17

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"It Takes a Village . . . ," and New Roads to Get There

Alan R. Pence

Using the analogy of a journey, this chapter describes the author's experiences in working with several aboriginal communities in developing and implementing a unique approach to postsecondary education in early childhood care and development. Those experiences, spanning 10 years and involving seven different tribal organizations, provide an inclusionary model of community participation in the training process that reinforces community responsibility for and involvement in the well-being of children, families, and communities.

The approach described complements community development and educational efforts described in other chapters in this volume, linking them through an interactive process of knowledge generation at the community level. Such inclusionary educational practices are deemed essential if community-sensitive services are to be realized. The processes and understandings of the Aboriginal Generative Curriculum projects share certain similarities with postmodernist movements in philosophy, education, and child development. Characteristics of those movements, and the common ground they share with the generative curriculum approach, will be briefly considered in the concluding section.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIAL PROJECT

An Invitation to Participate

> It will be the children who inherit the struggle to retain and enhance the peoples' culture, language and history; who continue the quest for economic progress for a better quality of life; and who move forward with a strengthened resolve to plan their own destiny.
>
> —MEADOW LAKE TRIBAL COUNCIL (1989)

Although a central activity of this project concerns postsecondary education, its origins are not in a university or college but in a northern Canada Tribal Council composed of nine First Nations communities.[1] Following the creation of the Tribal Council in the early 1980s, it pursued a variety of economic initiatives. Some of these succeeded and some floundered, but through the process the Council came to the position that "if we wanted to develop economically, we first had to develop our human resources" (V. Bachiu, personal communication at Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, 1989).

In 1988 the Council recognized, through a recently announced federal child care research and development fund, the opportunity to pursue a key facet of its human resources development agenda: "a child care program developed, administered and operated by [our] own people is a vital contribution to [our] vision of sustainable growth and development" (Meadow Lake Tribal Council, 1989). In order to meet the objectives, the Council needed to establish a relationship with a postsecondary institution that would support the nine communities' vision for their children.

The Council's search led to inquiries to a number of colleges and universities in several provinces. The response from the selected institutions was that they did indeed have an aboriginal child care training program, and they sent along a copy of the curriculum materials. As these curricula were reviewed, the following question was posed: "What of us—our people and our communities—is in here?" In virtually all cases, there was no information specific to their communities. There might be some information about Cree peoples or Dene, but there could be bits of Mohawk, Haida, or Micmac as well. The Council members continued their search for a curriculum that would reflect "themselves": their communities, their values, their ways of being in the world, as well as other peoples' perspectives on the world.

One of the places the Council contacted was my office at the School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, British Columbia. In contrast to some of their other contacts, my response to the query was that we did not have an Aboriginal Child and Youth Care Program, nor did I believe we had the internal expertise to create one. Nevertheless, Ray Ahenakew, the Council's Executive Director, wanted to talk further and we set up a meeting for a couple of weeks later when he would be on the west coast.

I entered the meeting bereft of aboriginally specific materials. Executive Director Ahenakew immediately took control of the discussion—spelling out the role he wished me and the University of Victoria to play, de-

scribing the needs analysis work that had been undertaken within the communities over the previous 5 years, and evidencing an extraordinarily high commitment to child, youth, and family issues within the constituent communities of the Tribal Council. Clearly, I was not in the driver's seat in this meeting, nor was I being asked to take the wheel at any point in the proposed future. I was to be a passenger, albeit an invited one and one he and the Council felt was critical to the journey they envisioned. The case the director put forward was compelling, and his personal energy was sincere and powerful—I had little idea where these travels would take us nor how we would get there, but the spirit was right and the trip promised to be fascinating!

In reflecting back on these very early stages of work that would ultimately continue for more than 10 years (as of this writing) and subsequently move to include five other aboriginal projects, I realize that elements that I would come to consider as key in undertaking such initiatives were present from the beginning:

1. The initiative and the vision for the project was the community's.
2. The personal chemistry between the proposed partners was strong and respectful.
3. Being "empty handed" but "open minded" can be an advantageous starting point.

