

## HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE FOURTH WORLD: Indigenous People Take Control

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Barnhardt, R. (1991). "Higher Education in the Fourth World: Indigenous People Take Control." Tribal College: Journal of American Indian Higher Education 3(2).

*It is self-evident to anyone capable of seeing beyond the confines of the little spheres within which we spin out our lives, that the day is rapidly approaching when it will no longer be viable for the minority of the world's population who don't live in villages to make every major decision affecting the lives of the majority who do. So any program of village education which intends to be forerunner of a revised world order must, as its first priority, design a delivery system premised on local decision-making.*  
- Bill Vaudrin, 1975

Bill Vaudrin, a Chippewa Indian from Minnesota, was President of the Inupiat University of the Arctic in Barrow, Alaska at the time that he wrote the above statement for the first catalog/calendar of the fledgling post-secondary institution created by the North Slope Borough. The North Slope Borough was itself created only three years earlier, shortly after the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was passed in 1971, freeing up oil fields in the land of the Inupiat Eskimo on the north slope of the Alaska Range for development. Through the governing structure of a borough, the Inupiat people, who were the original inhabitants of the land on which the oil had been discovered, would be able to exert a small measure of influence on, and reap some economic benefits from the development that was taking place.

The issues they faced as a self-governing people were much broader than matters of regulation and taxation, however. They were also confronted with the question of the kind of communities and lifestyle they wished to maintain as a people. How would their traditional whaling, hunting, fishing and other subsistence practices be impacted by the large scale industrial development that was taking place around them? How could they best make use of the economic resources and employment opportunities that would be generated as a result of the oil development? How could they most effectively bring their voices to bear in shaping the many policy and development initiatives that would accompany the influx of outside interests?

Very early in their deliberations, the people of the North Slope Borough identified education as a critical concern - in fact gaining control of their schools from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs was one of the incentives for establishing the Borough in the first place. Control over education was viewed as essential if Inupiat people were to have access to the kind of education they felt they needed to shape their own destiny. It soon became apparent, however, that gaining political control over the educational system was in itself not sufficient to meet their needs. Eben Hopson, the first mayor of the Borough, made the following observation a couple years after they had assumed responsibility for their schools:

Today, we have control over our educational system. We must now begin to assess whether or not our school system is truly becoming an Inupiat school system, reflecting Inupiat educational philosophies, or, are we in fact only theoretically exercising “political control” over an educational system that continues to transmit white urban culture? Political control over our schools must include “professional control” as well, if our academic institutions are to become an Inupiat school system able to transmit our Inupiat traditional values and ideals (1977).

Gaining “professional control” of the educational system meant staffing the schools with Inupiat teachers and administrators, though there were few Inupiat people with the credentials required by the state for such roles. At the same time there was an increasing need for Inupiat biologists, accountants, planners, lawyers, etc., who could bring an Inupiat perspective to bear in the many new positions that had emerged in the region. Having had little success in getting the University of Alaska to respond to their urgent higher education needs except for a limited teacher education program, the Inupiat people decided to establish their own post-secondary institution - the Inupiat University of the Arctic. They had concluded that if they were to exercise any professional control over the institutions that impact their lives, they would first have to exercise some control over the preparation of the professionals who staffed those institutions, and that meant an “Inupiat” University based on Inupiat educational perspectives, philosophies, principles and practices.

This was easier said than done, however. How could an Inupiat educational philosophy be made to fit the Western notion of a university, or should it be the other way around? What about accreditation? What kind of credentials would be required of the staff? Where would the Inupiat expertise and perspective come from? How would Inupiat elders, and language, be reflected in the programs? What would be “Inupiat” about the Inupiat University of the Arctic? These and many other issues presented enormous challenges and difficulties the first few years, all of which were compounded by considerable staff turnover, funding uncertainties, and political turmoil, both within and outside the institution.

Not the least of the difficulties was finding a “President” who was capable of understanding their concerns and translating what they wanted into reality. Under Bill Vaudrin’s early leadership and articulation of cultural purpose, the institution began to take on a distinctly Inupiat character and orientation, but his influence was cut short by a tragic car accident, which led to a succession of conventionally oriented non-Native managers and fund raisers who were unable to harness the Inupiat character of the institution. Even though the Inupiat University of the Arctic was eventually granted candidacy status for accreditation purposes, the growing political and financial conflicts and the discrepancies between philosophical rhetoric and operational reality undermined the credibility of the initiative in the eyes of the community, to the point where it was finally shut down by action of the Borough Assembly in 1980.

The idea of an Inupiat post-secondary institution did not die, however, nor did Eben Hopson’s dream of an Inupiat educational system. In 1986, the North Slope Borough established the North Slope Higher Education Center, administered locally on an affiliated

arrangement with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, which provides an accreditation umbrella under which the institution can operate until it is able to obtain independent accreditation. It has since evolved into the Arctic Sivunmun Ilisagvik College and is gradually building a reputation as a significant contributor to the educational well-being of the Inupiat people in the North Slope Borough. In the meantime, Eben Hopson's dream of an Inupiat school system is also taking shape as the number of Inupiat teachers and administrators continues to grow, and in 1990 Patsy Aamodt became the first Inupiat Superintendent for the North Slope Borough School District.

The evolution of Inupiat higher education initiatives on the North Slope of Alaska over the two decades described above is not an isolated occurrence. A similar story could be told for just about any group of indigenous people situated in historically subordinated circumstances in the context of industrialized nations. In an effort to get out from under the yoke of Fourth World neo-colonial status, indigenous/Native/Indian/First Nations/Aboriginal people in the United States (American Indian/Alaska Native), Canada (First Nations/Native Indian/Inuit), New Zealand (Maaori), Australia (Aborigine), Greenland (Inuit), Scandinavia (Saami) and elsewhere, have all been seeking to establish and control their own versions of institutions of higher/tertiary/post-secondary education. This paper will attempt to capture some of the attributes and qualities, the character and intent, and the innovations and frustrations that have distinguished these indigenous higher education initiatives from their mainstream counterparts.

## INSTITUTIONAL FORMS OF INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

Included in the descriptions and analyses that follow are over one hundred programs and institutions, ranging from small, locally sponsored teacher education initiatives to full-scale national and international post-secondary institutions (see Appendix A for a complete list). Some have incorporated explicit indigenous perspectives in their design, while others have adapted models of non-indigenous institutions. Some are independently administered and accredited, while others are affiliated with or subsumed within established institutions. Some have been in existence for over twenty years, while others are still in the formative stages. All, however, are controlled or guided by indigenous people and are intended to address the particular social, cultural, political and economic interests of the population they serve.

For purposes of discussing the salient characteristics of the various types of indigenous higher education institutions, they will be grouped according to the degree of organizational autonomy they exhibit (independent, affiliated, or integrated), since that quality more than any other shapes the cultural dynamics of these institutions. There are, however, too many examples to examine them all in detail, so certain institutions will be highlighted to illustrate pertinent points. Following a review of the various institutional forms and configurations, an attempt will be made to extract and summarize whatever lessons can be learned from the patterns of experience reflected in the initiatives that have been identified. Hopefully, new initiatives in the future can thus benefit from the experiences of those that have gone before, so that culturally responsive higher education opportunities for indigenous people around the world can flourish.

## Independent Institutions

One of the earliest, most widespread and sustained initiatives on behalf of higher education by and for indigenous people has been the Tribal College movement in the United States. Begun in the late 1960's with the establishment of fledgling community colleges on the Navajo and Sioux reservations and on an abandoned Nike missile base in Northern California, the movement has since grown to 24 tribally-run institutions in ten states. In addition, the movement has spawned a national advocacy organization (American Indian Higher Education Consortium), a national Indian higher education leadership development initiative (Tribal College Institute), a fund raising structure (American Indian College Fund), and a professional journal (Tribal College: Journal of American Indian Higher Education). In a report on the Tribal Colleges prepared by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Ernest Boyer describes the significance of their development in the following terms:

Tribally controlled colleges can be understood only in the historical context of Indian education and in the spiritual role they play in bringing renewal to their people. When viewed from these perspectives, tribal colleges assume a mission of great consequence to Native Americans and to the nation. ....if we have learned anything from our relationship with the American Indian, it is that people cannot be torn from their cultural roots without harm. To the extent that we fail to assist Native Americans, through their own institutions, to reclaim their past and secure their future, we are compounding the costly errors of the past (Boyer, 1989).

The emphasis Boyer places on "through their own institutions" reflects a common theme linking the development of all the tribal colleges. Having found the established mainstream higher education institutions wanting in terms of the kinds of program emphases, cultural orientation, institutional environment, and student support services that contributed to the success of Indian students, tribes set out to create their own institutions as a culturally-based alternative. From the tribal perspective, an institution was needed that recognized the symbiotic relationship between meeting the educational needs of the student and contributing to the social, economic and spiritual well-being of the community. Lionel Bordeaux, President of Sinte Gleska College on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation, provides the following observation on the multiple roles of tribal colleges:

Equally important in the evolution of tribal colleges was the need to develop a local forum to discuss community and tribal issues and to address future reservation challenges. Tribal colleges would be a vehicle for strengthening tribal nations through academic learning, training and cultural preservation. Combine Western teachings and a strong emphasis on cultural preservation and the end product is a tribal college. Building from a cultural base, the essence of tribal colleges continues to be human growth and people empowerment for the strengthening of a tribal nation (Bordeaux, 1990).

