



ON INDIAN GROUND

A Return to Indigenous Knowledge: Generating Hope,
Leadership, and Sovereignty Through Education



CALIFORNIA

Joely Proudfit and Nicole Quinero Myers-Lim



On Indian Ground

A volume in
*On Indian Ground: A Return to Indigenous Knowledge:
Generating Hope, Leadership, and Sovereignty Through Education*
Joely Proudfit and Linda Sue Warner, *Series Editors*

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On Indian Ground

California

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PREFACE

ON INDIAN GROUND

A Return to Indigenous Knowledge

American Indian education has over a 150 years of contentious generalizations that supported parochial, federal, state, private, and tribal involvement in the education of American Indian youth. The formalization of culturally relevant policy, curriculum, and practice by American Indian scholars, educators, elders, and researchers is relatively recent. Currently there are available texts on the history of American Indian education, as well as specific volumes on language revitalization or curriculum development. This series is not intended to duplicate the exceptional materials currently available. Our intent is to begin to narrow the conversation and to create a readable reference that is available to educators, parents, community members, and scholars as they begin to search for answers that are culturally appropriate to the regions and tribes they serve.

We also chose to move beyond the remnants of a past that gave voice to the victimization of American Indian education. In absence of an authentic, comprehensive approach to contemporary issues and with the specific intent to create resource materials that are engaging, thoughtful, and relevant, we propose the following volumes in our series, *On Indian Ground: A Return to Indigenous Knowledge—Generating Hope, Leadership and Sovereignty Through Education*:

- On Indian Ground: California* (Proudfit and Lim)
- On Indian Ground: The Bureau of Indian Education* (Redman and Gipp)
- On Indian Ground: The Southwest* (Tippeconnic)
- On Indian Ground: Hawaii* (Wright)
- On Indian Ground: Oklahoma* (Pahdopony and Hedgewood)
- On Indian Ground: Northern Plains* (Gipp)
- On Indian Ground: The Northwest* (Jacob)
- On Indian Ground: The South* (Faircloth)
- On Indian Ground: Northern Woodlands* (Wilson)
- On Indian Ground: Alaska* (Lillie)

With the assistance of nationally and internationally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian scholars, we believe that best practices need a wider dissemination among the educators who are best served by these policies and practices if we are to prepare American Indian students to be college- and workforce-ready in the 21st century.

The format of this series is designed to provide an in-depth look at topics which are relevant to all levels of education, as well as all types of schools.

These topics include the history of the state or region, policy, politics and law, tribal departments of education, early childhood education, K–12 best practices, language revitalization, postsecondary efforts, exceptional education, curriculum, counseling, technology, funding and finance, parental and community involvement, research, and evaluation. We asked our authors to engage in this scholarship with the intention that the text is readable and accessible to all who are interested. We anticipate that parents, community members, tribal educator directors, classroom teachers and administrators, elders, and community advocates will find the text useful and informative in their efforts to improve opportunities for American Indian students.

On Indian Ground: California is the first in our series. We chose to begin with California because the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center (CICSC) is located at California State University–San Marcos and serves over 100 tribes in California. The CICSC fosters collaborative research and community service relationships between higher education and members of tribal communities to develop and conduct research and best practices that support the maintenance of sovereignty and tribal culture. Our affiliation with CICSC created a unique vantage point for determining both the extent of the need and identifying scholars who could best address this need. Thank you for joining us in this journey.

**—Joely Proudfit
Linda Sue Warner**

INTRODUCTION

A RETURN TO INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Generating Hope, Leadership, and Sovereignty Through Education

On Indian Ground: California is the first of ten regional texts designed to narrow the focus of best practices to regional audiences. Each book in this series covers a wide spectrum of issues, policies, and practices that impact American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian students. For this first book, we are sharing the perspectives of native scholars, researchers, and practitioners who share our vision to create opportunities for tribal youth.

In Chapter 1, “Protecting the Treasure: A History of Indigenous Education in California,” Yurok, Hoopa, and Karuk Kishan Lara-Cooper traces the history of Indigenous education in California through the telling of a traditional Yurok story that includes the basket, elders, river, and villages. The story symbolizes indigenous knowledge and our reaction to socialization systems contact/genocide, relocation, colonial education, and self-determination in California. Lara-Cooper recognizes that in the face of blatant genocide, policies of enslavement and bounties to hunt California Indians, we have persevered.

