

The Invisible Hand of Pedagogy in Australian Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education

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The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC)-funded project 'Exploring Problem-Based Learning Pedagogy as Transformative Education in Indigenous Australian Studies' raised a number of issues that resonated with concerns we have had as professionals engaged in teaching and researching Australian Indigenous studies and Indigenous education. In this discursive paper we air some of the concerns we share which emerge from our collective research and teaching interests. We argue that Australian Indigenous studies and Indigenous education are too frequently collapsed or used interchangeably, and while there is tension between these areas rather than see as a problem we chose to interrogate this and argue for the potential for fruitful intellectual collaboration. This article problematises pedagogy and finds that sustained effort needs to be made to understand how pedagogical approaches to Australian Indigenous studies and Indigenous education are guiding and shaping each cognate area.

■ **Keywords:** Indigenous studies, Indigenous education, pedagogy history

Introduction: A Brief History of the Emergence of the Australian University and the Implications for Australian Indigenous Studies

Australia as a British colony transported the institutions and intellectual constructs of the British homeland. Universities were an early and important part of this process, though they were from the beginning intended for the benefit of the white descendants of Britons. Eighty years after Britain claimed discovery of Australia, the first university was established as an important 'civilising agent'. Although great interest was shown in the customs and habits of Aboriginal people, as evidenced by the plethora of late 18th and 19th century ethnographic texts, this pursuit tended to be somewhat esoteric and rarely appeared in the early Australian universities (see Russell, 2001). Furthermore, the existence of extensive knowledge held by Aboriginal peoples about this land and its people was all but invisible to the British colonists. Australia was occupied and established as an outpost of the British Empire and as such, its new white inhabitants needed to be civilised in the European post-enlightenment fashion. It is critical to understand the justifications and foundations of this 'emergence' in discussion about the place of Australian Indigenous studies in Australian universities.

The assertion of legitimacy underpinning Australian universities arguably reaches back into the 'branch office' status of the Australian system and places a newer, locally derived cognate area in a complex position. By cognate area, we mean an area of specific research and teaching focus, in this case Indigenous Australia. Methods, data and analytical tools can vary widely, though the focus is on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, politics, culture, sociology, languages and so on. The time frame can be deeply historical (tens of thousands of years for archaeologists) or present and contemporary (for political or sociological research), or indeed anything in between. While the subject can range widely, it is also explicitly focused on Indigenous Australia. The area flourishes in the interdisciplinary spaces, and a plethora of conferences and symposia have emerged where historians find connections with anthropologists, archaeologists and others. In the case of undergraduate university, students they might take a wide array of subjects — for example, history, cultural studies, legal studies — and still have a coherent stream within their studies.

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While historically Australia has experienced a contemporaneous development of its universities with its Asian neighbours under European colonial rule, it claims a cultural lineage that is as old as the university in Britain. The secular British university tradition developed, according to Ashby (1967), from a concept of Von Humboldt's of scholarly training for the aristocracy, in the early 1800s. It was a significant evolution of the Aristotelian Lyceum that had been maintained through the middle ages. The new university undertook to train its students to cultivate intellectual skills and vocations being taught elsewhere. The British university, like its older European counterpart, was to produce gentlemen who would be civilised, even if they could no longer feed themselves. Significant investment was made in the early Australian universities and they were, and continue to be, ensured of access to the knowledge that is the product of British universities. British academics were encouraged to bring their knowledge to Australia to assist with the development of the new universities. As a Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) country profile points out: 'Australian education was originally patterned on the British models and this influence is still evident' (DEET, 1991, p. 2).

The first Australian university was the University of Sydney, founded in 1850 by the government of New South Wales. While still separate colonies under British rule, the government of the Victorian colony established the University of Melbourne in 1853. The establishment of a university in a city that was not yet even 20 years old was indeed remarkable. In 1874, the government of South Australia founded the University of Adelaide and in 1890 the government of Tasmania established the University of Tasmania. At federation, in 1901, the control of these universities remained with the individual states and the universities themselves were constituted under their own individual Acts (DEET, 1991). The Australian university system was part of an empire-wide commonwealth that drew on and contributed to their collective knowledge base. By the 1950s there was a university in each of the six states and a research university had been established in the nation's capital, Canberra. The historical and philosophical foundations of the university in Australia saw universities develop through a rapid maturation process in a short 100 years. Important for our discussion, the British pedagogical approach to teaching and learning at university was also reproduced in Australia even as the global knowledge base was expanding under the colonial project. As categories of knowledge expanded and intellectual boundaries shifted and reconfigured, the colonial universities trod the path of imitation of the universities of old as the best way to ensure that they were considered to be proper universities.

