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Book Review: Indigenous Peoples: Self-Determination Knowledge Indigeneity

Edited by Henry Minde in collaboration with Harald Gaski, Svein Jentoft and Georges Midre.

Published by Eburon Academic Publishers in Delft, the Netherlands. 2008, Paperback, 382 pages, no index. AUD. \$79.99. ISBN 978-90-5972-204-0.

Reviewed by Bronwyn Fredericks, Queensland University of Technology and Monash University

This book is an important read for a number of reasons. In an era where the term globalisation is bandied around in relation many fields of study ie , to resources, peoples, information, capital, biology, this book in its entirety attempts to address s the impact of globalisation on Indigenous communities and its people through a wide range of interdisciplinary perspective. This edited collection, therefore, brings to the fore some of the complex issues of Indigenous identity, Indigenous activism and case studies within different nation states. As a whole it attempts to answer some of the issues raised by discussions on and around Indigenous identity and relational identity. The book is well suited as a text for students and professionals in the social sciences, humanities, cultural studies, Indigenous studies and law.

Minde explains that book chapters have their origins as papers presented in a 2005 workshop held in Tromso, Norway or as papers from the 2005 *Forum for Development Cooperation with Indigenous Peoples* organised by *The Challenge of Indigenesness: Politics of Rights, Resources and Knowledge* project and funded by the Norwegian Science Council. Only three papers were commissioned specifically for this edition. While the majority of the case studies are Scandinavian; there are also examples from the United States of America, Australia, Guatemala, Africa and work being carried out by the United Nations (UN).

Scholars contributing to this book come from a diverse range of disciplines and include historians, social anthropologists, political scientists and sociologists. All have drawn upon case studies to highlight the everyday impacts of aspects of globalization on Indigeneity and Indigenous peoples' rights. Chapters also discuss the political, legal and cultural strategies that Indigenous peoples have employed to challenge the new modes of identity, regardless of whether they are found within cultural, artistic, economic or legal arenas.

The book has 20 chapters and is divided into three distinct parts plus an introduction by Henry Minde, Harald Gaski, Svein Jentoft and Georges Midre. The three parts are:

- Part 1 Indigenous Movements and their Opponents;
- Part 2 Self-determination, Social Justice and Natural Resources; and
- Part 3 Politics of Knowledge

Reviewing this book is difficult given the diversity of topics across the 20 chapters. Some are of particular interest to the reviewer, while others were less so. In discussing Indigenous identity the following themes are interwoven throughout the book;

- national unity vs. ethnic diversity
- assimilation vs. self-determination
- equality vs. tolerance for difference
- multiculturalism vs. collective cultural identities
- the knowledges of Indigenous peoples held by Indigenous peoples vs the knowledge of Indigenous peoples held by academic and aesthetic institutions.

Overall, the book is optimistic in its outlook and, while not detracting from authors' abilities, in a couple of chapters there is a lack of interrogation or depth of analysis that one would expect from this kind of book. The chapter written by Henry Reynolds (pp.133-140), as an example, offers the reader a simple revision of events and with reference to a very limited number of significant works. This is problematic since he offers nothing more than people within the field already know about the topic.

The final section *Part 3: Politics of Knowledge*, offers more substantive scholarship. The focus here is on a collective grouping of differing perspectives around issues including representation, authenticity and the notion of Indigenous epistemologies. Vicki Grieves' chapter demonstrates how difficult it is for Indigenous peoples to speak and be heard even in arenas where Indigenous peoples are directly involved. Her chapter is included in this Part with others that also focus on Indigenous knowledge, including traditional and newly acquired through experiences with and within higher education institutions. In this, Grieves adds to the work of the other contributors and supports their perspectives and experiences.