

restore relationships of *k'í* (relationships) that acknowledge the natural world as necessary and integral to living Sa'áh Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhó remains the project of a critical Diné education.

Earth Memory Compass adds to the much-researched topic of Indian education and is significant because it is the first Diné-published monograph that offers a Diné-based model. However, predictably, it follows an established trajectory in histories of Indian education, where the language of assimilation and the efforts of well-intentioned white settlers to bring American education to Indigenous children obfuscates the reality of Indian education as a project of ethnic cleansing, as the Dakota historian Waziyatawin called Indian education under the US settler state. To her credit, however, although King fails to name the violence that undergirds the ongoing settler project to “kill Indians,” the stories she collects and offers are testaments to Indigenous peoples’ and the Diné’s fierce determination to remain Indigenous and Diné. Diné education exists in the chasms and ruptures of the established system, and they look to elders, traditionalists, and community organizers for the Earth Memory Compass.

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Michelle A. Purdy. *Transforming the Elite: Black Students and the Desegregation of Private Schools*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. 258 pp.

The history of education field has largely focused on the history of formal schools, though some have advocated a much broader conception of education. Within the larger formal school focus, much attention, especially in K–12 education, has been given to public schools. Michelle Purdy’s *Transforming the Elite* has effectively redirected the field’s attention on schools outside the public domain, while also demonstrating how these schools faced similar trends since the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision. In *Transforming the Elite*, Purdy argues that the public and private lines became blurred as the federal government used the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, along with taxation

policies, to force private institutions to end discrimination. This led to the desegregation of what Purdy calls *independent schools*. The use of the term *independent* distinguished these elite institutions from the makeshift, segregated private academies that developed in the South to curtail desegregation. Much of the book is centered on Atlanta's Westminster School, started in 1951 by William Pressly. Purdy meticulously explores how Pressly guided his school from a white-only institution to desegregation and led organizations like the National Council of Independent Schools (NCIS) and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). Independent schools, particularly in the South, were resistant to enrolling blacks, but the national political shifts with *Brown v. Board*, *Griffin v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*, and *Green v. Kennedy* lessened private schools' leverage if they wanted to maintain their tax-exempt status. Pressly keenly observed the shifting political landscape and worked to change the admission policies of Westminster and other schools.

Along with successfully asserting that the lines between public and private were blurred, Purdy contends that the students who desegregated independent schools bravely navigated the formerly white spaces. Through oral history interviews, Purdy chronicles the experiences of the first black students to attend Westminster. These stories are wonderfully captured and analyzed, and provide a fascinating read. Purdy joins other desegregation scholars who explore the experiences of students who desegregated schools. She combines coverage of the political inertia that led to desegregation and the ways in which students courageously navigated through the personal discrimination and isolation they faced. Their stories were my favorite part of the book.

The uniqueness of *Transforming the Elite* arises from the compelling and effective way it brings together numerous literatures. Purdy manages to combine the history of private elite schools with southern and Atlanta history as well as desegregation policy and implementation. Scholars have written extensively about desegregation but mostly in the public domain. Elite schools in the North, private academies in the South, and Catholic schools have been previously explored in the literature. Purdy situates these disparate histories within the history of education in unique and exciting ways. With the combination of these histories, she demonstrates how elite private schools were just as susceptible to federal intervention as public institutions. This point is well explored and one of the book's strengths.

Methodologically, Purdy utilizes a variety of archives, along with Pressly's writings, to uncover the history of Westminster and the NCIS. Newspapers, bulletins, and reports also documented how students and independent school officials thought about racial issues of

the day. Purdy explores Westminster's white students' ideologies through discussions of racial issues in their school newspapers. The students' writings capture the atmosphere of Westminster before black students arrived. Articles from independent school officials also detail the deficit views of black students typical in the 1960s. This is an important way to acknowledge the voices of people during the era and to help readers further comprehend how blacks were viewed. Purdy's use of oral history details how black students formed communities during desegregation and how they persevered despite facing bullying and harassment. The students utilized each other, black school staff, family, church, communities, and organizations to buffer their difficult journeys. It became clear from the stories of the first graduates that their own fortitude also helped them succeed.

The book is organized chronologically. The first chapter explores how Westminster began, while contextualizing the school within the histories of the region, education, and independent schools. Chapter two focuses on the city of Atlanta, the state of Georgia, and how the school developed with the values of the Old South. The next chapter captures how the public and private lines became distorted and Westminster admissions policies changed. The final two chapters focus on student experiences and the ways the NAIS leadership spoke out against segregation, while also addressing the needs of black students within independent schools. This book is an extensive history, but at times it is too extensive. In the first chapter, there seems little need to discuss W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington or to survey black educational history. However, this is minor in comparison to the book's overall contribution to the field.

I believe Purdy's *Transforming the Elite* is essential to the history of American education, southern education, private schools, and desegregation history. Purdy argues that the public and private lines were blurred. I believe that she obscured the separation between numerous subfields to effectively center our attention on the desegregation of elite independent schools. This book is a significant contribution to the history of education.

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