University curriculum materials with a focus on Aboriginal culture and knowledge were a feature of anthropology departments in the period after the 1890s. History texts rarely included Aboriginal content beyond an intro-

ductory chapter. Much of the material that was taught even into the 1960s was regarded as 'containing extraordinary misconceptions in proof of fanciful notions concerning the origin, history and character' of Aboriginal culture and lifeways (Stanner, 1963, pp. xiv–xv). The emergence of Australian Indigenous studies as a discrete cognate area was significantly shaped at a meeting chaired by W.E.H. Stanner on 15 May 1961 (Sheils, 1963, p. 1). This was the foundation conference of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS, later the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, AIATSIS). This newly established, federally funded institute was clearly and centrally operating within an assimilationist framework, underpinned by a concern for salvaging what was feared to be disappearing of Aboriginal culture. As Stanner said, its charter was that: 'Everyone should be invited who had authoritative knowledge of any relevant field of research; all appropriate academic disciplines should be represented; the sole concern should be with problems of fundamental study; and the approach should be truly national' (Stanner, p. xii). Significantly, no Aboriginal person was involved, and for the first years Indigenous people and culture were only ever subjects and not active agents in the institute. The first Aboriginal person to be part of the Institute was admitted in 1970 (AIATSIS, 2004). Its early brief was not focused on finding solutions to contemporary problems.

The AIAS's focus on historical circumstances, at what Colin Tatz saw as the neglect of the contemporary, urged him to set up the Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs (CRAA) at Monash University in December 1964. This was one of the earliest Aboriginal studies units at an Australian university and it continues today as the Monash Indigenous Centre. From these modest beginnings every university in the country followed and an Aboriginal studies (later Indigenous studies) unit became a standard feature of a liberal education. Some units operated as research and teaching centres, some had an Aboriginal students' support function and many underwent various iterations where the focus shifted from academic to support and so on. Generally the academic programs have links with, but sit apart, from historical studies, anthropology archaeology and other allied disciplines. For the most part, Australian Indigenous studies in the Australian university sector functions as a cognate area that is both interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary in content, but only in the recent past has there been discussion emerge about how to teach Indigenous content, who should teach it and for what purpose is it being taught.

Indigenous Education and Australian Indigenous Studies: A Note on Confusion Between Method and Content

As discussed above, Australian Indigenous studies has emerged as a cognate area in Australian universities,

drawing on the specialist expertise about Indigenous aspects of large and historically long established fields of research, predominantly in the Arts and Humanities sector, such as archaeology, anthropology, art, politics, and history.

In parallel, the development of university-level professionalisation of, for example, education, nursing, social work, policing, law, and health, has raised questions about how to improve the provision of these services to Indigenous communities. There is clear evidence that there has been a systemic failure in these professions to provide appropriate levels of service to their Indigenous populations and the recognition of this failure, now the focus of government 'Closing the Gap' policy frameworks, drives the professions in their attempts to improve.

Indigenous education, in the training of their students at universities, and in their ongoing professional development programs, have needed to draw on two interrelated, but separate, bodies of knowledge when considering the needs of Indigenous students and clients. The first comes from their professional, technical knowledge base, Indigenous education as method. This is about pedagogical approaches, curriculum developments and assessment issues around the learning needs of Indigenous students and how to teach non-Indigenous students about Indigenous society. The second knowledge base is found in Australian Indigenous studies. Lecturers in Indigenous education ideally draw on the broad canvas of expert knowledge about Indigenous cultures, identities, politics and history in order to ensure that the university training and ongoing development needs of their professionals has the capacity to understand the aspirations and needs of their Indigenous students and clients. They also ideally draw on what is known about Indigenous educational philosophy and methods of teaching and learning also, including Western education traditions, in their pedagogical approach.

