INDIAN EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

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TEXTBOOKS: LESSONS IN DEGRADING THE INDIAN

Textbooks that degrade, insult or forget the Indian have been used for years. Indians complain about these books, so a list is compiled and that is the end of it. Publishers are reluctant to change a book once published, authors become defensive and Departments of Education avoid the issue.

There are complaints about Indians being called "savages, with murderous eyeballs"; there are complaints about references to the two "founding races" of Canada (meaning British and French) and almost complete omission of the Indians' contributions; there are complaints about army and cavalry victories being called victories, but Indian victories being called "massacres"; there are complaints about cliches such as "heap big Indian" and errors such as the notion that all Indians lived in teepees and wore "head-dresses with stand-up feathers"; there are complaints that the complete dependence of the early map-makers (they weren't really explorers) on the Indians is omitted from the Social Studies, even though the diaries of most of these map-makers give credit to the Indians.

This article is about one of the worst offenders, a story called "Almighty Voice" in the Grade 5 reader Under Canadian Skies published by J.M. Dent & Sons. The story could be one of sharing, strength, bravery and honour. Instead it is a story filled with cliches, which piles dishonour on the memory of Almighty Voice and makes him look more like a fool than a brave man caught up in a series of misunderstandings.

Another version of the story is in Long Lance an autobiography of Chief Buffalo Long Lance, half-brother to Almighty Voice.

Here is how Long Lance sets the scene:

"Almighty Voice...had been arrested by the mounted police for killing a range steer that belonged to the Government of the North-West Territories. He had thought it was one of a small herd that had been given to his father." (p.273)

Here is how the Reading Text begins the story:

"Almighty Voice was not really a bad Indian. He just wanted his own way and didn't want to obey laws....He wanted to show them (his own people) what a 'heap big Indian' he was....

One day when Almighty Voice was riding across the prairie, he suddenly came upon a cow that had strayed from its herd. There was no one to be seen anywhere. He thought he could break the law without being found out. He shot the cow...." (p. 135,136)

In the opening paragraphs the Reading Text has already completely missed the chance to show a classic misunderstanding which occurred time-and-again between the Indians and the Europeans. No mention is made of the fact that the laws were not the Indians' laws but those of the Europeans. Instead of the misunderstanding being portrayed, Almighty Voice is made to look cowardly, dishonest and a show-off. The only good thing written about Almighty Voice is a mention in passing that he shared the meat with the rest of his tribe. No mention is made of the question that if Almighty Voice was so cowardly and dishonest, why would he share the meat with his tribe? Here the act of sharing, which is an important part of so many Indian cultures and is one of the things that many non-Indians don't think is important, is given only a passing mention.

After he was arrested for killing the steer, Almighty Voice escaped. Here is how Long Lance tells of it:

"One of the mounted police...jokingly told Almighty Voice, through an interpreter that they were going to'hang him for killing that steer'. The corporal did this to scare him he said." (p. 273). Long Lance tells of the escape in which Almighty Voice ran 14 miles carrying a ball and chain which had been strapped to his leg, and swam across the Saskatchewan River with the help of a quickly made raft (p. 274-276). Brave? Yes. A feat of strength? Yes. A misunderstanding? Yes.

But what does the Reading Text say?

"He was put in jail for a month as punishment for what he had done.... Almighty Voice managed to slip through the door and escape. He reached the Cree camp, picked up a horse and galloped across the prairie" (p. 137). Brave? Not especially. A feat of strength? No. A misunderstanding? No.

Within a short time a mountie found him and was killed by Almighty Voice who thought he was fighting for his life. Almighty Voice managed to elude capture for two years, despite a massive man-hunt. Finally, according to Long Lance, Almighty Voice decided to stop running and make a stand.

This he did with two other Indians, according to Long Lance, holding off 12 mounties, "...further reinforced by a command consisting of every spare man from the Prince Albert barracks of the North-West Mounted Police." (p. 287). This was further reinforced by a 25 man contingent from Regina, a 9-pounder field gun and a Maxim gun plus uncounted civilian volunteers (p. 289).