The cultural link between college and community is a central ingredient in everything from the goals and philosophy of the tribal colleges to their curricula. Efforts are made to provide

programs and services in a manner and environment that is compatible with local cultural tradition. At the Navajo Community College, this has included creating physical facilities that adapt traditional Navajo forms, practices and architectural styles to the functions of a “college.” At many of the colleges, tribal elders play a prominent role as instructors as well as cultural and spiritual guides for the institution. The difficult task of reconciling, balancing and integrating an educational mandate spanning traditional to contemporary knowledge, addressing individual as well as community needs, and encompassing Indian and non-Indian worlds, presents a continual challenge to college personnel. Inherent in, and underpinning all of this is a political and economic agenda oriented toward self-determination and self-sufficiency, as indicated in the following observation by Jack Forbes, based on his experience with D-Q University in Davis, California:

Native tribal and folk groups especially need their own institutions in order not merely to preserve that portion of their heritage which proves to be worthy of preservation, but also in order to develop sufficiently a degree of self-confidence, pride, and optimism. . . . A Native American university can serve as an agency for helping to restore the quite obvious ability in self-management and self-realization which Indians possessed prior to the intervention of the federal government (Forbes, 1985: Boyer, 1989).

The philosophy and mission statements of the tribal colleges provide a clear indication of the extent to which education is viewed as a means for stimulating tribal and community, as well as individual development. Typical of such statements is the following, taken from the 1990-91 catalog of the Fort Berthold Community College serving the Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan people of central North Dakota:

The philosophy of the Fort Berthold Community College emphasizes the interweaving of tribally distinctive cultural elements into the post-secondary process. The Community College utilizes a pragmatic and holistic approach to higher education, which focuses on providing and improving individual competencies relevant to the individual and to the community. The mission of the College is to address tribal needs and concerns, and to perpetuate tribal heritage, history, and culture. Fort Berthold Community College believes that it must take the leadership in directing reservation development in terms of local potential; that is, the approach to development must be in terms of local conditions. It must take into account not only general, but specific barriers. FBCC aspires to enable individuals to acquire a positive self-image and a clear sense of identity by developing their full potential. This process will prepare tribal members to operate effectively in their own culture, as well as in outside society (1990).

Along with such locally-oriented philosophy and mission statements, the tribal colleges have sought to define their program emphases in terms specific to the needs of their communities. Illustrative of the goals and objectives adopted by tribal colleges are the following from the Northwest Indian College on the Lummi reservation in northwest Washington:

To provide educational programs and services at a level of quality comparable to

other colleges in the Northwest.

To develop the human resources of Lummi and other northwest Washington tribes necessary to meet their overall needs.

To provide adult basic education, continuing education and community service programming and courses consistent with the needs of the local Indian communities.

To foster and encourage the study and teaching of the Northwest Indian culture.

To provide vocational education consistent with tribal economic development plans, the needs of local employers and the interests of Indian students.

To provide the first two years of college education for those students wishing to continue their academic study at a four year college or university.

To provide in-service training consistent with the needs of the Lummi and other tribal administrations and or employers.

To provide students with personal, academic and vocational counseling consistent with individual student needs.

To provide students with financial aid and counseling, including assistance in processing financial aid applications to appropriate agencies.

To provide students with opportunities to obtain work experience as well as placement assistance upon completion of their training program.

To provide students opportunities for leadership experience by participation in student government and/or extracurricular activities (1990).

The kinds of programs and services offered by tribal colleges in response to goals such as those outlined above range from community and vocational education to graduate level programs. Typical program offerings are in the areas of tribal/municipal self-government, rural/community/economic development, natural resources management, Indian law, business, teacher education, health and social services, Indian language revitalization, performing and creative arts, and adult education/literacy development. Underlying all of these programs and institutions, is an explicit commitment to culturally appropriate, readily accessible, quality post-secondary education for Indian people. While the cultural and programmatic particulars may vary, the shared goals of the tribal colleges are reinforced and energized through their membership in the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), participation in the Tribal College Institute, and publication of the journal, Tribal College. The transcending commonalities that link all these institutions together were pointed out by Paul Boyer in the Carnegie report:

Beyond the differences, all tribal colleges share common goals. They seek to

strengthen respect for their cultural heritage, create greater social and economic opportunities for the tribe and its members, and create links to the larger American society. The watchword at Indian colleges is not simply education, but empowerment (Boyer, 1989).

It is the emphasis on “empowerment” that has been most critical in moving the tribal colleges to seek status as independently accredited institutions of higher education. Although most of them started out in some kind of affiliated arrangement with a nearby established post-secondary institution, over half are now fully accredited in their own right, and several others are candidates for accreditation, either as two- or four-year institutions.(Ambler, 1991). Sinte Gleska College on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota has gone so far as to be accredited to offer a masters degree and is contemplating the possibility of a doctorate (Bordeaux, 1990).

In all of these initiatives, it was recognized that the localized functions of the tribal colleges, such as assisting with cultural revitalization, spiritual renewal, tribal development, self-government, etc. (all essential to the processes of community empowerment), were not readily accommodated within the parameters of existing higher education institutions, and thus would have to be addressed in an exceptional manner, and that the act of doing so could itself be empowering. Creating the tribal colleges has required extensive leadership and initiative at the local, state and federal levels. Locally, it was often necessary to overcome the residue of past institutional alienation and sometimes conflicting views on traditional vs. contemporary ways, as well as skepticism that the tribal community could actually run their own college. At state and regional levels it was essential to develop sufficient academic and institutional credibility to gain the support and cooperation of surrounding institutions, so that student’s work would be transferable and scarce resources could be shared. At the federal level, extensive negotiations and lobbying was necessary through AIHEC to gain stable funding support, which was eventually obtained in 1978 with the passage of P.L. 95-471, the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act. With the strong endorsement received from the Carnegie Foundation, the growing support from the tribal communities, and the renewal of the Tribal College Act again in 1990, the future of tribal colleges, while not immutable, is reasonably secure.

Independent higher education institutions serving indigenous people have taken other forms as well, beyond that of the “tribal college.” Within the United States, one of the earliest institutions intended to serve an indigenous population was Pembroke State College, established over 50 years ago on behalf of the Lumbee Indian people in Pembroke County, North Carolina. Even though the Lumbee people were not officially recognized by the federal government as a “tribe” at the time, they obtained sufficient local support to establish their own public higher education institution to insure that their children would have access to the knowledge and skills they needed to manage their own affairs. The College has survived over the years and continues to provide Lumbee people and others with a fully accredited slate of academic programs and services.

An example of a more recent independent initiative is Heritage College, a small private college on the Yakima Reservation in Toppenish, Washington. Established in 1982 at the

urging of members of the Yakima Tribe, the College was organized under the charter of a small Catholic college in Spokane that had closed the same year. Through an active fund raising campaign in the region and supplemented by various foundation grants, the College has thrived and grown, serving tribal members, migrant farm workers, as well as others from communities throughout the Yakima Valley. The College has added a satellite campus in Omak, Washington, adjacent to the Colville Reservation, and received full academic accreditation in 1986. Governed as a private, non-profit entity by an independent board of directors, Heritage College now offers a full complement of undergraduate and graduate degree programs to over 800 students in the region, while it still retains a strong emphasis on serving the needs of the Yakima tribal community. The College gained extensive exposure in March, 1991, for its success with the “educationally disenfranchised,” when it was the subject of a feature article in the nationally syndicated Parade Magazine. Much of that success has been attributed to strong and consistent leadership, both within the institution and from the surrounding community.

Another example of an independent private institution created through tribal initiative is Te Wananga o Raukawa (University of Raukawa), a Maori “centre of higher learning” established in 1984 by the Raukawa Trustees in Otaki, New Zealand on behalf of the Confederation of Awa, Raukawa and Toarangatira people. In an effort to strengthen the Maori presence in decision-making arenas, and in defiance of official government policies regarding tertiary institutions, the Raukawa Trustees created the first private university-level institution in New Zealand, with the following as its stated purpose:

Te Wananga o Raukawa aims to contribute to the further development of the Confederation and of the wider community by producing bicultural administrators, teachers or researchers in the expectation that their activities will enhance the quality of decision-making particularly on issues affecting the Confederation, but also on matters which have a bearing on the well-being of the community at large. At present the non-Maori majority in New Zealand has the power to veto major decisions affecting Maori people and this veto is exercised largely by senior decision-makers (including teachers) who do not have knowledge of and sophistication in the “tanga” of the Confederation or in Maoritanga in general (Raukawa Trustees, 1990).

In response to this mandate, Te Wananga o Raukawa has established programs of study in the areas of iwi (tribe) and hapu (sub-tribe) studies, administrative studies, health studies, Maori laws and philosophy, fisheries management, and hapu development. Through residential hui (gatherings), integrated case studies, lectures, tutorials, directed research and written assignments, students are actively engaged in real-world tasks and experiences in their community, thus contributing to the well-being of their people as they acquire a comprehensive perspective and understanding of the knowledge and skills required in their area of study. Extensive use is also made of expertise from the surrounding community, giving students access and exposure to local social networks, communication patterns, current political issues and other aspects of the inner workings of their community. The integration of students and faculty with the daily life of the community is an important and deliberate feature of Te Wananga o Raukawa’s identity as a Maori institution. The significance of this wholistic approach is indicated in the following description by Pere of



some of the distinguishing characteristics of Western and Maori style educational institutions:

Pakehatanga - Western institutions where everything has to come under some classification such as a department, a 'subject' area, or some framework that is insulated from others so that there are clearly defined boundaries. Co-ordination has to be deliberately provided for and arranged. This process may go on in the interests of teachers and administrators rather than children.