Nicole Sabine Talaugon, director of programs and evaluation for the California Consortium for Urban Indian Health details the perpetuation

of colonialism through Indian education in Chapter 2, “History of Indian Education in California.” Talaugon discusses the critical issues this climate of education creates for Native students and the consequences to their psychological development and educational attainment. This chapter is rounded out by an evaluation of contemporary efforts and challenges facing California Indians in the pursuit of educational self-determination, specifically the mandates of federal laws, creation of college level Indian education centers, and the introduction of tribal community colleges

In Chapter 3, “Navigating the System: Key Elements and Processes,” Gerald A. Lieberman, an internationally recognized authority on school improvement by using natural and community surroundings as interdisciplinary contexts and an educational leader for the State of California’s Education and the Environment Initiative, provides us with an overview of the roles of the many entities in California charged with developing, adopting, and implementing curriculum in the state. This chapter further goes on to provide guidance regarding how to become actively involved in decision making related to California’s K–12 education system.

Nicolasa I. Sandoval, Santa Ynez Chumash education director and State of California Department of Education member, discusses in Chapter 4, “Tokoy: A Circle of Promise for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians,” how her tribe exercises its sovereignty by investing in systems that ensure each community member has a clear access to educational pathways from birth to career. There are 23 American Indian Education Centers in California that are authorized by California Education Code, Article 6, Sections 33380-33383. Center staff assist schools with professional development, counseling, tutorial services, or parent education. They also provide supplemental and extended day instructional. Sandoval maps out how the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians has worked with the business and education committees and education department to ensure fiscal and systematic sustainability for future generations through a well-administered education center.

In Chapter 5, we explore the “Early Learning and Best Practice in a Native American Head Start Program” from Tamara Alexander and Mikela Jones. This chapter represents diverse experiences in working with native students. Alexander demonstrates best practices in early education through creating learning opportunities for the whole family and ensuring that the environment of the classroom fosters cultural growth and enrichment. Jones surveys the needs of middle school and high school students through examining the need to address trauma and establish meaningful and trusting relationships with students and families over time.

Dr. Melissa Leal, Esselen and Ohlone, advises readers about the foundations of “K–12 Best Practices: Creating Successful American Indian Students” in Chapter 6. She reviews her experiences as a tutor and an administrator in creating a practical plan for meeting the needs of Native

students. Her recommendations incorporate strategies for cultural continuity, community-wide engagement, positive relationship building, and extracurricular youth empowerment. Several practical considerations are included, such as transportation, as key factors contributing to student and programmatic success.

In Chapter 7, “Teaching Truth: Social Justice for California Native Students,” Joely Proudfit and Nicole Lim expand upon the experiences of Indian students in the classroom. Lim chronicles her journey raising a daughter who faces adversity from her educators and peers. She introduces the pressures faced by Native students in attempting to correct misrepresentations and stereotypes, including the hardships of being labeled as “overly sensitive” or the so-called “Native American expert” for the class. Proudfit examines the statewide impact of stereotypes across California public schools in the adoption of Indian mascots and the dominant culture’s acceptance of racism against Native Americans as the status quo.

Chapter 8, “Revitalizing Critically Endangered Languages in California: Case Study and Promising Practices,” Kumeyaay Theresa Gregor and Stanley Rodriguez showcase the work of a variety of California Indian language teachers and community members working in language revitalization throughout the states. Gregor and Rodriguez surveyed members from the Living Language Circle, an annual meeting started by the Yocha de he Wintun and Santa Ynez Chumash to bring together California Native Language teachers in an annual forum. The authors provide us with case studies from a variety of tribal communities ranging for northern, central and southern California. The efforts made by the Hoopa Valley Tribe; Yocha de he Wintun Nation; Tuolumne Me-Wuk Band of Mewuks and the Iipay/Tiipay Language Immersion at Kumeyaay Community College are a testimony to the resilience and persistence of California Indian languages.

In Chapter 9, Warner and Proudfit review the options for higher education for California native students. This chapter, “Higher Education in California,” draws heavily from the recent reports published by the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center at California State University–San Marcos. These reports have been integral to the work at the Center and have influenced policy, including the annual Report to Tribal Nations at CSUSM. The reports were funded by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians as part of their commitment to tribal youth and are widely acknowledged as the standard that other state offices should replicate. Proudfit and Warner note that California, as the state with the largest identified population of American Indians and the widest system of postsecondary institutions available, still has work to do to increase the proportionate number of graduates.

