

**Decolonizing Discipline: Children, Corporal Punishment, Christian Theologies, and Reconciliation.** Edited by Valerie E. Michaelson and Joan E. Durrant. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2020. 280 pages. \$70.00 hardcover; \$31.95 paper; \$25.00 ebook.

In *Decolonizing Discipline: Children, Corporal Punishment, Christian Theologies, and Reconciliation*, editors Valerie E. Michaelson and Joan E. Durrant skillfully sew together the chapters that form this text. Their proficient interlinking of disparate topics leaves the reader with a strong understanding of the harm corporal punishment has on Indigenous children. Michaelson, with a background in child health and Christian theology, and Durrant, a developmental psychologist who has studied corporal punishment and positive discipline, are well paired to tie together the multiple concepts of children, corporal punishment, Christian theologies, and reconciliation.

Birthered from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Call to Action 6, which calls upon the Canadian Government to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code justifying corporal punishment of children, *Decolonizing Discipline* creates important discourse surrounding physical punishment and challenges these violent practices that have for too long been considered normal, especially as they relate to the treatment of Indigenous children. Through the work of this collection, the editors provide an act of reconciliation by examining how Christianity has been used to justify violence against Indigenous children through church- and government-run residential schools, and what it would look like to "decolonize" discipline. Michaelson and Durrant brilliantly shed light on "the forces that have contributed to the colonization of discipline" (xiii), with the Western European interpretation of Christian texts at the forefront, and give space for the contributing authors to educate readers on the history of corporal punishment, Christian theoretical views, traditional Indigenous lifeways, and how to move toward reconciliation.

This book takes a close look at corporal punishment, the differences between discipline and punishment, and what each looks like from a Christian theological standpoint. William J. Webb's *Corporal Punishment in the Bible: A Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic for Troubling Texts* (2011), another work in this genre, also dissects these concepts and aligns with the editors' positions that corporal punishment in the Bible must be viewed and interpreted through the lens of the modern cultural climate.

Several contributors to this volume present alternatives to and tangible tools for nonphysical discipline. They also offer resources specific to Christian leaders and their communities that support efforts to end corporal punishment—among them are a sample sermon about the matter of corporal punishment and examples of how to take action in the local church and community to protect children and facilitate healthy development.

Also of particular importance is the book's discussion of traditional Indigenous lifeways and beliefs. Traditionally, Indigenous children were highly valued and considered sacred as the future of the tribe. To Indigenous people, the term "discipline" referred to teaching youth how to make better choices. The focus was on education. Tribal elders used teachings to empower youth and show them how to be responsible people. With the rise of residential schools and an increased effort to colonize and assimilate Indigenous children, the Indigenous lifeway of teaching as discipline was lost. Instead, the focus shifted to physical punishment. As contributing author Martin Brokenleg observes, "Punishment has never worked; it is based on the erroneous thought that if I hurt you badly enough you will want to do things my way" (133). If true decolonization is to take place, teaching as a way of discipline and other traditional lifeway practices must be rebuilt and supported, by Indigenous people and colonizers alike.

In an effort to move toward reconciliation, the authors offer a call to action for society to move beyond viewing corporal punishment as "that's just the way things are" (217) and take action to repeal Section 43 of the Canadian Government's Criminal Code. Indigenous people who have experienced corporal punishment are also called to move from seeing themselves as victims to survivors. Taking back the narrative of their experiences is where true reconciliation occurs.

This book would be of particular relevance to those interested in Christianity or Native American studies, as this book explores the intersection of these institutions and identities. This text would also serve someone new to the important concept of decolonization, especially as it relates to the discipline of Indigenous youth. *Decolonizing Discipline* provides a thorough and well-rounded discussion of corporal punishment and what it truly means to decolonize discipline. As more is discovered about residential schools and the impact corporal punishment has had on Indigenous children, other avenues for future research may emerge.

As a mother of two Chickasaw children, this book informed not only my professional endeavor to explore the inequality Indigenous people face but also my personal journey to decolonize practices within my own family. Although reading the personal experiences shared by survivors who contributed to this book was difficult at times, that discomfort can be a powerful motivator to readers, encouraging civil discourse and positive change.

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