

Introducing the articles of the Spring 2023 issue: “Kinship Worldview: Indigenous Authors Going Deeper with Holistic Education”

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Abstract

An editorial to introduce the Spring 2023 issue of the *Holistic Education Review*.

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I am grateful for the opportunity to put together this important issue of the *Holistic Education Review*. Holistic educators have long understood that the traditional, kinship, pre-colonial (Indigenous) approach to teaching and learning is the original model for “holistic education” – a phrase popularized in the 1980s to counteract the mechanistic and fragmented approach to mainstream schooling.

Indigenous Peoples recognized the problem of western schooling long ago. In 1744, Virginia’s governing commissioners offered to sponsor a number of young men from the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy so they could attend Williamsburg College. After a day’s discussion, the Confederacy wrote back stating they had previous experience with their boys who attended such schools and explained that they came back “totally good for nothing” (Hopkins 1898, 240). They then offered to take a dozen of the sons of Virginia to school, promising to instruct them so they could “make true men of them.” They meant to assure optimal development of a young person’s physical, emotional, moral, psychological, and spiritual attributes. Such education would emphasize respect, responsibility, and reciprocity on behalf of all human and non-human life. It

realized spiritual life forces and the lessons to be learned from the trees, wind, rocks, animals, waters and stars. It understood the sacredness of children.

The articles that follow offer testimony to the holism of original traditional Indigenous ways of teaching and learning. Each narrative describes an Indigenous orientation to holistic education that goes deeply into a sense of sacred interconnectedness with all life on Mother Earth. They reflect a “coherent worldview encompassing the processes of the world and how we humans find meaning in those processes” (Wildcat 2001, 7). Each article begins with an abstract and ends with a biographical sketch of the authors that include: Greg Cajete, Ethleen Iron Cloud Two Dogs, Frank Bracho, Ilarion Mercurieff, Jennifer Markides, Lily Mendoza, Devona Lone Wolf, Miranda Haskie, Sox Sperry, Tyson Yunkaporta, Amba Sepie, Shannon Kenny, Arthur Blume, Deepa Srikantaiah, Brett Grant, and Shytance Wren. We also have a featured book review of *Restoring the Kinship Worldview* by Vicki Zakrzewski, a dialogue from Fielding Graduate University’s Doctoral class, “Re-thinking Schools, Re-thinking Metaphors,” and a republication of my

chapter in the *International Handbook of Holistic Education* are also contributions to this special issue.

Dear HER Readers, Four Arrows, with the full support of the HER Editorial Team, has chosen to follow the Chicago Manual of Style rather than APA Style for this important issue. Please see this link for Four Arrow's thoughts on APA: <https://truthout.org/articles/are-eugenics-torture-and-social-control-hidden-legacies-of-the-american-psychological-association/>.

Author Bio

Wahinkpe Topa (Four Arrows), aka **Don Trent Jacobs**, is an Oglala Lakota Pipe Carrier, made a relative through one of the Lakota's seven sacred ceremonies, *Huŋkápi* after completing his Sun Dance vows on Pine Ridge with Rick Two Dogs. Formerly Director of Education at Oglala Lakota College, he is currently a professor with Fielding Graduate University in the School of Leadership Studies. He has authored numerous books, chapters, papers and articles on Indigenous worldview and counter-hegemonic education. Recipient of the Martin Springer Institutes Moral Courage Award for his activism, his most recent co-authored book, *Restoring the Kinship Worldview: 28 Indigenous Voices Introduce Worldview Precepts for Rebalancing Life on Planet Earth* was selected by UC Berkeley's Science Center for the Greater Good as one of the top 15 "thought provoking, inspiring and practical" science books of 2022. He lives in Mexico and in Canada with his artist wife and numerous pets.