

The strength of this book lies in its thorough reading of documents in both English and German to provide a picture of the complex nature of German and Germanness in Ontario during this time period. At times it was challenging to read as Bryce took us back and forth in time, such that one could stumble on the order of events if not reading closely. Additionally, the treatment of German Lutheranism was confusing in its nomenclature. As a Lutheran myself, familiar with the differences between the two Lutheran church bodies in Canada, I still had to stop and reread as to whether Bryce was discussing the Canada Synod or the Canada District. Anyone using the book for historical research is well advised to keep careful notes. On a theoretical level, I found that Bryce sometimes attributed more agency to children than I felt could be justified. However, while I felt that aspect was challenging to justify through an interpretation of historical documents, his overall presentation of a nuanced reading and interpretation of Germanness in Ontario provides valuable insights to ground future research in German history, education, and religious practices.

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Amanda Gebhard, Sheelah McLean, and Verna St. Denis, eds.

*White Benevolence: Racism and Colonial Violence in the Helping Professions*

Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2022. 280 pp.

In their edited book, *White Benevolence: Racism and Colonial Violence in the Helping Professions*, Amanda Gebhard, Sheelah McLean, and Verna St. Denis expose the myriad ways in which racism and white settler colonial violence unfold, are reinforced through historical and contemporary institutions and practices in the helping professions and transcend beyond spatial borders.

Contributors in this collection integrate critical theories and discourse to focus their gaze on institutions and professionals who often operate under the guise of innocence, neutrality, colour-blindness, denial, and silence. Yet these institutions and professionals have been complicit in asserting and upholding state-sanctioned exploitation and atrocities against Indigenous peoples. With autobiographical narratives, excerpts from personal and practice experiences, and critical analysis of existing scholarship, contributors provide important insights of the surveillance, vilification, subjugation, and criminalization of Indigenous peoples in various contexts. Authors boldly underscore the ways in which historical, political, economic, and social processes, policies and practices are and continue to be enacted to maintain, protect, reproduce, and uphold whiteness, white supremacy, and colonial violence. They demonstrate through their individual and collective stance, their strength, refusal, and resistance to white dominance, and various points of entry to forge a more equitable path for current and future generations.

The editors contended that they were propelled to write this book to advance

ongoing conversations on racial inequality and anti-Indigenous racism in the Canadian Prairies. This piece is timely given the occurrence of several recent events, the COVID-19 pandemic, social reckoning of persistent racial disparities, forcible extraction of Indigenous peoples and militarization of Indigenous lands. More recently, the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves of Indigenous children provides a stark reminder of the undisputable genocide of Indigenous peoples. Contributors are largely educators and scholars; however, several advocates and activists also contributed chapters on insidious acts of racism and white heteropatriarchal violence.

Written broadly for students, educators, helping professionals, activists, and policy makers, this cross-disciplinary collection illuminates how education, public health, social work, and criminal justice institutions work in tandem to uphold and maintain colonial narratives of white dominance. The collection also highlights how multiple voices including Indigenous (e.g., Morgan; St. Denis), racialized (e.g., Patel and Nath), and white scholars (e.g., Allen; Halvorsen et. al) are needed “to disrupt, refuse and resist settler-colonial myths of white benevolence” (12).

As a Black scholar, whose scholarship interrogates Black people’s experiences in the criminal justice system, education system and domestic violence sector, I was drawn to several chapters. A few chapters elucidate the oversurveillance and criminalization of Indigenous peoples ensnarled in the criminal justice system. Megan Scribe’s and Nancy Van Styvendale’s chapters complicate the pejorative stereotypes that inform master narratives of criminalized Indigenous peoples, who are often discarded and relegated to the periphery of society. Scribe’s chapter articulates how police violence against Indigenous women and girls is rooted in historical colonial violence and the ongoing and willful dispossession of Indigenous peoples, validating the voices of women and girls whose experiences are repeatedly subdued. Her observations align with other authors who maintain that police frequently engage in various tactics to minimize and dismiss violence against Indigenous women<sup>6</sup> yet there is little or no recourse or accountability for their persistent violence against them. Van Styvendale echoes similar perspectives related to the horrific treatment of Indigenous peoples, particularly those incarcerated. Providing vivid accounts of interviews and letters written by Cory Charles Cardinal, who self-identifies as Cree and was incarcerated in a Saskatoon correctional centre, Van Styvendale highlights the ways in which prisoners navigated dangerous demarcated spaces. By mobilizing and engaging in political activism and collective resistance, criminalized individuals co-inspired to rise above their subjugated circumstances. Through their acts of refusals, letters, and hunger strikes, incarcerated men raised awareness of poor prison conditions, asserted their agency, and built solidarity. Such actions as well as movements such as Idle No More (co-founded by Sheelah McLean) illustrate how ongoing Indigenous activism and resistance are actively being deployed to counter the effects of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism.

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6 Jerry Flores and Andrea Román Alfaro. “Building the Settler Colonial Order: Police (in)Actions in Response to Violence against Indigenous Women in ‘Canada.’” *Gender and Society* 37, no. 3 (2023): 391–412. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08912432231171171>.

While contributors in this collection do not provide readers with a rigid list of actions to disrupt whiteness, readers are invited to recognize the myriad enactments of whiteness, deleterious effects of intergenerational trauma, their complicity in perpetrating racism and colonial violence, and their responsibility to redress the ongoing denigration of Indigenous peoples. As the editors maintain, “readers are challenged to grapple with deeply embedded assumptions regarding where and with whom the responsibility for change is located” (12).

This collection makes an important contribution to scholarship on white settler colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism. The counter-narratives interwoven across the chapters expose a settler colonial regime characterized by genocide, ongoing violence, and deeply entrenched racism and its detrimental effects on generations of Indigenous peoples. Beyond these rich narratives, there is an earnest call to professionals in various sectors to “unlearn entrenched colonial scripts” (253) and grapple with the ways in which they have benefited from colonial violence. Authors provoke some of the contentious and mixed emotions well-meaning white women may experience, including assuming the stance of white saviours. Some may also assert their expertise of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing yet have done little to interrogate their own complicity. The editors reminded individuals and institutions alike that they must extend beyond current diversity and inclusion or implicit bias training, which often centres whiteness. As the editors assert, these trainings “often lack a foundational analysis of white settler colonialism and the unequal power dynamics that continue to negatively impact Indigenous Peoples” (252). This edited collection serves as a rich source of knowledge for those who wish to better understand the devastating consequences of anti-Indigenous racism, how the so-called helping professions contribute to and maintain systems of injustice against Indigenous people, and actions they can take to thwart injustices against Indigenous peoples and communities.

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Kyle P. Steele

*Making a Mass Institution: Indianapolis and the American High School*

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New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2020. 206 pp.

“Where’d you go to high school?” (1) is Kyle Steele’s hook for this engaging book about Indianapolis, Indiana secondary schools. Steele’s question resonates because, as he shows, attending high school has become the norm for practically all Americans. In examining how Indianapolis’s high schools wrestled with many challenges—curriculum differentiation in an age of mass secondary school participation, youth culture, racial segregation—Steele also tells a national story about American education in the past 130 years.