There have been many calls both in Australia and other British colonial settler state nations (e.g., Hesch, 1999) for preservice teacher education to include core, mandatory or compulsory units in Indigenous, Native, Maori, and Aboriginal studies. In Australia, Hughes (1988) identified this need. In 1991, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Commonwealth Government, 1991) made the following recommendation that:

All teacher-training courses include courses, which will enable student teachers to understand that Australia has an Aboriginal history and Aboriginal viewpoints on social, cultural and historical matters, and to teach the curriculum, which reflects those matters. (Recommendation 295)

In the mid-1990s, through funding by the The Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) and the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, Rhonda Craven and others (e.g., Craven & Mooney, 2000) developed models, principles, frameworks and materials to support university faculties of education to incorporate

Indigenous Australian Studies into their teacher training programs. Currently, under policy guidance from the *Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations* (DEEWR) and State and Territory Departments of Education and such bodies as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) Taskforce on Indigenous education (various) and Teacher Registration Authorities, it is clear that Australian Indigenous studies, as a discrete cognate area, underpins, enables and facilitates the achievement of many of the goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy.

Three important reviews were conducted through the Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) in 2000 (McRae et al., 2000a, 2000b) and Chapman and Hawley's (2000) performance audit of Indigenous education strategies. All indirectly point to the need for teachers to improve their effectiveness in teaching Indigenous students and teaching about Indigenous society, but there is scant discussion about the pedagogies that should be used to teach this material, the Indigenous education method. We are beginning to achieve a level of consensus of the 'what' from Australian Indigenous studies but we do not yet have a clear understanding of the 'how' of effective pedagogy.

There is opportunity at a number of universities for a student to specialise in Indigenous education (e.g., Australian Catholic University, University of New England, Curtin, Victoria University, Charles Sturt University, University of Southern Queensland, and Deakin University) as part of their general undergraduate teacher education degree. Generally, in places where teachers expect to be teaching in classrooms with significant numbers of Indigenous students, where the university has a collaboration with a local Indigenous community, or where there are specific programs offered to Indigenous people who are training to be teachers, students are now able to incorporate both Australian Indigenous studies and Indigenous education units into their preparation. It would appear that if there is a clear reason for undertaking such studies then the synergies between the two cognate areas are evolving to meet those needs. Even so, we find that a more developed professional dialogue needs to occur between academics teaching in the various disciplines contributing to Australian Indigenous studies and those who specialise in educational philosophy and Indigenous education method within the field of Education in order to tease out some of the confusion about pedagogical approach that currently exists.

In summary, there is significant difference between the terms 'Indigenous education' and 'Australian Indigenous studies', and it is necessary to distinguish the pedagogical approaches, curricula and assessment decision, and contributions of the discrete cognate areas in professionalisation efforts focused on improving service provision in the Indigenous domain.

From Raw Data via Pedagogy into the Classroom

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argue that there is a strong collusion of education systems with the reproduction of certain cultural forms in a society and the positioning of Australian universities within a strongly UK- and US-influenced system meant that the study of Aboriginal society has always been shaped by Western academic knowledge domains. The concept of 'Indigenous knowledge' is keenly debated ontologically, epistemologically, axiologically, and methodologically (Brady, 1992; Ma Rhea & Rigney, 2002) and the freedom of Indigenous knowledge holders to articulate their knowledge in a *sui generis* space within the Australian university system (e.g., Dodson & Strelein, 2001; Langton, 1998; Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Morgan, 2003; Nakata, 1998; Rigney, 1997; Tur & Tur, 2006). The relationship between Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous studies is beyond the scope of this article; however, we note that undoubtedly Indigenous studies is affected and influenced by Indigenous knowledge, even though often that knowledge has been sifted through multiple sources. The debates about Indigenous knowledge, in particular about Indigenous cultural knowledge and its place in the university, impact on pedagogy in the teaching of both Australian Indigenous studies and in Indigenous education. There are considerations of protocol ('who' is allowed to teach) before the 'what' and the 'how' of teaching might be examined, something that is not normally discussed by lecturing staff at university level.

Louis Althusser (1971) argues that power and knowledge maintain a collusive ideology within a nation. We find that Althusser (p. 243) is particularly useful when considering current challenges facing Australian Indigenous studies, located as it is both as a separate department and as a special interest of individual academics located in traditional academic disciplines and Indigenous education, whose role is to teach the next generation of Indigenous students the Western domain knowledge that they will need in order to succeed socially and economically in Australia. Althusser examines whose interests are served in a knowledge domain and links the social knowledge making processes to ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), and he offers four useful lenses by which to consider pedagogy in this field: production, legitimation, reproduction, and dissemination.

