

Beyond the Classroom: "Children in Traditional Societies Learn with Little or No Parental Involvement", Expert Says

Cornelius N. Grove, Ed.D., an authority on children's learning across cultures, shares his profound insights in new book.

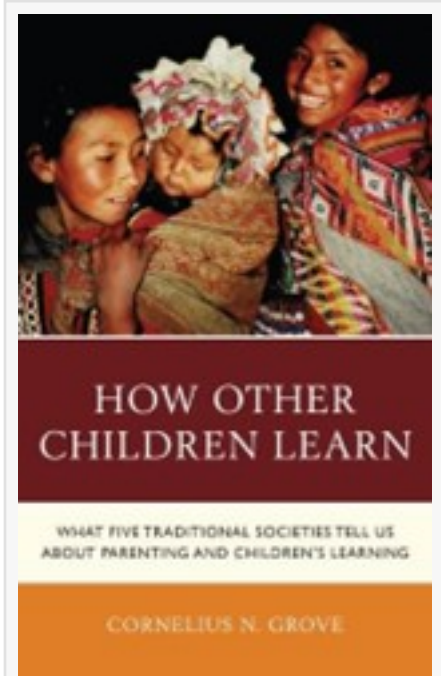
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, March 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- What parent doesn't want their children to willingly pitch in and complete routine household chores? In his eye-opening new book, [How Other Children Learn](#): What Five Traditional Societies Tell Us about Parenting and Children's Learning, Cornelius N. Grove, Ed.D., explores five "traditional" societies where children do just that on their way to becoming mature adults. Yet they spend little or no time in classrooms. How do those children learn? How do their parents parent?

Dr. Grove defines traditional societies as those unaffected by industrialization and urbanization and untouched by modern values. They still can be found in small villages and camps where people engage daily with their natural surroundings (including raising or finding their daily food) and have little or no experience of classroom instruction.

Why seek fresh insights from these societies?

"One reason is that doing so reveals that, in traditional societies, children very largely learn on their own how to become family- and community-minded adults," Dr. Grove said. "A second reason is because it's insightful for modern parents to find out how traditional parents deal with their children. You'll be astounded by how uninvolved they are!"

Anchored in the published research of anthropologists of childhood, *How Other Children Learn* takes a close look at the following five societies: the Aka hunter-gatherers of Africa, the Quechua of highland Peru, the Navajo of the U.S. Southwest, the village Arabs of the Levant and the Hindu villagers of India. Each society has its own chapter, which overviews that society's background and context, then probes adults' mindsets and strategies regarding childhood learning and



Classroom learning is indispensable in a modern society. But in pre-modern societies, children learn to be contributing family and community members via self-guided exploration, observation and participation.

socialization for adulthood.

The book concludes with two summary chapters that draw broadly on anthropologists' findings about dozens of traditional societies and offer examples from the five societies featured in the book. The first summary chapter reveals how children in traditional societies learn to willingly carry out family responsibilities and suggests how American parents can attain similar outcomes. The second contrasts our middle-class patterns of child-rearing and school-attending with traditional societies' ways of ensuring that their youngsters have opportunities to learn and develop into mature, responsible adults.

"Like their traditional peers, our children have a natural capacity to learn on their own and with other children by freely exploring, imitating adults and engaging in all sorts of activities serendipitously occurring in their community," Dr. Grove added. "How do our children's opportunities to freely explore and engage with others compare with those of traditional children? With school, extracurriculars and screen time, ours have very few."



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About the Author

After attaining a Master of Arts in Teaching at Johns Hopkins University, Cornelius Grove taught high school history, worked in educational publishing, traveled extensively in Europe and Africa, and completed a doctorate in education (Ed.D.) at Columbia University. He then served for 11 years as director of research for AFS, the student exchange organization, simultaneously holding adjunct teaching posts at Columbia and New School Universities. In 1986, he taught at Beijing Foreign Studies

University, after which he co-authored *Encountering the Chinese: A Modern Country, An Ancient Culture* (3rd Ed., 2010). During the 2000s, Dr. Grove became curious about the belief of many Americans that inborn ability is the main determinant of a child's academic performance. This led to *The Aptitude Myth: How an Ancient Belief Came to Undermine Children's Learning Today* (2013). He then figured out why East Asian students always outperform U.S. students on international comparative tests and wrote two books on his findings. The first addresses

differences in parenting: The Drive to Learn: What the East Asian Experience Tells Us about RAISING Students Who Excel (2017). The second explores contrasting approaches to teaching in pre- and primary schools: A Mirror for Americans: What the East Asian Experience Tells Us about TEACHING Students Who Excel (2020).

A charter fellow of the International Academy of Intercultural Research, Dr. Grove wrote lengthy entries on “pedagogy across cultures” for two encyclopedias. He retired in 2020 after 31 years as managing partner of Grovewell LLC, a global business consultancy. He and his wife have three sons. For more details, visit www.howotherchildrenlearn.info or connect with the author at www.Linkedin.com/in/cngrove-author/.

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