

(117). This constitution created the Osage Minerals Council, an independent agency, to discharge these obligations and to represent the interests of headright owners.

Continuing its melding of Native tradition with European constitutional law, this work describes the role of clan mothers in selecting—and, when necessary, removing—male leaders of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's constituent national councils (127), as well as the Navajo courts' incorporation of "tribal customary laws into modern dispute resolution. . . [which illustrates that] indigenous precepts can fit into Western-style litigation and decision-making" (170).

On the Internet, *Structuring Sovereignty* also includes many more reference resources as an "Electronic Appendix," including texts of several dozen constitutions from Abenaki to Yurok, as well as updates and errata (<http://www.uanativenet.com/book/Constitutions-of-Native-Nations>). It will prove valuable both in the classroom and on reservations.

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This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States. By Andrew Woolford. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015. 431 pages. \$90.00 cloth, \$90.00 electronic.

In the last twenty years there have been numerous books on the impact of boarding schools on indigenous peoples' lives and cultures. Surely Andrew Woolford's study will be regarded as one of the most important. Several aspects of the study are particularly notable: his framing of the boarding school story in a comparative United States-Canadian context; his argument that both countries purposely employed boarding schools as instruments of cultural liquidation and genocide; that both countries have failed to both fully acknowledge the immensity of the social and psychological damage wrought on indigenous populations by these institutions; and that as a consequence, both have failed to redress in a meaningful manner the immensity of their crime. Over the course of making his arguments, the author brings to bear a breathtaking knowledge of both primary and secondary sources, seamlessly moving from theoretical constructions to wrenching firsthand indigenous testimonies.

At the center of the study is the proposition that for both countries, boarding schools functioned as genocidal institutions. Definition is, of course, central here. Drawing upon the writings of Raphael Lemkin and others, Woolford maintains that genocidal policies can be physical, biological, and cultural, and that "genocide is important not so much because it targets the bodies of group members but because it targets the relations that hold the group together as a persistent but changing entity" (32). Since boarding schools were devoted to the elimination of indigenous cultures, they played—however justified by policy makers of the day as benevolent agencies for uplift and integration—a crucial role in the genocidal process. Drawing upon the work of Patrick Wolfe, Woolford argues that such institutions were the natural

outcome of settler colonialism, which mandated the elimination or transformation of the indigenous other as a necessary prerequisite for dispossessing them of their land and resources.

In making comparisons between the United States and Canada, the author focuses on four institutions: on the United States side, the schools in Albuquerque and Santa Fe in the state of New Mexico; on the Canadian side, the schools of Portage la Prairie and Fort Alexander in the province of Manitoba. Throughout his discussion of the four schools Woolford employs an original and most useful analytical lens for making sense of the schools' varying influence over students' lives—the “settler colonial mesh.” His argument is that structurally, the system as a whole was a series of nets operating at macro, meso, and microlevels. At each level the mesh was tightened or loosened, depending upon circumstances that ranged from policymakers' prescriptions for solving the “Indian problem,” to regional institutional practices, to teacher and staff personalities. This, in turn, allowed for degrees of resistance and subversion by both indigenous communities and students. Striking examples of this are the Albuquerque and Santa Fe schools, where nearby Pueblo communities forced school superintendents to make some accommodations to parental desires—for instance, allowing children to return home over the summer months.

Readers will find the author's comparison of the Canadian and United States systems especially rewarding. On several accounts, the former emerges as the more oppressive of the two. The Canadian policy of unrelenting wholesale assimilation lasted longer than in the United States, where progressive reforms in the 1930s under the direction of Indian Commissioner John Collier sought to roll back the off-reservation program. Indigenous parents in the United States frequently had more say in what institutions their children would attend. United States schools were also mostly government-run institutions, in contrast to Canada's where schools were mostly operated by religious denominations. This feature meant that Canadian schools were less accountable to governmental oversight authority and probably explains their longer reliance on corporal punishment as a means of discipline. This reviewer also wonders if sexual abuse by school staff wasn't more common in the Canadian system. Notwithstanding these differences, Woolford's judgement is that the immensity of the colonialist assault in indigenous minds and bodies by both countries was so great that both nations have much to answer for.

Apology, moreover, is not enough. Since the legacy of settler colonialism has been so devastating to indigenous communities, Woolford argues, major efforts at redress are morally justified. While Canada has begun this process, mainly through financial settlements to childhood victims of the boarding school regime, the United States has thus far all but dismissed the redress issue. The reasons for this are several: the colonial mesh was generally looser in the United States, thereby allowing indigenous communities and students more opportunity to resist and mitigate the worst abuses of the system; an assumption that the thirty-year policy shift toward “self-determination” absolves the nation from any past wrongdoings; and finally, that Indian leaders in the United States, rather than pursue the “messier” path of invoking genocidal terminology in their quest for federal dollars, have in the main focused on immediate concerns.

Woolford's fear is that both nations will ultimately attempt to bury the genocide issue altogether in an effort to get past the unpleasant truth that both were "born from a genocidal impulse" (296).

There is much to praise in this remarkable book. Woolford's contributions are threefold: his comparative analysis of the United States and Canadian systems, his analysis of the nature and levels of the settler-colonial mesh, and his arguments for redress. Some readers, no doubt, will object to his employment of the word "genocide" as something of a definitional stretch and will be more comfortable with the qualifier "cultural." It should also be noted that outside of offering up new testimonial evidence on the often horrific experiences that children endured at boarding schools, there is little new here on the overall capacity of these environments to wreak havoc on indigenous identities. Indeed, by focusing on the Santa Fe and Albuquerque schools on the United States side, he may have missed some of the worst abuses of the system writ large; that is to say, abuses in those institutions where Native communities held less sway over school officials' practices. It should also be pointed out that there is really nothing new about the inextricable connection between the colonizers' designs on indigenous lands and resources, on the one hand, and their education policies, on the other. Weakening students' collective bonds while simultaneously instilling in them the outlook of possessive individualism helped pave the path to dispossession. But these observations should not detract from the extraordinary originality and richness of this volume. Without question it is a genuine contribution to the literature and will remain for years to come a major source for understanding this tragic, but nonetheless fascinating, chapter in indigenous-colonial settler relations.

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