

There is a story told by Wade Davis (2002), a Canadian anthropologist who has travelled around the globe living with Elders and Medicine Men and Women from different Indigenous Nations. He has learned that the Elders and Medicine People have specific knowledge for creating their various medicines. In referring to a specific combination of plants to create a hallucinogenic drug, Western scientists suggest that these Medicine People must have used "trial and error" to find the right "formulas." However, with the over 80,000 species of plants that are available and the multitudinous

combinations, these men and women would have had to work for over a thousand generations to achieve these particular formulae. When Davis asked how they knew to use these particular plants in these particular ways, they were astounded to learn that Davis did not know. They assumed that with his credentials and his university degrees he KNEW how they did it. Davis admitted his lack of knowledge and the men were gracious enough to tell him that on the full moon of each month, the plants will sing out their songs, and tell the listeners how they can be used to help the people. What Davis faced was a different way of acquiring knowledge and understanding the messages of the Natural World. Davis learned that our Elders have learned in a different way, understanding the teachings of Creation as Anishinaabe Way of Knowing.

Our Medicines, Ceremonies and Songs contain knowledge. The information contained in our Songs is deeper than just the words or the actions. The Songs, Ceremonies and Medicines are our link to Creation. As Holmes (2000) illustrates in her stories about her Hawaiian Elders, knowledge is contained in our Hearts; our bodies contain Blood Memory. We will not achieve anything if we do not take the time to listen to the Voice of the Land. Anishinaabe Elders also tell us to listen, and to feel the Earth, the Sky, the Moon, the Air and the Water. These songs are also for our children so they can learn the ways of Creation. Eurocentric ways do not empower us to comprehend all that the world is telling us; we need our whole body to accept and process this information.

With these four elements, Language, Ways of Learning, Spirit and Anishinaabe Knowledge, we can develop a curriculum that is Anishinaabe first, that honours our Traditional Teachings and prepares our children for what lies ahead of them. As teachers begin to utilize this model, the whole school program will change. Schools will be more responsive, students and their parents will begin to re-learn and re-live the teachings of the Seven Grandfathers. Whole communities will acknowledge the child as an Anishinaabe child. If we take on this challenge, we will take our place in ensuring that our grandchildren Seven Generations from now will have the opportunity to live as Anishinaabe People.

It is up to us to trust our Anishinaabe ways of child rearing and education; to honour that Our Way is a gift from the Creator given to our ancestors and passed down to us. Teachers and parents who acknowledge the Anishinaabe way of learning and being teach their children that our Anishinaabe way is the only way that we CAN be. We cannot be anyone else or anything else. This pedagogical framework is our *mookise*, our new beginning, to ensure that we do not forget this truth. We will not let our children become lost for the next seven generations.

Mügwetch. Nia:wen

REFERENCES

- Alfred, T. (1999). *Peace, power, righteousness: An indigenous manifesto*. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Anderson, D. B., Horton, L., Horton, D., & Wilson, A. (2002, August). Honouring our traditions, honouring who we are as Anishinaabek: Establishing an Anishinaabe university programme. Paper presented to the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education, Calgary, AB.
- Benton-Banai, E. (1979). *The Mishomis book: The voice of the Ojibway*. St. Paul, MN: Indian Country Press.
- Brown, D. (1971). *Bury my heart at Wounded Knee*. New York, NY: Holt Reinhart and Winston.
- Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountain: An ecology of indigenous education*. Skyland, NC: Kivaki Press.
- Couture, J. (2000). Native studies and the academy. In G.J. Sefa Dei, B.L. Hall, & D. Goldin Rosenberg (Eds.), *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Davis, W. (2002) Ideas: CBC Radio: Toronto, ON.
- Deloria Jr., V. (1994). *God is red: A native view of religion*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing.
- Deloria Jr., V. (1969). *Custer died for your sins*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Dumont, J. (2002, May). Personal communication, Fort Frances, Ontario, ON.
- Dumont, J. (1976). Journey into Daylight Land: Through Ojibway eyes. *Laurentian University Review*, 8(2).
- Edwards, P. (2002). *One dead Indian: The premier, the police and the Ipperwash crisis*. Toronto, ON: Stoddart.
- Freire, P. (1968). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Seabury Press.
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gibbs, J. (1995). *Tribes: A new way of learning and being together*. Sausalito, CA: CentreSource Systems.
- Holmes, L. (2000). Heart knowledge, blood memory, and the voice of the land: Implications of research among Hawaiian Elders. In G.J. Sefa Dei, B.L. Hall, & D. Goldin Rosenberg (Eds.), *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Kohn, A. (1999). *The schools our children deserve: Moving beyond traditional classrooms and "tougher standards."* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Miller, J.P. (2000). *Education and the soul: Toward a spiritual curriculum*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Palmer, P.J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1969). *The psychology of the child* (H. Weaver, Trans.). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Postman, N. (1996). *The end of education: Redefining the value of school*. New York, NY: Vintage Press.