At the end of the first day of fighting Almighty Voice sent the message:

"'We have had a good fight to-day. I have worked hard and I am hungry. You have plenty of food; send me some, and tomorrow we'll finish the fight'

When this message was interpreted to the mounted police they were struck with surprise. But it was the Indian's code:

Fair fight, fair game, no bad feeling in the heart. It may be hard to believe but Almighty Voice admired the dashing courage of the mounted police fully as much as he did that of his two boy campanions. The Indian loves the brave, strong fighting opponent and hates the weak, cowardly adversary" (from Long Lance, p. 290). This message, which shows the bravery, honour and respect of Almighty Voice is not mentioned in the Reading Text.

The final killing of Almighty Voice, according to Long Lance, occurred after a number of days of siege including about 8 hours of shelling by two cannons. There isn't room to detail the final assault. We relate only one other incident that does not appear in the Reading Text.

Almighty Voice's cousin was found wounded but alive beside the body of Almighty Voice and the third Indian, his brother-in-law. A mounted policeman "...walked up to the hole and put a finishing bullet through the wounded lad's head". (p. 296).

The Reading Text condenses the story of the capture to less than two pages and ends with:

"Poor mistaken Almighty Voice! By breaking the law and fighting, he thought he would show his people what a big Brave he was. He forgot that the law he broke was made to protect Indians as well as white settlers". (p. 143).

If you would like to borrow the Long Lance version of the story just write. We have a limited number of loan copies.

There are many other examples of errors and omissions in texts. We would like to highlight one in each issue of this Newsletter. If you come across one of these references or stories write us about it and we will do our best to publish it. Here are a few places you can begin looking.

Look up a section called "The Aborigines" in Canada: A Political & Social History pp. 11&12. "The aborigines made no major contribution to the culture that developed in the settled communities of Canada....the Indian was not only useless but an active menace whose speedy extermination would be an unqualified boon"; or a section called Indian "Civilization" in Our Canada p. 17. "The northern Indians were much poorer artists than the Indians of the south" and an unchallenged quote

from a Jesuit priest (p.14). "...the unsavouray and insipid food of the savages, of which it is enough to say that the daintiest and most delicate of it would be refused by dogs in France." Finally in Stories Old and New read the poem for Grade 2 children called "The Archer" which ends:

"And sometimes I am Robin Hood,
That olden archer brave and good;
And sometimes I'm an Indian sly;
Who waits to shoot the passers-by."

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OUT OF THE PAST

(Our thanks to Harvey Brooks for passing this on to us)

from the Commencement Annual, Coqualeetza Indian Residential School, Sardis, June, 1934

Foreword and Valedictory

The term ends, the school year ends also, examinations are over, a large class of graduates have delivered their valedictory. Some students leave for their holidays with the assurance that they will return in the fall. Others, the graduates, do not sever connections so easily because of the knowledge that, as they say "good-bye." It is farewell to much thoughtful care, kindliness of action, pleasant relationships, happy school associates, but it has to be.

I also, after 20 years residence make this foreword a valedictory. After all, my thought is akin to the of the students, more mature because of accumulated experience: it is one of gratitude and devotion to the members of the staff, present and past, who have loyally supported the school in its educational, religious and character building ideals. During the years Coqualeetza has borne in mind several fundamental ends in the education of the Native children.

Let me also express my thanks to the Department of Indian Affairs, both in the service at Ottawa and outside service in British Columbia. Their unfailing courtesy and active co-operation could not have been surpassed by any department in the service of the country. I do not hesitate to say that rightly understood, the officers of the Department of Indian Affairs are really "the friends of the Indians." They have solved the problem of Indian education. They have as far as possible, humanly speaking, gone a long distance towards solving the complex problem of the health of the Native people. They are striving to solve now what is essential for their welfare and contentment, the problem of today which is essentially economic. We are proud of a Department which has tried to take care of the Native people of Canada, probably in a more sympathetic and practical manner than any other country which is responsible for the welfare of a dependent or primitive people.

Let me voice my appreciation of the officers of the United Church and the Woman's Missionary Society whose interest has always been of a helpful character: their day and residential schools and hospitals have been a great uplifting force in the lives of thousands of "the real Canadians." Their visits to Coqualeetza have been inspirational and are red letter days in the school calendar.

Now, as this is my last forward I am wondering what to say to the students. The constituency from which you come is largely that of the North Pacific Coast, from the Straits of San Juan to the border of Alaska. I have said that the Indian problem of today is essentially economic and to my vision there is a possibility of solving that problem to a large extent with Indian handicraft arts. If you and the Native people grasp the opportunity there is a road that will lead to work and contentment. If you are indifferent the chance is lost forever.