Guidance Systems

> I remember it so clearly, even though it happened back in 1988. MLTC [Meadow Lakes Tribal Council] Executive Director Ray Ahenakew told us to dream the best possible child care program we could imagine. And so we did.
>
> —MARY ROSE OPEKOKEW, Child Care Program Director in 1988

The proposal to the Canadian federal government was approved for a 3-year period, commencing September 1990. During that 3-year period the Council and the School of Child and Youth Care (hereafter, for brevity, the University) were committed to a partnership that would see the development, delivery, and evolution of a 2-year, university-level program in early childhood care and development (ECCD). If the model was successful, the founders wished to see it applied in other parts of the country as well. Clearly, to meet this "portability" expectation the model would need to be highly process oriented, providing an "open architecture" capable of incorporating different cultures' and communities' inputs. Other realities also

had to be considered in the construction of the new approach: early childhood licensing accreditation and university academic accountability, to name but two. Given the 1,500-kilometer separation between the Council and the University, even meetings posed significant planning and logistical challenges. The partnership was able to coordinate two major planning meetings in the fall of 1990, and out of those emerged agreement regarding a set of guiding principles for the project. These principles represented the shared vision of the partners—"stars" that would guide us in the absence of a map.

The principles included the following:

- A commitment to maintaining community initiative and involvement
- A commitment to principles of empowerment
- A respect for *all* cultural beliefs and values
- An understanding of the child in an ecological context
- Providing a base for a broad scope of training and services for children and families
- Creation of an education and career ladder for participants

In many respects the principles were in opposition to established educational and professional practices. But the failure in so many cases of those established practices to meet the needs of aboriginal children, families, and communities provided the liberation required to "dream the best possible" and to pursue it through the partnership. In short, we had little to lose and much to gain.

As we moved to operationalize the partnership a number of additional elements emerged as important in undertaking such projects:

4. The need for a thorough sharing and discussion of partners' and stakeholders' perspectives and visions.
5. The need for consensus on a shared set of principles and objectives.
6. The need to respect the autonomy, the knowledge, and the capability of one's fellow travelers, that is, to contribute but not dominate.

Curriculum as Process

> It helps when you ask Elders. . . . Older women are the ones you should ask for advice on how you can help people in your work. It's good that you are taking this course, you will go back and work with your people.

> You have to go home to work with your people,
> otherwise you will lose your culture.
> —HARRY BLACKBIRD, Elder, Makwa Sahgaiehcan
> Address to students

If the views, beliefs, and values of the Council communities were to enter into this curriculum, it could not come through the University. Even if the University were able to receive the information, it could not pass it on appropriately as the message is more than content: it concerns *how* information is presented as much as *what* that information is. The Council identified that the bearers and transmitters of their communities' knowledge were the Elders. The structure of the curriculum would need to provide the opportunity for the Elders' teachings, often in Cree in Dene, to be an integral part of the program.

Louis Opikokew was appointed by the Council as the Elder Coordinator for the project. Louis came to his position from a long history of work in Native Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programs for adults. In his own words, he was skeptical about the child care program, its priority for the communities, and what role he could play:

> "To tell you the truth, at first I didn't believe in the child care program. But once I saw what they were doing, it really opened my eyes. . . . [I am] pleased that the program gave the Elders a chance to share their knowledge with a younger generation. The students, for their part, recognizing special wisdom of the Elders, began to consult them on personal as well as course related matters."

The words of the Elders, presented weekly to the students and following traditional protocol, represented one key facet of what the project team came to call the Generative Curriculum Model (GCM). Another key feature might be termed the "Words of the West"—the traditional texts and theories of Euro–Western thought. Both perspectives were treated with respect, consistent with the Council's desire that the students would be able to "walk [and work] in both worlds."

As the curriculum project evolved, the traditional Western educational emphasis on content was supplemented with an equal emphasis on application. Knowledge, without an understanding of how such information can be used and applied, is incomplete. Through the context of community, ever present through physical location as well as direct input from Elders and other community members, the praxis of knowledge and action was, to a large extent, achieved.

> As the Generative Curriculum evolved it looked less and less like established, Western, postsecondary education practice. While the partners had been busy on the inside of the vehicle addressing issues and problems as they emerged, the route the car was on had left familiar roads and entered new territory.
>
> Key lessons from this period included the following:
>
> 7. Partnerships require putting the other first.
> 8. Focus on what *you* know and bring to the partnership—do not attempt to become the "expert" in your partner's domain.
> 9. Bring the world outside into the classroom and the classroom out into the world.
> 10. Come to understand curriculum and knowledge as living, evolving processes.

