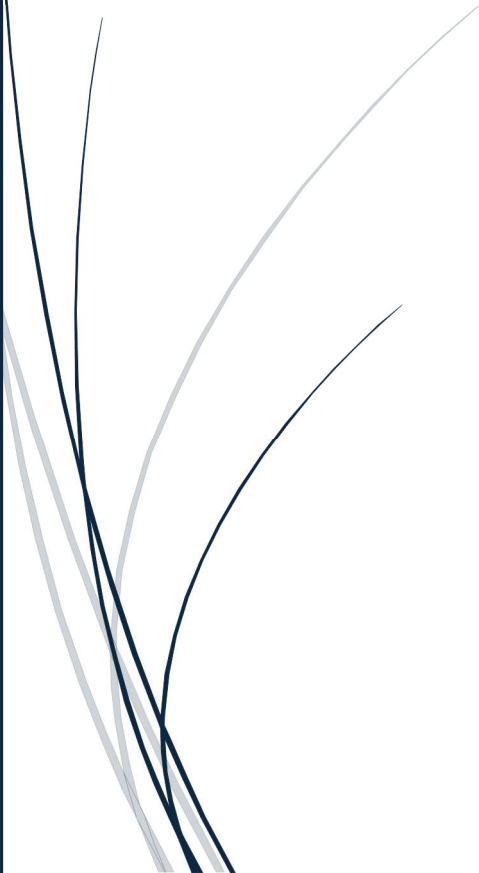




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The Remembrance Papers, Volume VII

The Sacred Role of the Child:
Inheritors of Memory, Architects of
the Future



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The Sacred Role of the Child: Inheritors of Memory, Architects of the Future

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Abstract

Children are not born empty.

They arrive carrying memory—ancestral frequencies encoded in their names, their dreams, and their ways of seeing. These are not just biological imprints, but metaphysical signatures. A child's laughter echoes with rhythms from distant shores, and their curiosity often reveals truths long buried by time.

This volume of *The Remembrance Papers* honors the sacred role of the child as both **recipient and transmitter** of cultural memory. In spiritual traditions across Black and Indigenous lineages, children were never simply to be taught—they were also to be listened to. Their presence is prophetic, their vision unfettered by the distortions adults have normalized.

In the long arc of Black and Indigenous survival, **children were never just protected—they were prepared.** They were taught to listen between words, to carry names others dared not speak, and to embody prayers whispered across generations. They became memory banks, code carriers, and guardians of symbols no longer safe to keep in the open.

They were the ones who would **remember what adults could no longer speak aloud**—and now, in this age of awakening, they are the ones dreaming what comes next. In their drawings, their questions, their anger and insight—we see the sacred impulse of a future remembered.

This paper reframes the child as a **sovereign being, a living archive**, and the sacred embodiment of our collective potential. To protect the child is not just a moral duty—it is a metaphysical imperative. To center the child is to re-center the soul of the people.

Introduction: More Than a Generation

Too often, children are spoken of as the "next generation"—a placeholder for the future, passive and incomplete. But within Afro-Indigenous cosmologies, the child is already whole. They are not just becoming—they are *returning*.

They are the bridge between ancestors and the yet-to-be. Their dreams carry the scent of forgotten homelands. Their gestures repeat dances performed before written time. To witness a child's intuition is to witness a whisper from the ancestors in real time.

They come with memory, purpose, and a sacred charge. Each child is a messenger encoded with direction. Their purpose may be veiled by modern schooling or cultural amnesia, but it remains intact—waiting for recognition, not invention.

In the face of forced removal, renaming, and reprogramming, **Black and Native communities turned inward—and entrusted their children with everything they could no longer risk writing or speaking aloud.** The stories became lullabies. The resistance became ritual. And the memory? That lived on in the heartbeat of the child.

To remember the child is to remember the lineage.

To see them clearly is to see not only what was—but what *must be protected*.

Section I: The Erasure and Weaponization of Childhood

Colonial systems knew the power of the child—and targeted it directly. Not just as a future adult to control, but as a **living soul-cord** to the ancestral realm. To sever the child from their lineage was to attempt a permanent rupture in the soul of a people.

• Boarding Schools:

Native children were not merely taken from families—they were taken from cosmologies. Their hair, often regarded as antennae of spiritual sensitivity, was shorn in acts of metaphysical disarmament. Ceremonial practices, sacred languages, and songs that connected them to sky, land, and ancestors were forcibly stripped, leaving not just trauma but an engineered emptiness—an orphaning of the soul. These institutions weren't schools; they were **rituals of forgetting**.

• Slavery and Labor:

Black children were born into systems that not only denied them play and education, but deliberately withheld the right to form **spiritual identity**. Before they could speak their names, they were given numbers. Before they could dream, they were assigned roles. These children were branded not just physically, but energetically—marked with an imposed frequency of subjugation that sought to override the divine signature they came in with. What was stolen was not only innocence, but **sovereign embodiment**.

• Family Separation:

From the plantation auction block to the modern-day foster system, separation has been a calculated weapon. By removing children from cultural continuity, colonizing forces hoped to interrupt the transmission of ancestral instruction. But even in the face of this, grandmothers whispered lineages, mothers encoded songs into the hush of night, and older siblings became **spiritual lifelines**.