How can this be accomplished? First, by reviving Indian Handicraft and Art designs and applying them to modern commodities for which there is always a demand. Second, by capturing the tourist trade of the country.

The first is possible through the training of the rising generation in the residential schools in handicraft arts with Indian designs, thus finding a way to secure a sufficient quantity to supply an increasing demand. The second can be effected and the market developed through the assistance of the Department of Indian Affairs and a nation-wide campaign in which the churches, the social service council of Canada, service clubs, tourist bureaus, transportation lines, the radio, moving pictures and exhibitions would become interested and create an Indian-minded atmosphere--favourable to solving for the native people their economic problem.

The attention of manufacturers throughout Canada, the United States and the continent of Europe can be caught and held by unique and artistic designs with the unusual appeal of strong symbolic Indian art not found anywhere in the world except on the Pacific Coast. In many industries your designs are applicable, manufacturers want them.

It is not to the credit of the Canadian people that they do not make a strenuous effort at the present time to save Indian handicraft art which is purely Canadian. There is much more to be said on the subject but it will suffice to say to you and the Native people of British Columbia this is a worthy experiment for your welfare at the present time and if successfully carried out your more remote future is full of promise...."

(Signed)

Dr. H. Raley, Administrator.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR A CLASSROOM WITH STUDENTS WHO SPEAK ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

by Joy Wild

Often in a classroom in which there are students who speak English as a second language, it is advisable to concentrate on the Language Arts program. Without a working knowledge of English, students find other subjects very difficult, if not impossible to do, never mind enjoy. Never forget that languages are equally "good." English is not a better language than any other. It is taught in Canadian Schools because it is the most widely used language in this country and thus is useful to people who have a mastery of it. There is a danger of teachers transmitting to students whose native language is not English, that their own language is inferior. Such an idea attacks the learners self image and culture as well as his language. Here are some ideas:

Set up a Listening Post

This is a tape recorder or record player into which children can plug up to 8 pairs of earphones.

Make up your own drills of minimal pairs, spelling (can be based on students own experiences), repetition of phrases, sentences, stories. Also exercises in stress and intonation patterns. Spoken English depends on these as much as on the meaning of words.

The C.B.C. radio School Broadcasts are handy, and you can tape them yourself. Also there are tapes on each major Indian tribe in B.C., based on the B.C. Heritage Series available from the Center.

Whenever students have finished their own work, or just feel like talking, have them go to the Listening Post and talk to themselves or make up stories or talk about what happened to them that day. These tapes can then be used by the teacher to analyze problems in language, or they could be played back to the student so that he can hear his own difficulties. A students tape can also serve as a basis for writing. Note, if students are listening to themselves on tape, always provide a good model as well, such as your own voice. If this isn't done students may only reinforce their own mistakes.

Reading

The S.R.A. Individualized Reading Program and Reader's Digest Skill Books are good.

Crossword puzzles are good for building vocabulary and for reading skills. After they learn how, have the students make up their own, as well as other word games.

Build a Post Office If you want a real post office, it's easier if you have woodworking skills, but that's not necessary! Use wooden boxes or cardboard if you have to. Students can write each other letters, complaints to the teacher, suggestions for activities. For practise in reading and comprehension get mail-

order catelogues from Eatons or Simpson-Sears. Mimeograph regular order forms-hundreds of them-the kind you find in the catelogues. The students then look through the catelogue to find items they like. They pick out the relevant information and fill out the order form. After they properly address the envelope, they mail it at the post office. To give added incentive make this a contest. Each week the teacher goes through the order forms and picks out those that are perfect. These are then put in a box and five are randomly picked out. The five are put in a master box, and when enough accumulate there is a draw. The winning student receives a prize which could be in the form of a gift certificate from the catelogue.

Match Box Library. This is an incentive for extra reading. As students finish books have them write a short sentence or question about their reading-something which they feel is particularly interesting or significant about the particular book. This is for the benefit of other students. The student then gets an Eddy match box or the equivalent, covers it with a colourful pattern, labels it with the authors name and the title and puts it on a shelf, where other students can take it out.

Setting up a General Store gives practise in speaking, taking orders, handling money, counting, reading. Have students bring empty food cartons, cans with labels on, etc. from home. In a corner of the classroom set up shelves (they can be made of boxes), and a counter. The students can then take shifts as being the store clerk.

