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Review of *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the  
School Curriculum: Purposes, Possibilities, and  
Challenges*. By Yatta Kanu.

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**Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum: Purposes, Possibilities, and Challenges.**

By Yatta Kanu. University of Toronto Press, 2011. xiii + 244 pp. Tables, discussion questions, references/recommended reading, index. \$60.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

This is an excellent book about an issue of importance for the future of cities in the Canadian prairies and Great Plains. It examines the difficult task of integrating Aboriginal cultural knowledge into school curricula. In the first chapter Yatta Kanu explains why this matters. In subsequent chapters she draws upon field research over the period 2003–2007 with 84 Aboriginal students and 18 teachers in six low-income, inner-city schools in a Canadian prairie city with a large Aboriginal population. She brings together the results of an integrated series of research studies, each building on the one before, and the existing academic literature, and she draws upon the voices of Aboriginal students and their teachers.

The research is conducted in a respectful and collaborative fashion, and makes good use of comparisons between classrooms in which attempts were made to integrate Aboriginal curriculum content and instructional and assessment methods, and otherwise similar classrooms in which this was not the case. The book is a fine example of how to conduct qualitative educational research—a model in this respect, in my view.

Kanu's findings are consistent with the well-established cultural discontinuity theory. More than that, however, she not only is able, by the use of her research methodology, to show the difficulties and the virtues of integrating Aboriginal cultural content and perspectives and instructional and assessment methods into the school curriculum; she also shows the limits of this cultural approach. Challenges abound: the preparation of teachers; the availability of resources; administrators' lukewarm support; and especially the problems associated with the socioeconomic conditions of so many Aboriginal students—i.e., poverty and related conditions—and their well-known, adverse impact on educational outcomes.

The author provides many insights into the kinds of classroom strategies that can improve educational outcomes for low-income, Aboriginal students—strategies that are sensitive to and respectful of cultural differences. But at the same time she argues, as so many others before her have done, that socioeconomic variables—poverty and related conditions—are likely to impede and may outweigh any such innovations.

This book is essential reading for those interested in education as a vehicle for social change in conditions of racialized poverty. **Jim Silver**, *Director of Urban and Inner-City Studies, University of Winnipeg*.