First Evaluations: Searching for Curriculum and Finding Community

> We must carefully consider the impact on not only our children today, but seven generations from today.
> —DEBBIE I. JETTE, Elder and Evaluator (1993a, p. 2)

Two and a half years into the 3-year project, evaluations of both the curriculum aspect of the project and the community services component of the project were organized. The curriculum evaluation component employed a coordinator who, in addition to interviewing students and instructors, submitted an overview of the project and several individual courses to specific Canadian-based specialists: a cross-cultural ECCD educator, an aboriginal ECCD educator, an early childhood curriculum writer, and a professional editor. In addition, two eminent cross-cultural education specialists were contracted to review the overall curriculum approach. Comments from all six evaluators were consistently positive. The two overview reviewers commented as follows:

Dr. Kofi Marfo, Ghanaian-born specialist in ECCD:

> "I have found the MLTC/SCYC [the School of Child and Youth Care] project to be one of the most innovative and well conceptualized approaches to addressing the educational and personnel preparation needs of cultural minority communities I have come across. The curriculum model acknowledges the limits of the knowledge base the principal investigators bring to the project, while appropriately respecting and honoring the tremendous contributions that elders, students, and community members at large can make to the program." (in Cook, 1993)

Dr. Roland Tharp, winner of the Grawemeyer Award for "significant original ideas with the potential for worldwide impact and improvement" for his work with Hawaiian educators and children:

"The placing of Elders at the origin of each unit, and the recursive reconciliation of the Native with the Professional concepts, are both philosophically and technically an outstanding exemplar of educational empowerment." (in Cook, 1993)

The evaluation comments of Dr. Marfo, Dr. Tharp, and the four other culture, content, and format reviewers provided strong confirmation of the process followed and the quality of the materials produced. However, the evaluation that had the most significant impact on me personally, as a key participant in the journey initiated 5 years earlier, were the comments of the First Nations' Elder from Ottawa who evaluated the community aspects of the Project. Through her eyes I became aware that our travels had truly taken us to a different place—a place called community:

"The most significant outcome of the Indian Child Care program is the renewed interest and impact of the Elders in the life of the communities. As one Elder stated, 'The Elders are the messengers and now play a big role in the MLTC. We are an information line, a bridge.' . . . " (Jette, 1993b, p. 44).

In reading Jette's evaluation report I began to appreciate that through involving and respecting the participation of "community" in the curriculum not only is student development enhanced but so too can be the community's development. The Elders and other respected community members who participated in the Generative Curriculum, and there were more than 40, became participatory conduits between the classroom experience and the community experience, and they themselves, as participants in both worlds, became part of the transformational process. Other words that Jette recorded from the community are like ripples and cross-ripples on a pond:

"Elders were a big part of the Indian Child Care Program, coming in on a weekly basis. This has carried over into other aspects of life and there has been a resurgence of Elder involvement."

"Elders are once again a respected and needed part of society."

"Students . . . began to consult them [Elders] on personal as well as course-related matters."

"Before, kids were left out of everything. But now they are coming back. This is like it was before." (Jette, 1993b, p. 45)

The evaluation of the community aspects of the Council project represented a turning point in my understanding of the GCM. The curriculum evaluation provided confirmation that our *intended* objectives had been achieved; however, the community evaluation indicated that very significant *unintended* outcomes had also been realized. At that point my understanding of our activities was transformed from "curriculum development work" to "community development." In that context, the tool of postsecondary education took on new significance. However, in order for postsecondary education to be effective as a community development tool, considerable reshaping must take place.

11. Elements of the reshaped tool, as constructed in the GCM, include the following:
    - Bringing community into the classroom and the classroom into the community.
    - Respecting diverse knowledge bases and seeking to understand their sources.
    - Emphasizing the *process* of learning, rather than the imparting of information.
    - Understanding all participants as learners and all as teachers.

These were elements of the tool that had been created. But before we could more fully understand its properties, we need to pilot the tool in other communities and understand its impact there as well.

SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS

There is no doubt that the [GCM] program addresses issues long obscured by the historically ineffectual attempts of mainstream postsecondary institutions to address the needs of First Nations students. The question now becomes not "should the program continue?" but "what can be done to make it better?"

—A. KEMBLE, Coastal Project Evaluator (1994, p. 2)

The Coastal Project

The evaluation of the original project provided strong confirmation of the value of the approach in the Council communities, but could the model be successfully employed in other environments? The original funding had been predicated on that "portability." The opportunity to test the approach in a very different cultural environment, the Coast Salish people of the Canadian west coast, came in September 1993.