Knowledge Production: The Raw Data

In Australian universities, knowledge is produced through a variety of means; for example, empirical research that is subject to peer review and then published. As noted above, in Australian Indigenous studies and in Indigenous education, there are intervening mechanisms that shape the way these cognate areas have been allowed to

develop. Australian Indigenous studies was first envisaged as an interdisciplinary effort. The immediate challenge posed by this approach has been that there is no consensus on the educational philosophy underpinning the pedagogical approaches taken by the majority of scholars in this discipline also having interdisciplinary focus. Historians, anthropologists, linguists, and sociologists employ their various disciplinary approaches to the teaching about Australian Indigenous societies. As Australian Indigenous studies knowledge is brought into professional qualifications such as in education, law, and nursing, the picture becomes even more confused with the imported knowledge being taught using the pedagogical approaches that have been developed in each professional qualification (e.g., Ma Rhea, 2002). The point we make here is that Australian Indigenous knowledge held tacitly by individual Indigenous people about their lifeways and their educational philosophies is becoming increasingly codified and standardised as it passes through the processes of knowledge production at the university level and we argue that the pedagogical approaches that are being used to teach such abstracted, codified knowledge have substantially been taken for granted even as they shape the Indigenous knowledge domains of both cognate areas.

Shaping Raw Data Into Knowledge

The publication process is the mechanism by which new knowledge is tested in the academic field. Other academics, nationally, and increasingly internationally, discuss, test, refute, critically analyse and attempt to improve or disprove claims made. Within the interdisciplinarity envisaged by the founders of Australian Indigenous studies, lies a key tension of the field — achieving legitimacy for the academic body of knowledge. More important, should the authority of legitimation rest within academia or within the Indigenous communities whom are the owners of this knowledge? Ma Rhea and Seddon (2006) argued that as localised processes of knowing become distanced from their local sources and are endorsed, authorised and credentialled as official ways of knowing, they become the official curriculum, the official history, the official way of knowing in that place, that history, that language. They state (Ma Rhea & Seddon, p. 263):

Such authorisation remainders other ways of knowing and delegitimises other knowers. This means that questions about who has the authority to define and authorise official knowledge, the veracity of Indigenous and 'Other' knowledge, and its place in education systems that struggle to address the limits of their monocultural past, have become fundamental issues.

Important for this discussion, university lecturers are, by their role as researchers, deeply implicated in the production and legitimation of Indigenous knowledge.

Knowledge Reproduction

Following Althusser, we suggest the possibility and necessity of looking beyond tangible evidence of production, in this case the research raw data that becomes the knowledge that is located within the broad range of traditional disciplines that contribute to Australian Indigenous studies, towards the role of lecturers and their pedagogy in how this knowledge is then packaged and taught, saying:

... We know that the reproduction of material conditions of production cannot be thought at the level of the firm [in this case the universities and the individuals involved therein] because it does not exist at that level in its real condition. What happens at the level of the firm [university] is an effect, which only gives an idea of the necessity of reproduction, but absolutely fails to allow its conditions and mechanisms to be thought ...

The role of the lecturer in the reproduction of knowledge about Indigenous society cannot be underestimated. In the praxis of research and teaching, the pedagogical decisions made by academics are key to understanding how Australian society, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, comes to understand itself.

Knowledge Dissemination

Lastly, the role of educators working in the Australian education system, in schools and tertiary institutions, in disseminating the knowledge held within the Australian Indigenous studies cognate area is important to consider. As Beresford (2001) argues, schools and tertiary education institutions have duplicated the exclusion both of Indigenous Australians and their life worlds. This historical exclusion meant that Indigenous cultures and languages were not recognised in the curriculum until the 1970s. We argue that this dissemination of knowledge about Indigenous lifeworlds into mainstream schooling has only been possible because of the work that has been undertaken since the early 1960s to disrupt the historical exclusion of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their knowledge from the work of universities. Questions about 'how' this body of work is taught are only now beginning to surface, as this volume attests.

In the following section, through a selective series of illustrative, case studies we explore the ways that some of the differences and tensions have played out in the area of Australian Indigenous studies and Indigenous education; in particular, about the often invisible hand of pedagogy.

