

Brenda J. Child, PhD Biography

Brenda J. Child is Northrop Professor and Chair of the Department of American Studies and former Chair of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota. She received her PhD in History at the University of Iowa. Her first book, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (University of Nebraska, 1998), won the North American Indian Prose Award. Child's newest books are *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community* (Penguin, 2012) and *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education* (with Brian Klopotek, SAR Press, 2014). A recent book, *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014) combines a family memoir of her grandparents' working lives, with a broader history of others of their generation. It won the National American Indian Book Award from Arizona State University, the Best Book in Midwestern History from the Midwestern History Association, and an Award of Merit from the American Association of State and Local History.

Child was a trustee (2013-2018) of the National Museum of the American Indian-Smithsonian. She served on the Repatriation Committee, the Executive Committee, and chaired the Scholarship and Collections Committee. She served five terms as a trustee of the Minnesota Historical Society. She was an original consultant to the exhibit, "Remembering Our Indian School Days" at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona and co-author of the book that accompanied it, *Away From Home* (Heard, 2000). The exhibit increased attendance at the Heard Museum, and she came back to be part of a team to update the exhibit with a grant from the NEH. It opened in February 2019.

In other public engagement efforts, Child's children's book *Bowwow Powwow*, a bilingual book for ages 4-7, was named by the Association for Library Service to Children as a Notable Book and a "best of the best in children's books." It was a Notable Book by American Indians in Children's Literature and a Blue Ribbon Book at the Minnesota State Fair. Currently, it is a finalist for Star of the North Picture Book Award in Minnesota. It sold out its first printing of 6,000 copies within six months of publication by the Minnesota Historical Society Press in May 2018.

At the University of Minnesota, she was a recipient of the President's Award for Outstanding Community Service and is co-founder of a major digital humanities project, the *Ojibwe People's Dictionary* (ojibwe.lib.umn.edu), which launched as a website in 2012. Recently, she led a collaboration between UM students and the Mille Lacs Ojibwe community on an exhibit, *Ziibaaska' iganagooday: The Jingle Dress at 100*, which opened April 3, 2019. It runs through October 2020 at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum in Onamia, Minnesota.

Child is writing a new book, *The Marriage Blanket: Citizenship, Violence, and American Indian Families in the Reservation Era*. She is Past-President of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (President, 2017-18). Child was born on the Red Lake Ojibwe Reservation in northern Minnesota where she is a citizen and member of a committee writing a new constitution for the nation of 12,000. She resides with her family in Saint Paul and Bemidji, Minnesota.