



Community Self-Determination: American Indian Education in Chicago, 1952-2006 (SUNY series, Tribal Worlds: Critical Studies in American Indian Nation Building)

John J. Laukaitis

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Examines the educational programs American Indians developed to preserve their cultural and ethnic identity, improve their livelihood, and serve the needs of their youth in Chicago.

After World War II, American Indians began relocating to urban areas in large numbers, in search of employment. Partly influenced by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, this migration from rural reservations to metropolitan centers presented both challenges and opportunities. This history examines the educational programs American Indians developed in Chicago and gives particular attention to how the American Indian community chose its own distinct path within and outside of the larger American Indian self-determination movement. In what John J. Laukaitis terms community self-determination, American Indians in Chicago demonstrated considerable agency as they developed their own programs and worked within already existent institutions. The community-based initiatives included youth programs at the American Indian Center and St. Augustine's Center for American Indians, the Native American Committee's Adult Learning Center, Little Big Horn High School, O-Wai-Ya-Wa Elementary School, Native American Educational Services College, and the Institute for Native American Development at Truman College. *Community Self-Determination* presents the first major examination of these initiatives and programs and provides an understanding of how education functioned as a form of activism for Chicago's American Indian community.

"John Laukaitis has produced an important book on the role of education in the Chicago American Indian community. His meticulous research in a wide array of manuscript collections and extensive oral interviews clearly convey to readers that he knows the city, knows the places, and knows the people." — Daniel M. Cobb, author of *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty*

John J. Laukaitis is Assistant Professor of Education at North Park University.

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