The Coastal Project represented a three-way partnership consisting of the University, the Coastal Council, and a local college program. While in the original project the University had been asked to assume responsibility for both development and delivery, in the Coastal Project the local college would deliver the curriculum under the guidance of the University, and both would work in partnership with the Coastal Council.

The Coastal Project also had many twists and turns on the way to completion, but evaluations conducted at two different points during the program echoed many of the findings from the original project, and similar "ripple impacts" were noted by the Coastal Project evaluator (Riggan & Kemble, 1994).

Midway through the project, one student noted, "This program has a different feeling and atmosphere from mainstream programs." At the conclusion of the full 2 years of the program, another student noted, "I really wish the third and fourth years were Coast-Salish based. This was a great experience for me." A third student commented, "As a native program it has greatly impacted on my need to pursue my native heritage in a more aggressive manner. . . . It has made a difference in my work with native youth."

A nonnative instructor commented on how the experience of listening to the Elders present each week had led her to question her own relationships with "Elders" within her own family and resolve to change that relationship. And perhaps most significant was the impact on the college system itself. College administrators, at the conclusion of the Coastal Project, spoke about how the Elder coordinator approach, with strong involvement by local Elders, had been adopted by other, sometimes long-standing aboriginal programs they operated. The evaluator noted, "The involvement of the Elders has now become pervasive. . . . The profile of First Nations people on campus has changed. The demographics of students, staff and faculty positions has shifted to more accurately reflect the representation of native people . . . " She concluded her second evaluation with this statement: "The CYCL [Child and Youth Care Laddering] program has already made a major impact. The students who have been a part of it will never be the same, nor will the community in which they live" (Kemble, 1995, p. 20).

Additional Communities

A third and fourth community initiated the Generative Curriculum in 1995 and 1996. Again, each of these communities represented different tribal organizations great distances from the first two communities. While no formal evaluations have yet been conducted at either of these sites, informal observation, as well as instructor and student feedback, suggests both strong "internal" (student and class) impact and significant ripple impact externally. Funds have recently been received (in 1998) to undertake an evaluation across the seven sites that either have utilized or are utilizing the GCM.

The subsequent GCM projects provide support for the adaptability of a process-driven approach to postsecondary education. Other learning from the subsequent projects included the following:

12. The importance of a very close liaison and mutual feeling of respect among the partners.
13. Elder participation is a critical component that should be present from the outset.
14. Unanticipated impacts remain a significant element in each project.

Reflections on Experiences with the General Curriculum Model

The preceding case study of the GCM complements and extends this volume's conceptual framework on human development. As will be discussed in the following section, there is a growing awareness throughout North America that if we are to be effective in our promotion of developmental health we must also be supportive of family and community well-being. Doing "more, better" while pursuing a paradigm of "doing to" rather than "doing with" is not the answer.

Community-focused interventions, such as those currently being undertaken in the province of Québec by Camil Bouchard and his colleagues (see Chapter 16, this volume), share a similar conceptual and theoretical base with the First Nations' GCM projects. As with Bouchard, the ecological work of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) and his colleagues at Cornell played a major role in the conceptualization of the original Council project. Indeed, the initial definition of "empowerment" utilized in the GCM came from Cochran, Allen, Barr, Dean, and Greene (1989–1992) with the Cornell Empowerment Project. Also, following in part from Bronfenbrenner's early work but also building on a strong tradition within anthropology, has been the work of individuals such as Super and Harkness (1986) and Weisner and colleagues (see Weisner, 1984). The sensitivity of these researchers to "eco-cultural niches" provided important direction to the project in its early period.

While published work on "the learning society" was not a part of the late 1980s early 1990s conceptualization of the GCM, the definition employed by Rohlen (Chapter 13, this volume) resonates with the work of the GCM within First Nations communities: "In a learning society, the goal is continuous learning, leading to improved knowledge and problem solving. . . . Innovation involves creating new knowledge, learning to utilize

knowledge to solve problems, and diffusing such solutions in the population." What is critical in the learning society and in GCM First Nations communities is respectful and broad *inclusion* in solving common problems through unique and innovative approaches (see Moss & Pence, 1994).

As noted by Scardamalia and Bereiter (Chapter 14, this volume), "The idea of students as participants, along with teachers and perhaps others, in a collaborative enterprise has been around at least since John Dewey"; nevertheless, the examples of this collaborative approach employed at a community level remain relatively few and far between. Scardamalia and Bereiter's "collaborative knowledge building," while an essential characteristic of the GCM, is relatively rare within the education and professionalization practices of child and family service professionals. Insofar as it is these individuals who are expected to play a major role in including "community" in the well-being equation, the next section will turn to the question of "community" in the provision of child and family services and obstacles on the way to reaching "the village."