In Chapter 10, “A Multilogical Approach to Giftedness: Creating a Space for Indigenous Knowledge,” Yurok, Hoopa, and Karuk Kishan Lara-Cooper

explores the community's concepts of giftedness, which are distinct from Western concepts of giftedness. Lara-Cooper writes that schools need to approach education from a community context, incorporating Indigenous knowledge. Lara-Cooper examines the concept of giftedness as defined and practiced by the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation located in Northern California. The intent of this chapter is to emphasize the significance of acknowledging and validating indigenous knowledge, embracing diversity, and thinking multilogically whereby indigenous knowledge is recognized, endorsed, and considered through its own theoretical lens.

Nicole Lim, Pomo, conducts an analysis of California's existing educational materials in Chapter 11, "Assessing California State Curriculum and Its Impacts on K–12 Students." Lim discusses the creation of educational myths and stereotypes regarding Mission and Gold Rush eras under the framework of genocide. She identifies common themes and relates them to patriotic motivations and romanticized justifications. Lim also provides strategies for revising the curriculum and adopting unified educational goals for teachers.

In Chapter 12, "Counseling: Cultural Components to Counseling and Advising," Andre P. Cramblit highlights counseling and advising in a historical context and showcases successes in working with Native students in California. Cramblit makes a case for the importance of having a culturally competent academic counselor who works closely with tribal needs to meet the needs of their students.

In Chapter 13, "Miromaa: Awakening California Tribal Languages in Digital Spaces," Tomio Endo conveys his experiences working on a community-wide language revitalization project for the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center. Endo illustrates how a partnership between an Aboriginal Language Center in Australia and a statewide Indian museum led to the creation of six mobile applications for introductory language learning. He examines how technology is being re-envisioned to empower language advocates to create new and affordable digital tools that make language learning accessible to broader segments of California of tribal communities.

Chapter 14, "Funding, Finance, and School Accountability," was compiled by Laura Lee George. Our goal for this chapter was to provide some real numbers on what exactly is funded and financed in support of American Indian education from both the state and federal government. It was both a struggle and challenge to find an authoritative voice to address the numbers specifically. The chapter's author, Karuk Laura Lee George, has a long history in education as a retired and former director of the Indian Teacher and Educational Personnel Program, Klamath–Trinity Unified School District superintendent, and business manager for Klamath–Trinity Unified School District that encompasses the Hoopa, part of the Yurok Reservation, and Karuk country. George provides us with an overview of the

federal and state legislative changes in funding and financial practices and measurements for accountability for schools in California.

In Chapter 15, “Parents and Tribal Community Efforts,” Tishmall and Hunwut Turner review case studies of how California tribal communities are reclaiming educational content and advancement for native students. They explore a diversity of tribal schools, programs, and nonprofits engaged in ensuring that tribal cultures, languages, stories and parents are active participants in their children’s classrooms. Case studies include the Pechanga Chámmakilawish School, the All Tribes American Indian Charter School on the Rincon Indian Reservation, the Rincon Indian Education Center, the Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association graduation program, and the Inter-tribal Young Men’s Camp. These authors explore how leadership and community activism contribute to educational success, cultural sensitivity, continuity and enrichment for both students and teachers.

Deborah Morton’s Chapter 16, “Educational Research: Using a Health-Based Model,” focuses on both the need for culturally relevant research and the use of tribal institutional review boards (IRBs) to create capacity in local communities.

Linda Sue Warner’s Chapter 17, “California Urban Indian Education,” is noteworthy because the author was unable to find an exemplar at the K–12 level. Other states have American Indian charter schools in urban areas; however, the districts with the largest enrollment of American Indian students do not use this strategy. If urban educators are to incorporate American Indian/Alaska Native culture or language in their curriculum, the only strategy available to them is the incorporation of cultural values and the inclusion of tribal perspectives using native ways of knowing.

In the final chapter, “Addressing ‘Anti-Indian’ Historical Bias in California Public Schools through Better Practices,” Sabine Nicole Talaugon investigates how California Indian education policies can be informed by challenges and successes of other states that have sought reform. She examines the impacts of multicultural educational theory on California public school curriculum and evaluates viable strategies for consideration, such as the adoption of “essential understandings,” or a state constitutional amendment. This chapter is offered as a way to leverage existing ideas into new solutions; we hope that it will serve as a catalyst for change.

We are honored that these educators and scholars continue to support promising practices in California and believe you will find valuable resources here to continue the work to improve opportunities for American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiians in our state. Your feedback is welcome as well. You may contact the series editors at CICSC@csusm.edu.

—**Joely Proudfit**
Nicole Lim