Tuhoetanga - Tuhoe institutions do not stand in isolation but actually merge into each other, and therefore need to be understood in relation to each other and within the context of the whole because there are no clear cut boundaries. Children are in consequence integral to the co-ordinating (1983).

Te Wananga o Raukawa, like most other indigenous higher education initiatives, is of, by and for the community it serves. The Raukawa Trustees have made a deliberate effort to create an institution that is defined by, and has as its first consideration, the educational needs of the people they represent, and only secondarily have they concerned themselves with their relationship to other tertiary institutions. Furthermore, as they have encountered the issues of qualifying for external recognition, accreditation or funding, they have approached them with a unequivocal notion of their own institutional purpose and identity, as is clearly conveyed in the following statement from their 1990 Maramataka (calendar):

While many years of policy formulation and implementation have taken place to arrive at this stage in the development of Te Wananga o Raukawa, many other challenges are yet to be resolved. The Runanga is well aware of the need to attract universal acceptance of the principles on which Te Wananga o Raukawa was established and of the prescriptions and requirements of its degrees. In this regard the Runanga plans to consult and co-operate with the Ministry of Education and with those responsible for the formulation of educational policy in New Zealand. As the only private institution offering university-level studies in New Zealand, Te Wananga o Raukawa and its Runanga recognizes the need to explore in detail a virgin territory of educational administration in New Zealand, namely, the co-ordination and development of public and private university-level institutions in a national framework. The Runanga will pursue, with all the energy required, effective consultation and co-operation with those bodies which have a direct interest in the emergence of Te Wananga o Raukawa to ensure that its programmes are:

(a) well suited to the needs of the community, particularly of Ati Awa, Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Toarangatira, and

(b) worthy of recognition as valued additions to the offerings of university-level studies in New Zealand and in the international community.

The creation of independent, private institutions such as Heritage College and Te Wananga o Raukawa is as much a matter of will and determination as it is of buildings, funds and

faculty. In both cases, there has been strong and persistent leadership in the form of an individual who has had a clear notion of what was needed and didn't let insurmountable odds get in the way of doggedly pursuing their goal. To understand the emergence of these institutions, you have to appreciate the level of commitment and perseverance that was brought to the task by people like Kathleen Ross (Heritage College) and Whatarangi Winiata (Te Wananga o Raukawa). Without the coherent vision, consistent leadership and commitment to community that they, and the many others like them, have contributed to the development of their respective institutions, those institutions could easily have suffered the fate of the original version of the Inupiat University of the Arctic, described above. It is the recognition of the importance and uniqueness of such a leadership role that led to the establishment of the Tribal College Institute by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, as a way to provide leadership development opportunities specifically suited to the special circumstances of indigenous higher education institutions. Given the developmental and evolutionary nature of these institutions, their long term survival is dependent on attuned and sustained leadership that can merge their operational ethos with the dynamics of the communities they serve.

Another variation on the kinds of post-secondary education initiatives that have emerged from indigenous communities are the many vocational-technical, adult and community training centers that have been established to provide specialized job-oriented training, usually with sponsorship through government granting agencies and other external funding sources. Examples of these are the Aboriginal Training and Cultural Institute in New South Wales, Australia, and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and En'owkin Centre in British Columbia, Canada. While such institutions usually start out offering primarily non-academic programs and services focusing on specialized skills, they often evolve into feeder institutions with a strong complement of academic services. Once students' appetites have been whetted and their confidence established in a supportive environment, their aspirations often lead to the pursuit of further academic study. The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, for example, has expanded its services to include university transfer courses in the areas of education, pre-law, commerce, forestry, agriculture, medicine, arts and science. In other cases, such institutions serve as a center for outreach programs from a nearby university. For example, students can complete the first two years of the the Native Indian Teacher Education Program at the En'owkin Centre in Penticton, British Columbia before transferring to the UBC campus in Vancouver. Such locally administered centers and institutes offer valuable post-secondary programs and services to their communities, as well as serve as bridges to further study at more culturally and physically distant institutions.

The final category of independently administered higher education institutions serving indigenous people to be reviewed here are those established directly by action of home rule, regional or territorial governments whose jurisdiction includes a substantial proportion of indigenous people. Examples include Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland) in Nuuk, Greenland, Saami Allaskuvla (Saami College of Education) in Kautokeino, Norway, Arctic College in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada, and Yukon College in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada. Unlike the tribal colleges and other independent institutions described above, these institutions exist in an environment relatively unconstrained by formally defined standards and guidelines. To the extent that they are a product of their

respective government and regulatory system, it would appear that they are free to write their own rules and define their own standards according to the needs of the population and/or nation-state they serve. Such is not always the case, however, as is evidenced by the experience of Ilisimatusarfik, which was established by the Greenland Home Rule government in 1981. At the time of its creation, the mandate for Ilisimatusarfik was spelled out by the Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs as follows:

In the mandate I asked the commission to give further suggestions as to how the Inuit Institute can organize studies in our cultural inheritance including language, history and our present situation. And I fully agree with the commissions proposal that the Institute during its first years of existence should attempt to look at our cultural inheritance as a whole and so avoid to be split up in single isolated subjects. In a time where conditions for life change that rapidly, it is of vital importance that we can compare our present situation to the one that our forefathers had to live under. To avoid misunderstandings I shall stress that this is not to be perceived as a nostalgic attempt to return to a long gone period. The fact is that any society wanting to know itself needs to know its history as well as its present to ensure future innovations to rest on a firm foundation (Langgaard, 1990).

In its initial conception, staffing and curriculum, Ilisimatusarfik adhered closely to the “cultural inheritance as a whole” dictum, offering instruction in Greenlandic and focusing on subjects such as Greenlandic grammar, Greenlandic literature, Greenlandic history, Greenlandic political science, Inuit dialectology, and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference. Soon, however, conflicts began to arise between Greenlandic purists and academic eclectics, between community linkage and scholarly detachment, between subjectivists and objectivists, the latter raising the spectre of international disdain and non-transferability of an education that extended no further than “the parish pump.” In adopting an identity as an “academic” institution, and in employing credentialed staff (Greenlandic and Danish) who brought with them a thorough grounding in the expectations of outside academic institutions, the standards by which Ilisimatusarfik began to judge itself were those of distant universities. This created increasing tension within and between the institution and the local political community, with one group wishing to adhere to the original mandate of an “Inuit” Institute, and the other seeking to create an institution modeled after the Nordic universities with which they had been previously associated. Eventually, the issue came to a head and in 1989 the Inuit Institute Act was repealed and in its place Ilisimatusarfik, “Greenland’s University,” was established. The difference between the two institutions is summarized by Langgaard as follows:

The differences in the objects clauses of 1981 and 1989 do mirror a radical change of focus. While the “Inuit Institute” was a pure instance of a ‘community university’ with a very restricted scope, “Greenland’s University” is basically a general university which deals with specific local empirical data in ways which are absolutely not specific as to the concept of localness. Greenland’s University’s task is to produce skilled localers who are able to compete professionally with imported southerners for positions in the local society (1990).

The new Ilisimatusarfik is organized around three departments (Culture and Society, Greenlandic Language and Literature, and Theology), each offering B.A. and M.A. degrees in their respective subject areas. Along with Ilisimatusarfik, the government has established Ilinniartissuaq, a teacher education institute which provides professional preparation for Inuit/Greenlandic teachers, and Handelsskolen, a commercial college addressing business and economic needs. The new institutional arrangement has not resolved all of the dilemmas that befall a “small university in a small society,” however, as indicated by the following observation by Langgaard, himself an Ilisimatusarfik faculty member:

There can be no doubt that Greenland’s University has set out on a rather perilous voyage between Scylla and Charybdis (a rock and a whirlpool). If we are not, in everything we do, consciously aware of the University’s very nature as a local Greenlandic institution - which from a certain point of view might be the only *raison d’être* for the university - we are apt to become a third rank southern university mistakenly placed in Ultima Thule. If on the other hand we are too little aware of the universal nature of knowledge, we shall be reduced to a hollow symbol with very restricted practical importance (1990).

The tension between local and universal that Langgaard alludes to is not unique to Ilisimatusarfik. It has been, and continues to be a common thread that runs through the experience of many indigenous higher education institutions. In most cases, however, the tension is relieved somewhat by avoiding casting the issues in dichotomous, either/or terms, and pursuing instead a synergistic posture premised on the kind of complementarity reflected in the adage, “think globally, act locally.” Recognizing the social, political and economic necessity of maintaining inside/outside linkages, and seeking to enhance the synergistic effect of mutually respectful cultural, linguistic and educational exchange across interdependent governmental jurisdictions, other “small universities serving a small society,” such as Saami Allaskuvla, Arctic College and Yukon College, have, at various stages in their development, entered into a variety of negotiated arrangements with external post-secondary institutions to gain access to the resources, expertise and credibility needed to achieve their goals. The critical element in these arrangements is that they have been non-coercive, to the extent that the initiative and controlling interest remain in the hands of the local institutions.

