

Editorial

We are honoured to present this issue of *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*. It is a sentiment we express each time an issue is released but rarely do we unpack what this is exactly. Formerly, the *Aboriginal Child at School*, *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education* has resisted and persisted the tide of state, Federal and global politics which ebb and flow through our work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and Indigenous education more broadly. Appearing sometimes as friend, sometimes as foe, and perhaps many more times as both, such practices, policies and politics present ongoing challenges for us but nevertheless, we are still here searching for and speaking particular kinds of justice into the space for the Indigenous children, their families and communities that matter to us. The current educational climate of neoliberalism — replete as it is with individualism, competition, measurement and accountability — is certainly no different but we are still here — persisting and resisting. We are still on our way to the kind of education we seek for Indigenous peoples at all levels locally, nationally and globally and the papers in this issue represent that search. To quote bell hooks in *Teaching to Transgress*, a much loved scholar in critical pedagogy, ‘the academy is not paradise. But learning is a place where paradise can be created. The classroom, with all its limitation, remains a location of possibility’ (1994, p. 207). The ongoing search to move beyond boundaries characterises much of the work that appears in *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education* and it is this sentiment which we are honoured to present.

In this issue, the first suite of papers by Charles *et al.*, Thorpe and Burgess, Hiha, Locke and Prentice, Brigg, and Collins–Gearing and Smith take us into the field of Indigenous Studies and education in higher education. Together, they provide a theoretical step back into our ways of doing, being and knowing in this context. Charles *et al.* explore the promise collaboration and collectivity holds in negotiating global and interdisciplinary Indigenous Studies. Here, the ways in which allies can be brought together to debate, discuss and develop the discipline of Indigenous Studies takes centre stage. Thorpe and Burgess seek to challenge the ways that university lecturers think about the students who enter into teaching degrees and the assumptions that they may or may not hold in relation to

Indigenous Australian students and knowledges. Drawing on the ideas of Brookfield and Nakata, their work shows that it may not be political resistance and indifference which sits behind a lack of engagement in this particular cultural interface but rather uncertainty and discomfort, and suggests that lecturers too need to ensure that they are engaging in an ongoing process of reflexivity to ‘hunt their assumptions’. Locke and Prentice provide us with a comprehensive review of the ways in which Australian and New Zealand Indigenous musics are re/presented in school and university canons, curricula and classrooms. The lasting message we are left with from this review is the absolute need for criticality reading the kind of colonial reproductions and of Indigenous musics which continue to ‘make their way in’ to such educational spaces.

The paper by Brigg further asks us to consider the ‘ethico-political’ and epistemological challenges bringing Indigenous knowledges into mainstream contexts holds. He urges us to move beyond the binaries of us and them, coloniser and colonised in this endeavour through a relational practice of knowledge making. The significance of Indigenous knowledges as methodology is presented in the story of experience about Kaupapa Maori by Hiha. Hiha takes us on a researcher’s journey through the positive aspects and challenges associated with performing Kaupapa Maori as a Maori researcher. Central to this paper is the possibility that Kaupapa Maori holds for decentring the dominance of Western methodologies and making space for Indigenous methodological voices to be heard and embraced, particularly by Indigenous researchers. Collins–Gearing and Smith pick up on this thread to think about what the term ‘Indigenisation’ means as philosophy and practice, specifically in relation to the discipline of English. Indigenisation as concept and curriculum is often overused and misunderstood, and here the authors share their experience of what it might look like and what it might come to mean when done with respect for Aboriginal knowledge systems at its heart.

The second suite of papers in this volume speak directly into the classroom to address pedagogy. Ruddell *et al.* share their understanding and experiences of what happens when Indigenous knowledge is allowed to co-exist with Western scientific knowledge in relation to the Indigenous Sky Stories programme. The assumption that it

is difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate Indigenous knowledges in the national science curriculum is deconstructed in this paper and the authors suggest connecting with community and community knowledge of astronomy as an insightful and inspiring way to embed Indigenous perspectives. In a similar vein, the paper by Weuffen *et al.* asks teachers to consider the possibility that ‘renaming’ practices have education about and with Indigenous Australian peoples. They recommend that engaging with communities to learn about the histories of places and peoples in relation to the names given is an important way to reconsider the ways we embed Indigenous perspectives in our classrooms and curriculum. The final

paper issue in this paper by Caffery turns our attention to the impact of colonisation on Indigenous languages and explores the ways in which Indigenous linguistic training might be more closely aligned with the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to assist in the long-term maintenance of Indigenous languages.

We hope that you are inspired by the ‘praxis’ of persistence and resistance that are presented in the paper in this issue to continue to work within/against the limitations of our current education contexts to seek the education that matters to Indigenous peoples locally, nationally and globally.

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Editors