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CULTURAL MAINTENANCE

The ability of any societal group to safe guard its survival is to ensure control over the education system for it is here that "transmission of culture and world view to succeeding generations" (Barman, Herbert&McCaskill 1986:1) is effected.

In Australia, where formal education is dominated by the ideals of the dominant culture, schools have an urgent responsibility to consider what they can do to contribute to the maintenance of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures which they serve.

By understanding and appreciating the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students who attend their school, teachers will be able to start with the known, and make learning more culturally relevant for their students. This understanding is equally relevant in urban and non isolated rural communities as it is in the country's more isolated areas.

Including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, through consultation, in school decisions and generally in school activities, will increase the schools understanding of these cultures and bring their influence directly into the classroom.

Barman, J., Hebert, Y.,and McCaskill, D. (Eds)
1986 Indian Education In Canada:
Volume 1: The Legacy.
University of Columbia Press.