Yukon College, for example, has been able to “shop around” and explore relationships with several universities to find the services and arrangement that would best complement its programs. If the arrangements at one university don’t work out to serve their interests (as has sometimes been the case), the Colleges are free to pursue alternative arrangements elsewhere, until they are able to obtain the services they want. If they are unable to negotiate a satisfactory arrangement, or if they have evolved to the point where they have achieved the economy-of-scale to be able to sustain themselves independently, as has been the case with Saami Allaskuvla, they have the option to establish their own standards and infrastructure to support an institution entirely of their own making. Institutions such as tribal colleges and Te Wananga o Raukawa have not been free to exercise a similar degree of independence because of the additional levels of bureaucratic machinery within which they have been situated. They have, however, been able to exercise some reciprocal influence on the redefinition and broadening of the external standards by which they are to be judged for

accreditation purposes.

Having already challenged the status quo by their very existence, indigenous institutions generally are not hesitant to extend their efforts at innovation into the arena of accreditation standards, regulatory guidelines, curriculum reform, etc.. From the point of view of the survival of their culturally-oriented, community-driven service missions, it is in the best interest of such institutions to find ways to redefine and expand the scope of the standards by which they will be judged, so the accreditation review process can accommodate their unique attributes, rather than accommodate themselves to pre-established standards that disregard their uniqueness, and thus put their basic mission or “raison d’etre” in jeopardy. Taking the matter one step further, some tribal educational institutions in the U.S. have even begun to explore the possibilities of establishing their own independent accreditation association, and thus by-pass the existing system altogether.

In all of these instances of initiatives by indigenous people to create their own versions of higher education institutions, the unmistakable implication is that existing mainstream institutions have not adequately served their needs, so after many generations of frustration and alienation, they are taking matters into their own hands. Through independent institutions such as those described above and the many others not specifically included here, indigenous people are taking responsibility for, and control over their own destiny, and there is no turning back. To the extent that these institutions are able to achieve their mandate, the people and communities they serve will be greatly strengthened, as will the larger society in which they are situated.

### Affiliated Initiatives

Not all indigenous higher education initiatives are conceived as operating outside the purview of existing mainstream institutions. In some cases, established institutions are found to have redeeming qualities that can contribute to the educational aspirations and needs of indigenous people, particularly if there is a recognition of responsibility and willingness to cooperate and adapt to indigenous interests on the part of those institutions. Where such conditions have existed, indigenous and mainstream institutions have found it mutually beneficial to negotiate affiliated relationships whereby educational services for indigenous people are administered by an indigenous-run institution under the academic oversight and accreditation umbrella of the cooperating institution. These arrangements are often formalized through a contractual arrangement, including shared responsibility for curricula, personnel and resources.

One of the most long-standing and widely known affiliated indigenous higher education institution is the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, which operates under the aegis of the University of Regina in the province of Saskatchewan, Canada. SIFC was established in 1976, along with the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, representing the Cree, Saulteaux, Chipewyan, Assiniboine and Sioux Nations. It has since grown to an enrollment of over 1000 students, with nearly 500 graduates from throughout Saskatchewan and beyond. Students can pursue residential, continuing and distance education programs in

the areas of Indian languages, Indian fine arts, Indian communication arts, Indian education, Indian social work, Indian management and administration, and various sciences. The College is governed by a Board appointed by the Indian Chiefs of Saskatchewan, which has defined the mission of SIFC as follows:

. . . to enhance the quality of life and to preserve, protect and interpret the history, language, culture and artistic heritage of the Indian people. The College will acquire and expand its base of knowledge and understanding in the best interests of the Indian people and for the benefit of society by providing opportunities for quality bi-lingual, bi-cultural education under the mandate and control of the Indian Nations of Saskatchewan. SIFC is an Indian controlled university college which provides educational opportunities to both Indian and non-Indian students selected from a provincial, national and international base (SIFC, 1991).

The relationship between SIFC and the University of Regina is entrenched in a formal “Federation Agreement,” from which both institutions derive benefits. As for SIFC, the intent of the agreement is stated as follows:

Under its Federation Agreement with the University of Regina, the College operates as an independent institution, but is integrated academically with the university. The College designs its own programs and hires its own instructors, and all courses and instructors are approved under university regulations and governing standards (SIFC, 1988).

From the point of view of the University of Regina Senate, the relationship with SIFC is seen as having a dual benefit, for the University as well as for the students:

The aim of the Federation (Agreement) is to associate with the University of Regina and to integrate with it in matters academic, post-secondary institutions within the Province, which are legally and financially independent of the University, for the purposes of (A) assisting the University in its task of presenting, reflecting upon and scrutinizing as broad a spectrum as possible of values and viewpoints, and (B) providing students with an opportunity to become associated, within the broader context of the University, with a smaller college environment (Dudgeon, 1988).

Gaining academic standing through the federation arrangement to be able to offer fully accredited university-level education, but with its “own distinct flavor,” has been an important element in the success of SIFC, however, it hasn’t been the only element, as pointed out by former president Oliver Brass:

Our first responsibility is to Indian people, and then we go on from there and try to mesh that together with academic requirements, federation with the University of Regina, etc.. Our first mandate, however, comes from the people. I think that is the thing that is very unique about SIFC. An Indian college could have been started by academics someday in the future, but it probably wouldn’t have been designed to respond to the constituencies first, to the needs of the people. Academics starting a

university generally start something which reflects where they went to school themselves (Brass and Demay, 1987).

In an effort to make sure SIFC provides programs and services which “respond to the constituencies first,” a strong emphasis has been placed on the involvement of Indian Elders in all aspects of the institution, but particularly in the area of student services:

SIFC, in keeping with a philosophy of bicultural education, has resident Elders on staff to address the traditional needs of our students. The Elders are concerned with the integration of concepts, relevant to the Indian Nations and the conventional disciplines of the behavioral sciences and educational foundations. The Elders are responsible for personal counselling in areas such as value clarification, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, etc.. All SIFC students are encouraged to share in the wealth of knowledge brought to the College by the Elders (SIFC, 1987).

Through the contributions of the Elders as culture-bearers, SIFC attempts to provide a supportive, inviting, culturally compatible atmosphere for Indian students. The significance of their contribution is indicated by former president Brass in an interview about the role of the College and its relationship to the cultural community it serves:

I think at the reserve levels and probably also at the city level, it's not the notion of going to university which counts but one where there are other Indians. There are cultural events, there are friends, there's family, there's a feeling of comfort. They don't have to deal with those aspects of loneliness, isolation, social isolation. It's the social support I think, that's number one. . . . Indian Elders, almost universally, are trying to forge and encourage these younger people to walk on the road taking the best of both worlds, as they always say - taking the educational system to acquire knowledge, “Western” knowledge and skills, and yet try to retain as much that is good from the Indian heritage. But we can't live exclusively in the Indian past even if we wanted to. Some people try to, but really can't. I don't think that even to have a degree from the University ensures that you are going to be looked upon as a leader. If one goes to the Indian community, you find that you still have to go the route of somehow gaining trust from the people and it's not gaining trust so much with your academic credentials as by your social relationship with them. I don't see any reason to fear that simply producing university graduates is somehow going to interfere with the Indian tradition. Because the Indian tradition is changing, and this (education) is now becoming part of our tradition (Brass and Demay, 1987).

SIFC sees itself as playing an active role in helping people better understand and deal with their changing conditions on the one hand, and influence the nature and direction of those changes on the other. As such, it envisions itself as evolving into an “Indian University College,” in which Indian oriented research and curriculum development become significant features, in addition to the instructional services currently provided. The case for these new directions in curriculum development is outlined by Brass as follows:

If students are to lead wisely and well, they must learn from a curriculum which not

only prepares them professionally but which is rooted in what Indian people believe and wish to uphold. In a very real sense, the content of our curricula in these last years of the 20th century will determine the nature of Indian leadership in the next century. In any field, curriculum is the medium of ideas and explanations. The SIFC experience of the last twelve years has taught us that the core of Indian educational control is curriculum content. Any Indian educational institution which simply “brokers” curricula shaped by those outside the Indian world to meet needs other than our own does not duly reflect Indian control of education. Indian students and the challenges all Indian people face demand that we create our own curricula. Indian education works best when the curriculum used is illuminated by Indian interests and set in an Indian philosophical framework. Recognizing this, SIFC is confronting the curriculum questions. We know that the best solution is the most extensive - a new and truly bi-cultural curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12 and then on through the post-secondary level. This is the ideal toward which we must work (quoted in Dudgeon, 1988).

Brass also outlines the case for a research role for SIFC:

The role we haven’t begun to fill very seriously is the role of generating new ideas and new research to lead Indians in the future. That’s what we haven’t been doing and that’s a very crucial role. Some Indians are also afraid of doing that. They simply think that we should be producing school teachers, social workers and business graduates. Some ask us why are we producing politically-minded people who challenge the chiefs out here? That’s the natural result of a good university. Being exposed to the universe of knowledge is going to create reflective people who are going to support new ways of doing things (Brass and Demay, 1987).

SIFC has taken steps to expose students to that “universe of knowledge” through the creation of a Center for International Indigenous Studies and Development, through which joint ventures have been established with indigenous people around the world:

SIFC has been an innovator pursuing international agreements with indigenous peoples and institutions around the world. These agreements provide access and opportunity to develop an awareness and appreciation for the broader socio-political and cultural context of indigenous peoples on a global scale (SIFC, 1987).