ARRIVING AT COMMUNITY: FEATURES OF AN IDEASCAPE

> "It takes a village to raise a child."
>
> —Generally credited as an African proverb, this quotation is pervasive in 1990s North American society and is the title of a 1996 book by U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. A nice sound byte, but can we get there from here?

The earlier description of Generative Curriculum projects has implications far beyond the several First Nations discussed. At a time when the words quoted above—"It takes a village . . . "—have taken on a mantra-like quality across much of North America, we must seriously question if our services to children and families can get "there" from "here." I rather doubt they can—at least not without a fundamental shift in our understanding and in the practices of social services training and professionalization. Both practices mitigate against working with and through communities. What is required for such a shift to take place is not a romanticized return to *Gemeinschaft* or a pining for a "world we have lost," but an active and respectful engagement in cooperative planning with the communities of which we are a part today. By that I mean we must learn to "do with," not "do to," those with whom we live. Professionals and experts must be prepared to be knowledgeable, supportive, and involved coparticipants engaged with communities as listeners as well as speakers, followers as well as leaders. As coparticipants, professionals must become

comfortable with the indeterminancy and power sharing that coconstruction requires.

The training for and provision of social services in North America still follows an academic and professional heritage based on principles of immutable "Truth" and restricted access to that Truth. The traditions of the Enlightenment and of logical positivism are but more recent manifestations of an understanding of "knowledge," "truth," and "authority" that have deep roots in Western society, including not only political but religious institutions as well. Certainly not limited to Western society, the essence of such structures is that knowledge is a scarce and specific commodity—a few people have it in "sufficient" quality and quantity, and many do not. Within such a conceptualization of knowledge, exclusionary, as opposed to inclusionary, principles and priorities apply. Both tertiary educational systems and our professionalization practices are exclusionary in nature, whereas the road to "the village" is necessarily inclusionary. Indeed, we cannot get "there" from "here," at least not on the roads we currently travel.

Yet, ironically, while the tenets of professionalism still promote the need for "professional autonomy, self regulation, a specific formal education, and a clientele which recognizes the authority of the profession" (Kelly, 1990, p. 168), the social science bedrock upon which such restrictive and exclusionary principles were based has crumbled. "The epistemology of logical positivism has proven to be untenable. The firm conviction that the world was simply 'out there' waiting to be discovered and described has been exposed as a convenient fiction" (Schwandt, 1996, p. 58). The aftershocks of this Cartesian collapse still reverberate throughout the worlds of science and social science, while in the *social services* these events are often misinterpreted as part of a revolutionary toppling of one power system, opening the way for its replacement by some faction of those formerly dispossessed (a familiar cycle in history). Untransformed in this social services' "revolution" is the core principle that "right answers" do exist—they are just the property of the formerly disenfranchised, who now hold power as the wheel of history turns. Such cycles are not what the GCM is about; it is not the specter of radical relativism wherein "anything goes" and "experts" can be dismissed. The terms "expert" and "professional" must, however, be problematized and their modernist roots exposed and reconstructed in collaboration with those impacted by their practice.

The condition of "Cartesian anxiety" (Bernstein, 1983), created by the collapse of "objective knowledge," is considered resoluble through what Schwandt (1996) calls "practical philosophy," the practice of which is complementary to that described above in the Generative Curriculum process:

> "First, inquirers seek to establish a dialogical relationship of openness with participants in the inquiry. . . .
>
> "Second, inquirers view the participants in the inquiry as themselves engaged in performing a practical art. . . .

> "Third, the aim of such inquiry is not to replace practitioners' commonsense knowledge of their respective and joint practices with allegedly more sophisticated, theoretical, scientific knowledge but to encourage practitioners to critically reflect on and reappraise their commonsense knowledge. . . .
>
> "Finally, . . . we retain the Enlightenment insight regarding the importance of self-clarity . . . but we seek to adopt a better or more critically defensible notion of what this entails. . . . " (Schwandt, 1996, pp. 63–64)

A more "practical" approach to understanding and generating community appropriate knowledge has begun to evolve in some areas of child and family related social sciences, although such literature continues to represent a minority of published work.

