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Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities by Julie L. Davis (review)

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sulting in lengthy, jargon-laden paragraphs that require much rereading. This issue is exaggerated by errors—entire sentences, paragraphs, and block quotations sometimes appear in two different sections of the same chapter—yet the arguments in this book are worth the extra effort. Readers will be rewarded by those passages that focus on analysis of primary texts, in which Goeman clearly demonstrates the necessity of combining multiple critical approaches in order to understand the ways that literature can empower us to remap the world.

Julie L. Davis. *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013. 307 pp. Paper, \$22.95.

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The popular narrative of the American Indian Movement (AIM) focuses on the glorified and controversial militant actions of the organization between 1968 and 1973. However, Julie L. Davis argues that the influence of AIM extends well beyond the perceived decline in 1973 by successfully demonstrating that the American Indian Movement was not entirely focused on large political demonstrations. Davis's work examines the survival schools established by AIM in the Twin Cities of Minnesota in the early 1970s and their connection to preserving American Indian culture through educational self-determination. According to Davis, AIM also concentrated on local community issues for American Indians in Minneapolis and St. Paul. By examining AIM through the lens of the survival schools, Davis reveals the concern of parents and community activists in preserving American Indian languages, culture, spirituality, and identity.

Davis constructs her argument around the history and actors involved with establishing separate American Indian educational institutions from the public schools of the Twin Cities. The long history of American Indians in the upper Midwest greatly influenced AIM and its development of the survival schools. Many of AIM's members were victims of the boarding school era and actively living through what Davis termed "American settler colonialism," which Davis defines as the work of the US government "to eliminate Indigenous people—physically, politically, economically, socially, and culturally—through military conquest, treaties, removal, reservations, and assimilation policies" (17).

Davis argues that the Termination Era of the late 1940s and 1950s also greatly influenced American Indian activism, because the US government moved to terminate responsibility for all American Indian communities. The Termination Era also produced mass relocation of American Indians from the rural reservations to urban centers, and it also accompanied an era of declining governmental assistance for American Indian families. The American Indian Movement recognized the increasing lack of governmental assistance and rapidly growing discrimination directed toward American Indians in areas such as education, housing, and employment.

Davis demonstrates that the tipping point for the establishment of the survival schools came from the astounding number of American Indian children removed from their families and placed in the care of non-American Indians. In response, Clyde Bellecourt, Dennis Banks, and Pat Bellanger worked diligently with families in the late 1960s to provide legal counsel in an attempt to keep American Indian children in their homes. Davis argues that the term *survival* was chosen to represent the survival of American Indian families and traditions. AIM established two survival schools, the Heart of the Earth School in Minneapolis and the Red School House in St. Paul, both founded in 1972. Davis provides a compelling comparison between the vision of African American freedom schools and Black Panther Party liberation schools with the foundation of the American Indian survival schools. However, Davis demonstrates that the mission of the survival schools developed a distinct indigenous educational philosophy based on community responsibility. The curriculum focused on the following three components: academic, cultural, and political activism. Davis argues that AIM targeted American Indian youth because they were the most vulnerable to settler colonialism.

Money was a tremendous obstacle to most of AIM's actions, and the early years of the survival schools were no exception to this difficulty. Davis argues that they struggled to find adequate facilities and the funds to support good faculty and staff, proper equipment, and the curriculum. However, the survival schools financially benefited from local churches, grants, and the passage of the Indian Education Act of 1972. Government standards accompanied federal money that trickled into the budget, but the curriculum remained focused on American Indian traditions. Davis

emphasizes that the success of the survival schools depended heavily on parental involvement and the connection to the larger American Indian community. Davis argues that the implemented educational structure reflected traditional familial rearing practices and demonstrated the larger movement toward educational self-determination. Eventually, the Red School House was forced to close its doors in 1995, and the Heart of the Earth closed in 2008 due to financial issues and corrupt leadership. Davis argues that even though the survival schools no longer exist, the legacy of educational self-determination is still under evaluation.

Davis's work engages broader conversations of settler colonialism, self-determination, and transnational Indigenous decolonization but leaves many questions unanswered. She does establish many trailheads for scholars to further explore the American Indian Movement, though, particularly the connection between AIM and larger transnational decolonization and cultural revitalization movements. Davis weakly connects Northern Ireland language nationalists and the work of the survival schools to preserve traditional languages and regional dialects in her conclusion. This part of her argument needed further development to give better clarity to her broader transnational claim.

Julie L. Davis's expertly written work is a tremendous addition to the scholarship on the American Indian Movement. Davis effectively uses oral histories to support and enrich her research. Its refreshing approach relocates the popular narrative away from AIM leaders' constant pursuit of the public eye and emphasizes the achievements of local urban communities. There are activist undertones throughout this work, such as questioning the direction of the American educational system and continuing the argument for reorienting the direction in which history is written. The classroom, in her opinion, is much larger than the brick-and-mortar building; rather, it is the cultural interactions of the world writ large. Davis concludes that the American Indian Movement's survival schools "blazed a trail for Indigenous decolonization specifically through the practice of educational self-determination" (244). The American Indian story is filled with tragedy, but Julie Davis gives hope to American Indian communities by highlighting educational self-determination as a means toward decolonization.