Singing is good practise in speaking the language, and can be used for teaching sounds and structures. Besides kids like it! Make your own songs using sentence patterns as a basis-steal tunes from other songs (easy to remember).

Students Individual Files

Make up files for each student. These can include drills and exercises specifically designed for the areas in which the student is having difficulty. A good source for drills and exercises is Carson Martin. The student does an exercise, then marks it himself from a master sheet. He then counts the number of right answers he made, and the number of total possible correct answers. From this he charts and graphs his own progress. These files are for the students and so should be easily accessible to them.

A plug for the teacher's files: It may seem like a lot of unwarranted trouble or unnecessary paperwork, but an up-to-date file of a students progress is very handy when you are planning out individualized programs.

Remember, whenever possible use the children's own experiences as a basis for learning language. It's difficult enough for them to use a new language without being bombarded with any new and foreign concepts at the same time.

Science and Social Studies: These subjects often have to take second place to the language Arts until the students know enough English to cope with the materials. However, they can often be incorporated into the teaching of English.

Science: The discovery method of teaching science is very useful, in addition to introducing children to concepts of science, it provided them with experiences of working together which they can then talk about. You can see my bias as an English Teacher!

Social Studies: The ideas presented here are oriented to the teacher who is working in a multi-level classroom or in a more isolated area or with Indian students; however, they could apply to any ehnic group.

Field trips to study the local area i.e. could be studying maps-first study maps to determine the symbols used, have students use these symbols to make their own maps of the country they know:

-next learn the system of topographical maps, and map nearby terraine. Sand models may give them a better idea of how this is done.

-teaching the use of a compass and how to correlate this with a map is also interesting.

An anthropological study could be done of the area i.e. what kind of work the people do and how this is suitable to the country; what kind of houses they live in; what kinds of things they do for recreation; the source of food e.g. in the Chilcotin many people hunt deer and moose and fish for meat supplies. After the area has been thoroughly explored look at another "different" area and explore that. If you have students who have never been to a city or vice versa have never been to the country, try to arrange a trip. School boards are frequently more receptive than teachers give them credit for, and although you may have to raise most of the money to finance it you can get the time off school for the trip.

Another possibility is to study a foreign country by having the students draw a map on the floor of the classroom, decide on an imaginery trip they would like to take, research it through pictures, slides, films, books, then present to the class. They could do this by walking over their trip and at each important stopping and telling others what they see.

Bring resource people in from the community i.e. Indian people to tell about the Indian stories and legends, or teach the children the songs and dances of their culture.

Things Other Than Academics

Wood working programs or sewing programs for girls. (And I don't mean just embroidery! Often one of the mothers will help out on this.)

Skating rink or ski hill; mats on the floor of the basement for boys who feel like fighting.

Lunch program particularly if you have students who you suspect are lacking in nutrition. If pays off in enthusiasm and attentiveness in school!

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INDIAN SCHOOLS-BRITISH COLUMBIA-YUKON REGION
1970 - 1971

School	No. Classrooms	Grades	No. Pupils	Shopping Center	Distance
LOWER MAINLAND					
Chehalis	4	K-6	69	Agassiz	20 m.b.r. *
Homalco	2	1-6	45	Campbell River	15 m.b.a. *
Mount Currie	5	K-5	160	Pemberton	5 m.b.r. *
St. Paul's	1	K	35	North Vancouver	
Seton Lake	1	K	20	Shalalth	One-half mile.
VANCOUVER ISLAND					
Ahousaht	4	K-7	81	Tofino	20 m.b.a.o.w.*
Christie Student Res.	4	1-8	134	Tofino	3 m.b.a.o.w.*
Kingcome Inlet	2	K-7	28	(Simoon Sound	20 m.b.a.o.w.*
				(Alert Bay	48 m.b.a. *
Kuper Island Student Res.	4	1-5	102	Chemainus	3 m.b.f. *
Kyuquot	1	1-7	16	(Kyuquot	3 m.b.w. *
				(Tahsis	30 m.b.a.o.w. *
Opitsaht	1	6,7	11	Tofino	2 m.b.w. *
St. Catherine's	4	K-2	88	Duncan	2 m.b.r. *
Tsartlip	4	1-6	90	Brentwood	1 m.b.r. *
SOUTHERN INTERIOR					
Adams Lake	1	3,4	9	Chase	1 m.b.r. *
Alkali Lake	2	K-4	46	Williams Lake	35 m.b.r. *
Anahim Lake	2	1-7	48	Williams Lake	220 miles by road
Canoe Creek	1	1-4	12	Clinton	52 m.b.r. *
Cariboo Student Res.	1	1	18	Williams Lake	17 m.b.r. *
Chilcotin	6	K-7	89	Williams Lake	70 m.b.r. *
Shulus	1	K	22	Merritt	3 m.b.r. *
Stone	1	1,2	14	Williams Lake	65 m.b.r. *