Stimulating the development of a global perspective and “new ways of doing things” can, however, lead to the same kinds of internal and external political tensions regarding the degree of attention to be given to “local” vs. “universal” concerns that Ilisimatusarfik has encountered in Greenland. It is easy for college personnel to get caught up in the hegemony of an “ivory tower” existence, to the point where notions of academic freedom and the pursuit of universal truth and knowledge wherever the path may lead can run head-on into the cultural dictum of respect for Elders. The very nature of indigenous institutions makes it a perilous choice to attempt to retreat to the scholarly detachment embodied in the conventional notion of the university as an ivory tower. Institutions like the tribal colleges, Te Wananga o Raukawa, Ilisimatusarfik, and SIFC, must maintain a close symbiotic



relationship with the people and community they serve, or they run the risk of losing the support of that community, in which case they are likely to end up in the same circumstances as the Inupiat University of the Arctic - abandoned.

The issue, however, is not one of choosing between two mutually exclusive options. Rather, it is a question of determining the proper balance between local and universal necessary to maintain the integrity of the institution, while proceeding in a manner that continually reaffirms the essential commitment to the community being served. That commitment must be clearly demonstrated in terms that convey a concern for both the collective interest (however that may be defined locally) as well as the interest of each individual. Again, the two are not mutually exclusive, but are integrally connected in the sense that the individual is dependent on a healthy community for social, emotional and spiritual sustenance, and the community is dependent on healthy, informed individuals for its well-being. The success of indigenous institutions depends on their ability to approach their task in a wholistic, integrative and culturally congruent manner. Pre-occupation with matters of academic consequence at the expense of cultural and community considerations is a sure recipe for alienation and ultimately, failure.

SIFC continues to serve as a lead institution in seeking more appropriate avenues for the creation, transmission and use of knowledge on behalf of indigenous people and incorporating existing mainstream institutions in the effort, but it is no longer the only institution. Two other significant Canadian examples of affiliated arrangements between indigenous and mainstream institutions are the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research in association with the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan, and the Four Worlds Development Project in conjunction with the University of Lethbridge in Alberta. Each of these institutions represents a variation on the affiliation theme.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute was established in 1980 as the educational arm of the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (representing Native people of mixed ancestry), with the following mission:

... to promote the renewal and development of Native culture through appropriate research activities, material development, collection and distribution of educational materials, and by the design, development and delivery of specific educational and cultural programs and services. Sufficient Metis and Non-Status Indian people will be trained in the required skills, commitment and confidence to make the goal of self-government a reality (GDINSAR, 1987).

With a sizeable number of Native people in Saskatchewan of mixed ancestry who do not come under the provisions of government policies for "Status Indians," the Gabriel Dumont Institute has sought to fill the gap by establishing its own system of comprehensive educational services, including university-level programs. With the need to improve the quality of education at all levels, and building on the precedent established by SIFC, the Institute has worked out cooperative arrangements with the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan to establish and run the off-campus Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). The goals of SUNTEP are:

1. to ensure that people of Native ancestry are adequately represented in urban teaching positions, and
2. to provide Native teachers who are more sensitive to the educational needs of Native students and who can be identified as positive role models for both Native and Non-Native students (GDINSAR, 1987).

SUNTEP students are enrolled in the teacher education program at their respective university, but are provided with additional support and tutorial services, as well as expanded opportunities for on-site instruction and practicum work in urban schools. SUNTEP, along with similar initiatives for other Indian and rural students in remote centers, has been highly instrumental in increasing the number of certificated Metis/Native/Indian teachers in the urban and rural schools of Saskatchewan. Community/school-based teacher education programs administered by and for indigenous people have been one of the first and most prominent avenues by which higher education has reached out into indigenous communities. Similar outreach approaches are represented by the Kaurua Higher Education Centre in South Australia, the Te Rangakura Educational Development initiative in New Zealand, Arctic Sivunmun Ilisagvik College in Alaska, Saami Allaskuvla in Norway, Ilinniarfissuaq in Greenland, and the many other affiliated Native/Indian teacher education programs across Canada and the U.S.. For the Gabriel Dumont Institute, SUNTEP serves as a vehicle for gaining access to the professional roles that shape the educational experiences of the people they serve. From there, they are in a position to influence other elements of the educational system, including the curriculum, the language of instruction, and the resource materials used in the schools. As their experience with SUNTEP grows, they are expanding to provide similar support services in other areas of professional and academic development.

A third variation on the affiliated institutions theme is the Four Worlds Development Project at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. The central focus of Four Worlds is the development and provision of culturally appropriate services in the areas of curriculum development, training, research, planning and evaluation, particularly with regard to alcohol and drug abuse prevention. Through the University of Lethbridge, they offer accredited workshops, summer institutes, and other forms of training and technical assistance for schools and communities that are specifically aimed at strengthening traditional educational, spiritual and healing practices and building a local capacity for indigenous communities to address their needs in their own way. They have been especially effective in finding ways to articulate and demonstrate the academic validity of incorporating indigenous practices and perspectives in the functioning of a university. The culturally-based curriculum materials, community-oriented research and evaluation models, and self-healing approaches to personal and community development promulgated by the Four Worlds Development Project have attracted an international audience for their services. They have been able to use their association with a university to legitimate the epistemological and spiritual underpinnings of the indigenous community, and their association with the indigenous community to broaden the legitimacy of the university. Once again, the benefits of institutional affiliations/federations/associations can be seen to be of mutual benefit to both parties in the arrangement.

In those instances where limited resources and/or the economy-of-scale is such that an independent institution is not possible, affiliated arrangements with existing post-secondary institutions offer indigenous communities an option whereby they can gain access to existing institutional resources and exercise at least a modicum of control over the higher education programs and services they receive. That which is given up in the way of autonomy and independence is offset by the increase in, credibility, access and influence over the disposition of existing resources.

### Integrated Structures

There is yet a third category of institutional configurations for providing indigenous higher education services, and that is programs and units contained wholly within and administered by existing mainstream institutions. Integrated structures such as these are usually found in institutions that are geographically situated in close proximity to, or historically have attracted students from a significant indigenous population. Either because of a recognition of institutional responsibility or as a result of local political pressure, these mainstream institutions have responded by establishing units within their structure explicitly dedicated to addressing indigenous needs. The most common form these responses have taken is the creation of indigenous-oriented academic programs or research/development/service units within the institution, usually in the areas of Native/Indian/Aboriginal studies and/or teacher education.

A typical example of a unit addressing both of these areas is the Aboriginal Studies and Teacher Education Centre (ASTEC) in the South Australia College of Advanced Education, which provides a wide range of special programs and services within the host college, as well as to other tertiary institutions across Australia. Included under the aegis of the Centre are the following:

- Aboriginal and Islander Nurse Education Program
- Anangu Teacher Education Program (ANTEP)
- Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP)
- Aboriginal Education Resource Centre
- Aboriginal Studies Key Centre

The latter unit is the Australian version of a research and development centre, which has among its objectives, the following:

- To provide a national program in Aboriginal studies and education available internally and externally, at undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate level.

- To co-operate with other Aboriginal programs and agencies for the furtherance of Aboriginal Studies and Aboriginal education in general in consultation with the national body responsible for Aboriginal education and the South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Committee.

To afford Aboriginalisation pre-eminence in current programs and operation of ASTEC and future initiatives.

To direct research towards specific instrumental goals, and the incorporation of action based and evaluative strategies . . . with preference for participative modes of research.

To develop programs directed towards providing community education with the intention of improving relationships between Aborigines and non-Aboriginal society (ASTEC, 1990).

The South Australia College of Advanced Education was the first institution of higher education to begin offering Aboriginal Studies in Australia in 1968, and its programs have since grown to include a staff of 41, over 30% of whom are Aboriginal people, the largest number employed by any Australian higher education institution. The most recent addition has been the September, 1990 opening of the the Kaurna Higher Education Centre to house all the Aboriginal programs at the College, and to provide for the publication of the Kaurna Higher Education Journal.

Taking a slightly different approach to advancing indigenous interest within the framework of an established higher education institution is the First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) at the University of British Columbia in Canada. FNHL was established in 1987 to serve as a vehicle to draw together and give greater visibility to the increasing number of First Nations programs that had emerged on the UBC campus since 1974, when the Native Indian Teacher Education Program became one of the first of such programs in Canada. In addition to NITEP, the First Nations House of Learning coordinates the Ts'`kel graduate programs in education, the Native Law Program, and the First Nations Health Care Professions Program, and it is currently exploring ways to increase the First Nations presence in the areas of natural resource sciences, commerce and business administration, and First Nations languages. At UBC, the role of FNHL is not to serve as the academic home for the respective programs listed above (which remain the responsibility of the appropriate faculties/departments), but rather to coordinate existing efforts, stimulate new initiatives, provide support services for students, and serve as a liaison between the university and First Nations communities. Specifically, the mission and objectives of FNHL are spelled out in the 1991-92 calendar/catalog as follows:

. . . to work towards making the University's resources more accessible to B.C.'s First People, and to improve the University's ability to meet the needs of First Nations. The House of Learning is dedicated to quality preparation in all fields of post-secondary study, with quality education being determined by its relevance to the philosophy and values of First Nations. . . . The House of Learning seeks direction from First Nations communities through consultation meetings and workshops held throughout the province.

The objectives of the First Nations House of Learning can be summarized as follows:

To facilitate the participation of First Nations people in a wide range of study areas by providing information on post-secondary opportunities and support services.