The trauma was profound, but so too was the resistance—unseen, quiet, and persistent.

This was not accidental. The colonizer understood:

To break a people, you must break their children.

But even in this understanding, there was miscalculation. Because the child is not only fragile—they are *eternal*. Their spirits recoil, remember, and rebuild. They return across generations to reclaim what was lost.

The child, once targeted for erasure, is now the vessel of return.
And in their reawakening, **the empire trembles**.

Section II: The Child as Living Archive

In response to cultural erasure, the child became a sacred vessel—an archive in motion, coded with memory not bound to paper, but to presence. They did not merely remember—they *became* remembrance.

• Oral Lineage:

Elders whispered through time by embedding sacred names, origin stories, and cosmological maps into the minds of the young. These were not bedtime tales—they were encoded transmissions, encrypted in metaphor, rhythm, and resonance. A lullaby might carry the story of a migration, a proverb might conceal the lesson of a lost city. The child, receptive and intuitive, memorized what adults dared not record.

• Symbolic Teaching:

Games, dances, and crafts were not only entertainment—they were mnemonic systems of ancestral education. Each movement, bead, or song step functioned like a sigil, carrying embedded truths across time. Children who jumped rope in rhythm were tuning to frequencies of survival. Through art and play, they absorbed resistance in disguise—a curriculum hidden in plain sight. **The act of play itself is an interaction with Spirit**—a sacred rehearsal of cosmic order. In laughter, mimicry, and movement, children accessed dimensions beyond the spoken, re-enacting rituals, retelling cosmologies, and reweaving what was torn. Play was not a break from learning—it *was* the language of memory encoded in joy.

• Name as Ceremony:

Names were not chosen—they were revealed. Many children received names during dreams, births aligned with moon cycles, or signs observed by the elders. These names held maps: to tribal identity, blood memory, spiritual destiny, or cosmic origin. A true name was both *a portal* and *a protection*, anchoring the child to the sacred web that colonization sought to sever.

Even when families were silenced by violence or law, the children *carried the signal*. In their breath, laughter, and questions—they remembered. And through them, the language of the ancestors endured.

Section III: The Child in Prophecy and Resistance

Children were not only memory holders—they were **messengers of return**, born with spiritual contracts to disrupt forgetting and rekindle knowing. Their power lies in what adults dismiss as wonder—and what the ancestors recognize as encoded light.

• Prophetic Children:

Across many Indigenous traditions, children who spoke of other lives or saw beyond the veil were not corrected—they were honored. Known as *returned ones* or *seer children*, they were often protected from certain foods, exposed to sacred places, or apprenticed to spiritual elders.

Their dreams were recorded as omens. These children bore frequencies that helped entire villages realign.

• **Spiritual Continuum:**

In Yoruba and other African cosmologies, children are not new souls—they are ancient spirits walking again. Sometimes, a grandparent returns as a child, bearing wisdom veiled in giggles and riddles. The child is not separate from the ancestor—the child *is* the ancestor, wrapped in time. In their eyes, one can glimpse eternity—and in their feet, the footsteps of the next revolution.

• **Youth Movements:**

From enslaved youth secretly learning to read, to children guiding the elders through swamps and safe houses, the young have always borne the torch of freedom. The Civil Rights era was ignited by youth—carrying signs, songs, and strategy. And today, in chants, walkouts, and social media storms, the lineage continues. Children are not waiting for adulthood to change the world—they are *remembering how they already have*.

The child is not a placeholder. The child is *a prophecy fulfilled*—a divine echo from before time, come again to restore the sacred.

Conclusion: The Return of the Golden Children¹

The new children are not here to begin—they are here to continue. They carry what was buried, what was whispered, what was once encoded in the bones of their elders. What was hidden in the hearts of grandmothers now pulses in the dreams and drawings of their grandchildren.

To honor the sacred role of the child is to:

- Speak to them as sovereign spirits
- Teach them as walking archives of bloodline and light
- Protect them as embodied prophecies
- Listen to them as echoes of who we were—and glimpses of who we may yet become

¹ The term *Golden Children* can be traced to multiple spiritual and Indigenous traditions. In Hopi prophecy, for example, a time would come when the “children of the rainbow” would return to restore balance to the Earth—these are said to be souls who remember their cosmic origins and spiritual missions. Contemporary metaphysical literature also refers to *Indigo*, *Crystal*, and *Rainbow* children—terms popularized by authors like Nancy Ann Tappe and Doreen Virtue—which describe children born with heightened intuition, spiritual awareness, and a strong sense of purpose. In both frameworks, these children are not anomalies, but the return of an ancient continuum

These children are not the future. **They are the activated now**—radiant, intuitive, and encoded with everything the ancestors dared hope we would remember.

They are not behind us.

They are leading the return.

And we must be brave enough to follow.

Suggested Readings

- bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*
- Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*
- Joy Harjo, *An American Sunrise*
- Tiya Miles, *All That She Carried*
- Deborah Miranda, *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir*
- *The Hopi Survival Kit* by Thomas E. Mails
- *Understanding Your Life Through Color* by Nancy Ann Tappe
- United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII): Reports discussing the role of Indigenous youth in cultural preservation and leadership initiatives.