*m.b.r.-mile by road *m.b.a.-mile by air *m.b.a.o.w.-mile by air or water
*m.b.f.-mile by ferry.

School	No. Classrooms	Grades	No. Pupils	Shopping Center	Distance
		NORTHERN INTERIOR			
Blueberry River	1	1-5	19	Ft. St. John	64 mi. by road
Fort Babine	1	1-4	17	(Smithers Ldg.	125 mi. by road or water
				(Burns Lake	150 mi. by air
Fort Ware	1	1-7	28	(Finlay Forks	160 mi. by air
				(Local store	Food
Halfway	2	1-5	24	Ft. St. John	68 mi. by road
Lejac Student Res.	7	1-8	211	(Vanderhoof	30 mi. by road
				(Endako	-
Prophet River	1	1-6	14	Ft. St. John	182 mi. by road
Stone Creek	1	K	30	Vanderhoof	9 mi. by road
Tache	3	1-6	68	Ft. St. James	35 mi. by air or water
					40 mi. by winter road
Takla Landing	1	1-6	32	Ft. St. James	125 mi. by air or water
		NORTH COAST			
Aiyansh	7	K-7	171	Terrace	63 mi. by road
Bella Bella	12	K-7	312	Ocean Falls	23 m.b.a.
Canyon City	1	K-3	7	Terrace	65 m.b.r.
Hartley Bay	3	1-7	55	Prince Rupert	80 m.b.a.
Kincolith	6	K-7	134	Prince Rupert	62 m.b.a.
Kispiox	6	K-7	125	Hazelton	10 m.b.r.
Kitimaat	3	K-1	65	Kitimat	8 m.b.r.
Kitkatla	7	K-7	156	Prince Rupert	32 m.b.a.
Kitsegukla	5	K-6	110	Hazelton	22 m.b.r.
Kitwancool	2	1-7	35	Hazelton	42 m.b.r.
Kitwanga	2	1-7	48	Hazelton	32 m.b.r.
Klemtu	3	1-7	59	Ocean Falls	37 m.b.a.
Lakalzap	5	K-7	109	Terrace	92 m.b.r.
Masset	2	K	42	Masset	3 m.b.r.
Port Simpson	12	K-7	272	Prince Rupert	20 m.b.a.
Klappan	4	K-7	65	Eddontenajon	2 m.b.r.
Lower Post Student Res.	4	1-4	66	Lower Post	1 m.b.r.

EDUCATION 479 - INDIAN EDUCATION

Education 479 is a new course, designed to aid teachers in adapting education to the needs of Indian students. A basic assumption in the course is that, while there are many similarities and differences between all individual children, our present educational programs generally do not take into account differences, mostly cultural, which many Indian children share.

The course is presented by many people including Indian teachers and students; representatives of Indian organizations; specialists in anthropology, sociology, psychology, language arts, Indian culture, arts and crafts; and by the course participants. A large part of the course is based on an exchange of ideas between people in the course. The course is co-ordinated by Dr. Art More.

The content is divided into two parts. Part One emphasizes background knowledge and includes historical and contemporary background; attitudes towards education by Indian parents, teachers, students and organizations; and policies of the Provincial Department of Education, Department of Indian Affairs and B. C. Teachers Federation. Part Two emphasizes adapting teaching and includes language arts, using Indian contributions in teaching, using community resources and dealing with potential problem areas. Part Two represents about one-half of the course.

The course is offered during Summer Session, July 5 to August 20 at U.B.C. Classes will meet Monday through Friday, 1:30 to 3:30. Students registering for credit (3 units) should do so through the Registrar's Office. Non Credit--the course is open to a number of auditors. Please contact Dr. More at the Center for further information.

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