Preparing to Teach Our Children

Ross, R. (1996). *Returning to the teachings: Exploring aboriginal justice*. Toronto, ON: Penguin Books.

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London, England: Zed Books.

York, G. (1990). *The dispossessed: Life and death in native Canada*. Toronto, ON: McArthur.

WAABGINOJII / DAVID ANDERSON is of Dene/Irish-Canadian ancestry and is currently on leave from York Region District School Board to complete his PhD at OISE/University of Toronto. He has been involved in Aboriginal and Anishinaabe education for the past twenty-five years as a teacher, consultant, curriculum writer, teacher educator, and instructor in a graduate Indigenous Knowledge program. David lives near his two children in River Drive Park, Ontario. You may contact him at danderson@edu.yorku.ca.

WAABGINOJII / DAVID ANDERSON est d'origine déné/irlando-canadienne et il est actuellement en congé de l'arrondissement scolaire de la région de York pour terminer son doctorat à l'IEPO/Université de Toronto. Cela fait vingt-cinq ans qu'il s'occupe de l'éducation des Autochtones et des Anishinabee en tant qu'enseignant, consultant, rédacteur de programme, responsable de la formation des enseignants et chargé de cours dans le cadre d'un programme d'études supérieures en connaissances autochtones. David vit près de ses deux enfants à River Drive Park (Ontario). On peut entrer en rapport avec lui à l'adresse danderson@edu.yorku.ca.

POSITION AVAILABLE

DIRECTOR

MCGILL UNIVERSITY, FACULTY OF EDUCATION OFFICE OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT EDUCATION

THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY, Montreal, seeks to fill a tenure track appointment at the Assistant or Associate Professor level for the position of Director of the Faculty's Office of First Nations and Inuit Education beginning July 1, 2003.

The University seeks candidates with doctoral degrees and with expertise in teacher education programs which target the preparation of First Nations and Inuit peoples. The Office is responsible for the delivery of field-based teacher education and Aboriginal literacy programs, both pre-service and in-service, in partnership with Algonquin, Cree, Inuit, Mi'kmaw and Mohawk communities in Nunavut, Quebec and Nova Scotia.

Requirements: The successful candidate will have experience in teaching at the elementary or secondary level; student teaching evaluation; course and program planning, implementation and evaluation. Educational background should include Aboriginal knowledge perspectives and an emphasis on education related to the experience of Indigenous peoples in North America and globally. A research program, administrative experience, and excellent leadership and communication skills are required. Knowledge of English and French, or of English and an Aboriginal language are assets. Preference will be given to applicants of Aboriginal heritage.

Responsibilities: The successful candidate will direct a large teacher education program in partnership with First Nations and Inuit communities; therefore, willingness and ability to travel regularly to partner communities is required. The candidate is expected to conduct research, ideally with evidence of interdisciplinary approaches. The successful candidate will teach at both undergraduate and graduate levels and supervise graduate students.

Salary: Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

To Apply: Applications should include a current curriculum vitae, a statement of research experience and interests, and evidence of teaching experience and effectiveness (e.g. a teaching portfolio). In addition, the candidate should supply names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of three referees who can attest to the candidate's scholarship, administrative experience and community involvement. Direct applications to:

Chair, Selection Committee, Office of First Nations & Inuit Education
Faculty of Education, McGill University, 3700 McTavish, Rm. 614
Montreal, QC H3A 1Y2
Phone 514-398-4533; FAX 514-398-2553; www.education.mcgill.ca/ofnie
e-mail: directorsearch.education@mcgill.ca

McGill University is committed to equity in employment. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, priority will be given to citizens and permanent residents of Canada.