To expand the range and depth of program and course offerings within the faculties, schools and institutes at UBC related to needs identified by First Nations people and communities in B.C..

To identify and promote research that would extend the frontiers of knowledge for the benefit of First Nations (e.g., legal studies of land claims and self-government, resource management, delivery of social services).

To increase the First Nations leadership on campus.

To establish a physical facility (longhouse) on campus to enhance access and support services for First Nations students.

To explore the possibility of founding an international component for the advancement of indigenous people around the world (Kirkness, 1991).

In addition to the academic programs listed above, the First Nations House of Learning, through its director, Verna J. Kirkness, has been instrumental in several national and international initiatives on behalf of indigenous people, most notably the Canadian Indian Teacher Education Programs (CITEP) annual conference, the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples Education, and the Mokakit (Indian) Education Research Association. CITEP is an informal alliance of over 30 Native/Indian teacher education programs across Canada and Alaska that sponsors an annual rotating conference to bring together students, faculty and community representatives from the various programs to share ideas and experiences associated with Native teachers, teaching and teacher education.

In 1987, UBC and the First Nations House of Learning organized and hosted the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples Education. The conference attracted such widespread interest that a second World Conference was hosted by the Maori people in New Zealand in 1990, and a third will be hosted by the Aborigines in Australia in 1992. The success of this initiative has served as an inspiration to add the last item to the FNHL's objectives listed above.

The First Nations House of Learning has also been a prime mover in promoting indigenous scholarship through the establishment of the Mokakit (Indian) Education Research Association. Created in 1983 following a gathering of Indian educators from across Canada at the University of British Columbia, Mokakit sponsors projects and hosts a bi-annual conference to encourage and support Indian initiated, designed, and implemented research:

The Mokakit philosophy includes a commitment to excellence in Indian education. It recognizes that research is fundamental to the development and improvement of Indian educational aims and objectives. Mokakit promotes the participation of Indians at all levels of educational research. Mokakit is a professional organization

which:

Fosters higher education among Indians

Promotes and enhances individual and group research initiatives

Reviews and highlights current research

Collects and disseminates research information

Conducts workshops and seminars in research methodology

Provides a resource base for Indian communities

Provides access to research funds established for fellowships, sabbaticals, scholarships

Publishes a journal (Mokakit) of current research in Indian Education (McCue, 1984)

In addition to publishing the Mokakit research journal, FNHL also alternates with the University of Alberta in the editing and publishing of the Canadian Journal of Native Education. One of the most tangible contributions of FNHL to indigenous higher education at UBC, however, is the construction of a Longhouse for First Nations programs, to be completed in 1992. The Longhouse, fulfilling a dream spelled out in the original objectives of FNHL, “will be the first west coast longhouse constructed as an integral part of a university campus.” Once ready, it will:

Serve as a “home away from home” where First Nations students can study and learn in surroundings which reflect their heritage and culture.

Unite, under one roof, access and support services which currently are housed in several locations across campus.

Provide a meeting place and special events area.

Enable First Nations people to share their knowledge and culture (FNHL, 1991).

The components that will make up the Longhouse facility include a Great Hall for large gatherings and celebrations, an Elders Hall, a Spirit Renewal Hall, a Resource Centre/Library, a Living Culture Workshop, a Native Indian Student Union office, seminar rooms, an archival room, offices for all First Nations programs, a student and staff lounge, a day care facility, a food preparation area, a computer room, and a shop. As was the case with the Navajo Community College and other indigenous institutions with the opportunity to create their own environment, the design of the Longhouse facility incorporates as many traditional features of Northwest Coast Indian architecture as possible, in an attempt to provide a facility that will give First Nations students a comfortable and supportive atmosphere within which to congregate (McFarland, 1990).

The First Nations House of Learning has become a potent force in bringing indigenous perspectives to bear within the institutional milieu of the University of British Columbia. As was the case with Heritage College and Te Wananga o Raukawa described earlier, an important element of FNHL's success has been strong, visionary and consistent leadership on the part of the director, Verna Kirkness, and the community advisory board, coupled with a supportive university administration. Once entrenched on campus in the First Nations Longhouse, fluctuations in leadership and direction will be less threatening to the survival of FNHL as an institution-within-an-institution, but stable and committed leadership has been critical to get through the formative years. Although FNHL is an institutional anomaly in the context of UBC, exercising administrative but not academic control over First Nations programs, it has been well situated to guide the University in its efforts to become more responsive to the needs of the indigenous people and communities of British Columbia.

In a situation somewhat parallel to that of the First Nations House of Learning, the Centre for Maaori Studies and Research at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, has also been able to retain strong, stable leadership in its efforts to serve as an advocate on behalf of Maaori people. As with FNHL, CMSR does not have direct responsibility for offering academic programs, but serves rather as a research and development centre, utilizing its university base and resources to address issues of concern to Maaori people. As stated in the 1991 calendar/catalog of the University of Waikato:

The work of the Centre for Maaori Studies and Research concentrates on community research and development. Contemporary matters are studied in this context and include employment, economic development, education, race relations, land, family and community life, health, migration and urbanization, unemployment retraining programmes, crime, cultural development and the arts. Centre staff are actively involved in the community while conducting their research. They are committed, furthermore, to finding appropriate ways of returning information to the community in order that it might develop its own solutions. Within the wider community, staff of the Centre have also been involved in helping Maaori tribal groups to prepare submissions to the Waitangi Tribunal, providing back-up research and on occasion appearing as expert witnesses. In carrying out its work, the Centre is open to cooperation with other departments and assists their student referrals with research proposals and essay assignments. It also supervises national and international Ph.D. students researching indigenous issues. Research conducted in the Centre is used as a basis for planning to assist in the development of national policy. The information is collated at the Centre and published as occasional papers which are available at the University (1990).

The Centre for Maaori Studies and Research has established a pattern of close working relationships with the Maaori community for all of its endeavors. Robert Mahuta, the director of the Centre since its inception in 1972, has maintained an active involvement with his own tribal community and has used his dual role to implement, document and articulate a Maaori perspective on various community development initiatives, which then serve as a model for other communities, or for shaping government policy (where he has also played a

significant role on many occasions). The Centre has been able to use its university base as a vehicle for helping strengthen, legitimate and bring to the fore Maaori views and concerns, and in so doing, has been a significant force in bringing about a major shift in the control of Maaori affairs and resources from government to tribal authorities.

The University of Waikato has itself been the target of initiatives that have grown out of the work of the Centre for Maaori Studies and Research, the most recent being a proposal for the creation of “Endowed Colleges” at the University of Waikato and the University of Auckland, as a form of compensation for the past confiscation of Maaori land by the government for the purpose of “endowing” tertiary level education, but from which Maaori people have received very little, if any benefit over the years. Having carefully documented the historical facts of the land transactions, the Centre, in conjunction with the Tainui Maaori Trust Board, has developed a detailed proposal for the establishment of Maaori Colleges patterned after the Oxford/Cambridge model of self-contained academic and residential units which would:

- Be autonomous, each comprising a physical entity within the university with its own residential, tutorial, study and workshop provisions;

- Be a place of residence for students - predominantly but not exclusively Maaori - who wish to live in a college environment which is Maaori in as many aspects as possible;

- Have a tutorial staff working within the college and offering some specialized lecturing to other departments in the university;

- Provide, through seminar and research activities, a “think-tank” where national matters of policy and international matters of scholarship can be pursued at an advanced level;

- Be a place where scholars of national and international stature may be in residence for varying lengths of time;

- Be a place for Maaori activities and workshops, especially in the arts (Tainui Maaori Trust Board, 1991).

By creating an environment in which students can feel comfortable and be encouraged in expressing themselves as Maaori, and experience on a daily basis the Maaori values of Whanaugatanga (relatedness), Rangatiratanga (status and respect), Manaakitanga (sharing and caring), and Kotahitanga (unity through consensus), the Endowed College is intended to overcome the long-standing problem of Maaori “under-achievement and under-representation in Universities.” Specifically, the aim of the proposal is to:

- ... create a collegial, living environment based upon Maaori cultural values and adapted to the social, educational and affective needs of Maaori students. Spelt out, this means creating an environment which more closely approximates the Maaori cultural context, wherein the dominant (Maaori) values are experienced (Tainui



Maaori Trust Board, 1991).

The Endowed Maaori College concept represents a unique blending of features from each of the independent, affiliated and integrated configurations described in this paper. Such a “College” would be free to create its own policies and practices to support its unique Maaori identity, while retaining the academic, political and economic advantages of an integral relationship with an established institution. While the concept has been endorsed by the University and the government, the compensatory base funding for the “endowment” that it calls for has not yet been provided, so the idea remains to be fully tested, but it holds considerable promise as a legitimate alternative configuration for addressing the special higher education needs of indigenous people. In the meantime, the University of Waikato has made an additional effort to recognize its obligation to the Maaori community by adopting a Maaori version of its name - Te Whare Wananga O Waikato - which now shares equal billing on the cover of the University calendar/catalog. The Centre for Maaori Studies and Research has left its mark on behalf of Maaori education in New Zealand in more ways than one.