One such area of research that has been slow to achieve major recognition, despite a fairly long history of activity, is cross-cultural psychology. Through the increasingly prominent work of Majority World[2] child developmentalists, including Kagitcibasi (1996), Nsamenang (1992), and Sinha (1983), to name but three, the degree to which Western perspectives and beliefs of universal patterns of development have dominated our understandings, despite evidence to the contrary, is becoming increasingly apparent. Jahoda and Dasen (1986) deplored the fact that "theories and findings in developmental psychology originating in the First World tend to be disseminated to the Third World as gospel truth" (p. 413). The recent movement of cultural psychology from the periphery of interest to a more central position of recognition in the world of child development can be seen as supportive of efforts, such as the GCM, to respectfully copresent indigenous beliefs and values regarding children and their development alongside Minority World beliefs with the intent of achieving a practical understanding through a dialogical process.

Recent work in early childhood care and development is also moving to redefine the "limits of universals" in understanding quality caregiving. Working separately, but arriving at a similar position, are recent publications by Woodhead (1996) and Moss and Pence (1994). Woodhead argues that quality is "contextual," while Moss and Pence argue that a definition of "quality" must be arrived at through an inclusionary process. Both publications run counter to the present majority of ECCD publications addressing "quality care" that tend to adopt a prescriptive approach. Indeed, most of the publications considered to have relevant features for the community ideascape considered in this chapter were "counter" documents at the time of their publication.

A significant pioneer for those working in both cross-cultural child development and alternative perspectives on early childhood care and development is Urie Bronfenbrenner. Bronfenbrenner's 1970s work, in establishing an ecologically sensitive approach to understanding children's development, has provided personal, professional and scientific support for

those who shared his frustration with the "science of the strange behavior of children in strange situations with strange adults for the briefest possible periods of time" (1979, p. 19). Both the recent work in reconceptualizing quality early childhood care and the efforts cited to further appreciate the importance of culture in human development owe a great deal to Bronfenbrenner and "the giants upon whose shoulders we stand" (1979, p. xi). Fruition of the work of those giants in creating a more contextually sensitive understanding of child development may at long last be at hand. As Elder, Modell, and Parke (1993) note, "Science's grip on the discipline of psychology has prevented quite the rout of positivism occurring in philosophy and history, but we see a weakening at the edges" (p. 193).

Such a "weakening at the edges" can be seen as a precondition for communities to engage in meaningful dialogue with "experts." If "Truth" is singular and universal, then dissemination, not dialogue, is the way forward. But dissemination has been tried and for many, like the aboriginal peoples of North America, has been found wanting. These communities, and I believe many others, can very legitimately ask, "What of us is in here?" If we, as "experts," are not prepared to engage in dialogue about that point, to learn as well as to profess, then effective community services for children and families will remain beyond rather than within our grasp (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

> As the twentieth century draws to a close, there is little question that we are living through more than the chronological end of an epoch. . . . Time is imbued with symbolic meaning, it is caught in the throes of forces of which we only have a dim understanding at the present. The many "post-isms," like post-humanism, post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-Fordism, post-Keynesianism, and post-histoire, circulating in our intellectual and cultural lives are at one level only expressions of a deeply shared sense that certain aspects of our social, symbolic and political universe have been profoundly and most likely irretrievably transformed.
>
> —SEYLA BENHABIB (1992, p. 1)

The First Nations of Canada have long lived in a social, symbolic, and political universe that has been profoundly transformed. The quest of certain of these communities to "find their way" in the context of a world that is vastly different than what they have known in the past may provide direction and insight for others. These communities' understanding that old and new must find ways to coexist, each to respectfully inform and learn from the other, may provide a model for development in uncertain times. The road to healthier communities for those First Nations described in this

chapter has, by and large, been a commitment to the well-being of their children. Children may represent the accessible "common ground" upon which families, communities, and child developmentalists can support each other in creating a better, stronger, healthier future. It may be that the basis upon which we can realize that "it takes a village to raise a child" is an appreciation that perhaps "it takes a child to raise a village."

NOTES

1. First Nations is a term preferred by many North American Indian communities in Canada. While it has a technical definition, it also serves as a reminder to the "two founding peoples of Canada" (the English and the French) that the First Nations were here before either arrived.
2. The terms "Majority World," instead of Third World or Developing Countries, and "Minority World," instead of First World or Developed Countries, are used in this chapter both to highlight the significant population difference between the minority who live in "Developed Countries" and the significant majority who live in "Developing Countries," and to avoid the Western biases inherent in the terms "developed" and "First."