The final example to be reviewed here is an integrated academic unit with responsibility for providing a full range of programs and services to an indigenous population - the College of Rural Alaska of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The College of Rural Alaska has evolved out of a consolidation of Native and rural post-secondary programs and services dating back to 1970. It took on its current form in 1988 when the University of Alaska statewide system went through a substantial restructuring, which included incorporating three rural community colleges, several rural extension centers and a collection of baccalaureate, graduate and research programs based on the Fairbanks campus, into a single college paralleling two other academic colleges and several professional schools that make up the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The preamble to the mission statement of the College of Rural Alaska indicates that it is:

. . . committed to educational processes through which all Alaskans, with a particular focus on Alaska Natives and rural residents, are empowered to effect social and economic changes in their communities and to protect and enrich the quality of their lives and culture. The college has responsibilities for teacher education, social work preparation and counseling in both urban and rural Alaska, and to provide the psychological and sociological foundations required for many degree programs throughout the University of Alaska Fairbanks. In addition, particular consideration is given to the needs of permanent residents and students in nontraditional settings who seek skills and degrees suited to the rural economy and the well-being of rural communities (1990).

Within the framework of the College of Rural Alaska a variety of undergraduate and graduate academic degree programs and services are made available to students throughout rural Alaska by way of five regional campuses, as well as on the main campus in Fairbanks. The regional campuses offer academic and vocational programs at the associate degree level, and a two-year general studies core curriculum that provides a platform from which students may transfer to further baccalaureate-level studies at one of the University’s three urban

campuses. Through a cross-regional instructional delivery system administered by the Center for Distance Education, the College offers baccalaureate and graduate level instruction on-site in rural communities in the areas of cross-cultural education, rural development, and human services. In addition, research and development activities and support services are administered through the Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, while Native leadership development and spiritual revitalization are fostered through the Alaska Native Human Resource Development Program.

Although the College of Rural Alaska mission and programs are clearly intended to focus university resources on the higher educational needs of the Eskimo, Indian and Aleut people, who make up over 90% of the population in rural Alaska and 16% of the state as a whole, this has not been without its difficulties. As a specialized unit situated within the context of a larger public service institution, the College has sought to broaden the capacity of that institution to offer a wider range of programs and services that address the diverse and unique needs of the Native segment of the population it is intended to serve, while at the same time extending similar services to the general population. However, the more entrenched segments of the larger institution tend to view the role of the College as one of offering ways for rural/Native students to gain access to the institution in its pre-existing mainstream form and function, thus placing the onus for accommodation on the students rather than on the institution itself (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991). Programs, policies or practices that are intended to respond to uniquely Native concerns are often treated as anomalous and considered outside the purview of the university's customary mission, even though they have been subjected to intense internal and external scrutiny and numerous reviews and have consistently met regional and national accreditation standards.

Despite these on-going institutional constraints, the College of Rural Alaska has managed to develop and offer an extensive array of educational programs and services, each with its own academic integrity built around paradigms associated with indigenous populations, rural communities, village-scale institutions, rapid socio-economic change, and an arctic environment. Direction and support for the College has come largely through regional governance councils representing the various communities and constituencies being served. In fact, it was Native economic and political interests stimulated by and deriving from the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971 that, over the years, obtained the funding from the state legislature for the programs and services that now make up the College. Those same interests continue to monitor the University's responsiveness to Alaska Native educational needs, and when those needs are not being met, do not hesitate to initiate alternative institutional structures and arrangements more in their interests, such as the Inupiat University of the Arctic and Arctic Sivunmun Ilisagvik College described earlier.

While there are many other examples that could be included to illustrate the variety of institutional forms that are being used to provide higher education services for indigenous people in Fourth World settings, most would fall within one of the three configurations (independent, affiliated, integrated) that have been portrayed above. By carefully examining the different approaches that have evolved over the years, we can begin to identify the institutional patterns and practices that have the greatest potential for furthering the educational agenda of indigenous communities. It is to that end that the remainder of this

paper will be addressed.

## INDIGENOUS FORMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Given the range of institutional forms that are reflected in the various indigenous higher education initiatives identified in the previous section, the following analysis will focus on how and to what extent indigenous forms have been incorporated into the educational and operational practices of those institutions. In what ways have the mission, organizational structure, modus operandi, academic emphasis, etc. of these higher education institutions been adapted to reflect the cultural patterns, practices and predispositions of the people they serve? The qualities that will be addressed in this analysis are those which tend to distinguish indigenous institutions in general from their mainstream counterparts, though the specific manifestations of these qualities are likely to vary from one indigenous institution to the next, in accordance with the local culture. To the extent that certain indigenous-controlled institutions seek to emulate and replicate mainstream institutional forms, their operational qualities are not likely to differ markedly from the parent model and thus are not reflected in this analysis.

### Commitment to Community

One of the most salient and significant characteristics of indigenous higher education institutions is their over-arching sense of commitment to the collective interests of the indigenous community with which they are associated. This may not seem surprising, since their sponsorship and identity is usually closely tied to the surrounding tribal community, but the priority given to communal development places the indigenous institution in a very different posture in relation to their clientele than that of institutions whose primary concern is development of the individual. When indigenous people speak of education as a vehicle for “empowerment,” they are usually referring to their aspirations as a people, rather than just as individuals. Students who come to a Tribal College, or to the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, for example, are often pursuing objectives that go beyond getting a better job and include improving their ability to be of service to their tribal community. As was indicated in the case of SIFC, however, these are not to be construed as competing or conflicting objectives - “the two are not mutually exclusive, but are integrally connected in the sense that the individual is dependent on a healthy community for social, emotional and spiritual sustenance, and the community is dependent on healthy, informed individuals for its well-being.”

This same sense of communal responsibility is at the root of the dynamic tension between “local” and “universal” emphases that Ilisimatusarfik and many other indigenous institutions have experienced. In most instances, however, the tension between community linkage and scholarly detachment has been exploited in mutually beneficial ways by redefining the educational process as one of reciprocal learning, rather than a one-way flow from teacher to student. In this regard, indigenous institutions often function along the lines of the ideal of the “Land Grant” universities in the U.S., in which research, teaching and community service are seen as interdependent functions tied to the needs of the constituent community.

The extent to which indigenous higher education institutions (and programs) are able to transcend conventional institutional concerns and demonstrate in culturally appropriate ways an unequivocal commitment to the community they serve, tends to be the most critical factor in their success and ultimate survival as an institution. For most such institutions, this is their reason for being, so a large part of their efforts are devoted to making it a reality, and it is from this commitment that most other forms of cultural adaptation emanate. Increasingly, indigenous people are pursuing higher education on their own terms as a means of maintaining their cultural integrity and securing a full measure of communal self-determination and self-sufficiency.

### Integration of Functions

A second quality that tends to distinguish indigenous higher education institutions from their mainstream counterparts is a high degree of structural and functional integration, within the institutions and between the institutions and the communities they serve. Community members are often active participants in the institution, and students, faculty and administrators are often actively involved in the community. The relationship between academic studies and the real world is treated as an interactive process, each contributing to the other in a cumulative fashion. Knowledge, rather than being fragmented into academic disciplines, is usually viewed in a wholistic framework and is acquired through a mutually constructive process drawing as much from experience as from books. The institutional structure generally reflects minimal hierarchy, and the boundaries between the various elements are often quite fluid, with students, faculty, administrators and community members moving back and forth across multiple roles. Very often it is through such wholistic integration of structure and function that cultural congruency is achieved, as the institution and all of its participants enter into the natural flow of life in the community. In the case of Te Wananga o Raukawa in New Zealand, for example, students balance their classroom learning by becoming actively engaged in real-world tasks and experiences in their community, thus contributing to the well-being of their people as they gain access and exposure to local social networks, communication patterns, current political issues and other aspects of the inner workings of their community. It is through such synergistic and integrative processes that indigenous institutions are able to achieve so much with so few resources, and at the same time merge their cultural mandate with their educational mission.

### Sustained Local Leadership

Inherent in the successful functioning of indigenous higher education institutions is the need for strong, sustained, visionary leadership that is well grounded in the community being served. This has been clearly evident in the experiences of the many such institutions that have survived their formative years, and is the basis for most of the successful cultural adaptations that reflect significant divergence from conventional practices in higher education institutions. It takes a high degree of patience, persistence and political savvy to bring a new institution into being, and the person or persons responsible for the initiative must have an unwavering commitment to the idea, along with strong backing from the community to survive the many obstacles that are likely to be encountered. The chances of such an initiative being sustained over the long term are greatly enhanced if the leadership

originates from the local community and is able to effectively represent the interests of the community in the day-to-day milieu of the institutions development and operation.

Continuity and stability are critical factors in the survival of an emerging institution, and while locally-derived leadership is no guarantee of a constructive and cumulative building process, its absence greatly diminishes the chances of long term survival. For indigenous institutional development purposes, the credibility and stature of the leaders in the eyes of the host community is probably more important than their credibility and stature in the eyes of the academic community. The latter can be built over time, if there is demonstrated support and interest in the community, but the reverse is much harder to achieve. Increasingly, indigenous leadership capacity is becoming available with credibility in both arenas, and where that is the case, the fledgling institutions are usually able to move ahead at a much quicker pace.

### Participation of Elders

One of the most consistent features of indigenous higher education institutions is the active role that local Elders play in many aspects of the life of the institution. For example, Elders are usually involved in some consultative role in shaping the priorities and ethos of the institution, and are generally regarded as the culture-bearers with regard to the practice and transmission of traditional values, beliefs, knowledge, skills and customs. In some cases, such as SIFC, resident Elders play a more active role in the daily life of the institution, serving as guides and counselors who help students in the integration of the traditional and academic aspects of their educational experiences. Elders are a critical link between the indigenous institutions and the culture and community with which they are associated, and they serve as an important alternative to books as a source of valuable knowledge and expertise, which is given additional strength and validation through the sanctioning of the institution. For most such institutions, their educational mission and cultural mandate could not be accomplished without significant participation by the Elders.

### Spiritual Harmony

Along with the prominent role of Elders, another dimension that plays an important part in the cultural strength of indigenous higher education institutions is that of spirituality, not in the sense of promoting a formal religious dogma, but in the sense of attending to the development and well-being of the whole person, and the integration and balancing of all aspects of peoples lives, including the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. Since spiritual beliefs and practices vary from culture to culture and from person to person, students are usually encouraged to participate in whatever manner they consider appropriate and to recognize the need to attend to their spiritual development as an integral and essential part of their overall development as human beings in harmony with the world around them. For some, this may take the form of Christian religious practices, while for others it may mean rekindled interest in traditional beliefs and practices, and for still others it may mean a combination of both, or neither. From the institutions perspective, however, it is an indication that an education is not viewed as complete if it doesn't nurture the spirit along with the mind and the body.

### Use of Local Language

For many of the indigenous communities that have entered into a higher education initiative, the survival and use of the indigenous language has been a major issue of concern. In one form or another, the local language is usually incorporated into the fabric of the institution. Where the language is alive and well and in everyday use, it will most likely be reflected as a subject in the curriculum, to be taught for conversational and/or literate purposes, to persons for whom it may be a first or second language. Those learning the language may include interested local residents, as well as outsiders who are living and working in the community. Where the language is sufficiently strong that locally produced instructional materials are available, it may also be used as the language of instruction for other subjects, as is the case in Greenland, for example. In those situations where the local language is no longer in everyday use, indigenous institutions are usually expected to play a major role in protecting, preserving and even revitalizing the language through research, documentation and course offerings where fluent speakers are still available to serve as instructors. In so doing, the local educational institutions often serve as a vehicle for broader cultural renewal leading to increased sense of pride and dignity as the contemporary significance of historical events and experiences are recognized, recounted and documented. Language can serve as an important focal point for rekindling a sense of cultural identity and distinctiveness, and indigenous higher education institutions are often the vehicle through which the spark is ignited.

### Traditional Ways of Knowing

Less tangible than the role of language, but of equal and growing importance to indigenous higher education institutions, are the traditional ways of constructing, organizing and using knowledge - an indigenous epistemology or ways of knowing. While this has been a largely neglected area in the past, it has received growing attention as indigenous institutions and faculty have sought to move beyond mainstream categories and perceptions of knowledge and how it is put to use in everyday and institutional life. Indigenous scholars have taken an increasingly active role in articulating the basis for traditional structures and uses of knowledge and have found a ready audience in indigenous communities and institutions for the incorporation of those alternative ways of knowing into educational practice. The most common consideration in this regard is the traditional emphasis on orality over literacy as the primary means for codifying and transmitting knowledge (Archibald, 1990; Goody, 1982). Taking the issue one step further, Eber Hampton, president of SIFC, has attempted to outline an "Indian theory of education," including an alternative set of "standards" which can be used as a basis for judging the efficacy of educational programs designed to serve Indian people. These standards embody much of what indigenous higher education institutions are about, including:

- Spirituality - an appreciation for spiritual relationships.
- Service - the purpose of education is to contribute to the people.
- Diversity - Indian education must meet the standards of diverse tribes and communities.
- Culture - the importance of culturally determined ways of thinking,

communicating and living.

- Tradition - continuity with tradition.
- Respect - the relationship between the individual and the group recognized as mutually empowering.
- History - appreciation of the facts of Indian history, including the loss of the continent and continuing racial and political oppression.
- Relentlessness - commitment to the struggle for good schools for Indian children.
- Vitality - recognition of the strength of Indian people and culture.
- Conflict - understanding the dynamics and consequences of oppression.
- Place - the importance of sense of place, land and territory.
- Transformation - commitment to personal and societal change (Hampton, 1988).

While there are variations in the details of knowledge use and ways of knowing from one indigenous community to another, the commonalities usually out-weigh the differences, and it is those commonalities of experience that have brought indigenous people and institutions together to form organizations such as the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and Mokakit Education Research Association, as a way to strengthen their ability to devise an institutional framework capable of respecting, enhancing and perpetuating indigenous forms of knowledge and ways of knowing.

### Traditional Teaching Practices

Coupled with traditional ways of knowing in indigenous institutions is the incorporation of traditional teaching practices. Once again, the specifics vary from culture to culture, but most institutions make some attempt to adapt their teaching routines to reflect traditional practices in one way or another. Most notable in this regard is a highly personalized relationship between teachers and students, along with a strong emphasis on experiential forms of learning activities. In fact, “teaching” in its conventional mode as a one-way inculcation of knowledge from teacher to student is usually considered inappropriate in indigenous settings, with a preference instead for “creating opportunities for students to learn,” where the “teacher” acts more in the role of tutor/facilitator than as a repository of knowledge to which the student is given access. In this way, teaching and learning are considered reciprocal and symbiotic processes in which knowledge and skills grow out of a mutual exchange and shared experience, in which all participants are teacher as well as learner. In addition to the symbiotic nature of teaching and learning, careful attention is given to the context as a significant factor in shaping a learning experience.

Students attending indigenous institutions are just as likely to find themselves actively engaged in a learning activity out in a community setting as they are to be listening to a lecture in a classroom. Learning is treated as a natural process that is best accomplished in a natural context, and very often that context is a setting in which the learning can be linked to real-life circumstances. This is especially true with regard to subject matter related to the local culture, which is more likely to retain its true meaning and authenticity if encountered in a natural context than if obtained from a book in the library. At the same time, however, many indigenous institutions have become the central repository for artifactual and historical information related to the local community and culture, and make a concerted effort to

incorporate that material into the curriculum in culturally congruent ways.

### Congenial Environment

If context is important to the teaching/learning process, it is no less important to the physical environment of the institution as a whole. Wherever possible, indigenous higher education institutions have made an attempt to create an atmosphere and a physical environment that is as congenial and compatible with traditional cultural forms as possible. Architectural examples of this are the Navajo Community College facilities and the First Nations Longhouse at the University of British Columbia, both of which have sought to incorporate designs with which students could identify and feel at home. In addition to the physical environment, institutions such as SIFC and the proposed Endowed Maaori College in New Zealand seek to establish a congenial and supportive social environment to which Indian or Maaori students will be drawn to receive cultural sustenance and guidance while they learn to cope with and adjust to the surrounding mainstream institution. Many indigenous students attending higher education institutions are the first generation in their family and/or community to do so, and for them to cross the cultural boundaries to enter a university can be a very intimidating experience. To the extent that the institutions are able to offer a culturally compatible and congenial social and physical environment in which the indigenous culture is recognized and built upon, the students are that much more likely to find the rest of their experience sufficiently comfortable and rewarding to persevere (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991).

### Participatory Research

The last distinguishing quality of indigenous higher education institutions to be addressed here is the nature of the research that such institutions tend to enter into - namely, participatory, community-based research. Given the close link between the institutions and the communities in which they are situated, there is a strong inclination to be of service to those communities, and in the research arena, that usually means focusing on issues and using methodologies that draw upon and feed back into the community in substantive ways. Thus, community members are often active participants in research activities, and the data gathering and analyses are tied to issues of current concern to the community. In the case of the Centre for Maaori Studies and Research, for example, the environmental and cultural impact of large-scale economic development initiatives is very often the focus of intense community research activity. Through the use of participatory research approaches, a great deal of residual expertise accrues to the community, and the results of the research undertaking are seldom left to gather dust on a shelf. Indigenous higher education institutions are uniquely situated to contribute new knowledge, insights and perspectives on issues of concern to society in general, but to do so they must go beyond the conventional modes of research and knowledge production and enter into close collaboration with the communities they serve.

There are many other qualities and issues that set indigenous higher education institutions apart from their mainstream counterparts, but those described above are sufficient to indicate the special nature and mission of these unique institutions. Their ability to move beyond



convention and find ways to make higher education accessible and meaningful to students and communities that historically have been on the outside of such institutions will continue to enlighten and enliven educational processes, not only in their own milieu, but in mainstream society as well.

### Conclusion

While this paper has attempted to review a broad sample of the various kinds of indigenous higher education institutions that have been established in various Fourth World settings, there are many others that have not been included, though hopefully the issues they have encountered have at least been touched upon. Although the focus of this analysis has been on higher education in indigenous contexts, we can also gain useful insights from other instances in which higher education institutions have been established to address particular socio-cultural, political and economic needs, e.g. historically Black institutions in the U.S., such as Howard University and Grambling University, or post-colonial university's in developing countries, including regional university's such as the University of the South Pacific and the University of the West Indies.

Though beyond the purview of this paper, such institutions offer valuable lessons for indigenous people seeking to construct an educational alternative to the dominant, mainstream, Western-style institutional model, for they all have concerns in common revolving around issues such as center vs. periphery, local vs. global, rural vs. urban, subsistence vs. market-based, theoretical vs. applied, self-sufficiency vs. dependency, self-determination vs. neo-colonialism, outside vs. inside, traditional vs. modern, etc.. In addressing issues such as these, indigenous higher education institutions are contributing not only to the well-being of the immediate communities they serve, but to the well-being of all humanity, as the quote by Bill Vaudrin at the beginning of this paper makes evident.

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