Case Studies: Monash University, University of Newcastle, University of New England and Curtin University. Much of the histories of these institutions and centres is derived from their own websites or conversations with staff members and Directors. There is as yet no synthesised version of these histories. As we noted earlier, the development of a specific Australian Aboriginal Research

Centre at Monash University was inspired by the sense that the national centre (AIAS) was committed to studies of 'traditional' Aboriginal culture, based firmly in an anthropological paradigm, with slight interest given to contemporary issues. In 1964, Monash's Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs (CRAA) was established in the Department of Politics in the Faculty of Business and Politics by Colin Tatz. A few years later it shifted into the Department of Anthropology and Sociology in the Faculty of Arts. During this period and leading up to the mid-1970s, the research focus of CRAA was primarily driven by a social justice agenda and covered law, health and race relations. The first full-time Indigenous Director, Professor Colin Bourke, was appointed in 1977, and reflecting Bourke's own interests, CRAA was relocated to the Faculty of Education. During its tenure in the Education faculty, CRAA shifted focus significantly so that teaching became key. Aboriginal Studies was introduced into the Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Education unit was delivered in the Faculty of Education. The overwhelming majority of student who undertook Aboriginal studies (and later Indigenous studies) were non-Indigenous or settler Australians. This remains the case today.

Responding to a strong need for a mechanism to ensure Aboriginal students were academically ready for university studies, the Centre developed a series of bridging programs. Out of this emerged the highly successful Monash Orientation Scheme for Aborigines (MOSA), which ran for over 15 years. As a teaching-only venture, MOSA sat alongside a specialised Aboriginal Research Centre. Several iterations later and the Monash University Council approved a chair of Australian Indigenous studies, with the dual responsibility of student support, research and teaching. Several faculties, most notably Arts, Education, Law and Medicine, created dedicated Indigenous studies undergraduate offerings. Only the Medical faculty, however, incorporated Indigenous materials throughout their curriculum, ensuring all graduates have a familiarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. In 2011, arguing that the Centre had established itself as a major research and teaching centre, members of the Chancellery decided to relocate student support into a separate (though allied) unit. The name was changed to the Monash Indigenous Centre (MIC), and the research and teaching interests increasingly include comparative international studies.

Each of the iterations of the Monash Indigenous Centre has reflected the specific intellectual interests of senior staff. There has been little effort to think through the pedagogical impacts for the cognate area of Indigenous studies, and indeed at times there has been a deliberate (and we would argue necessary) privileging of Indigenous education. While much is known of the historical shifts in focus, less attention has been given to the pedagogical approaches used, why these were chosen, and whether the approach proved successful. What we know is that

approaches such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL) are proving to be effective with students (see Bradley, this volume).

At Newcastle University an Indigenous Australian student support program, called Wollotuka, was established in 1983. In a similar vein to the experience at Monash this support shifted to course design and delivery, first offering a bridging program, then later, undergraduate units, and finally a badged Bachelor of Aboriginal Studies degree. A highly significant and important development saw Newcastle University create the Indigenous Australian Medical Students Program, which graduated its first medical doctors in 1990. Accelerated growth saw Wollotuka become the main provider of Aboriginal studies courses to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study (see Mackinlay and Barney's introduction to this volume for discussion of the use of PBL in one of these courses). Innovatively, a mandatory Aboriginal Education unit was developed for all pre-service teacher education students.

As Wollotuka grew and the cognate area of Indigenous studies gained a foothold, an application was made to the Commonwealth Government (1986) to establish an Indigenous Australian Higher Education Research Centre. This centre is called 'Umulliko', and although the two centres were originally separate, they were merged in the late 1990s. In common with the experience at Monash, Indigenous Support was removed from Wollotuka, which was to focus on academic activities. However, Australian Indigenous studies and Indigenous education continue to be a complex area for universities and these show a remarkable propensity for movement and change. In the late 2000s, all Indigenous matters, the academic program, student support unit, Indigenous employment and Indigenous health were merged into the Wollotuka Institute. The success of Newcastle (it remains one of the largest providers of education to Indigenous students in the country) is, in part the result of their flexible attitude to the relationships between Indigenous studies and Indigenous education; a flexibility that has enabled them to ride the vagaries of political whim. Newcastle University was an early adopter of PBL as a pedagogical approach and arguably this contributed to their success.

At the University of New England (UNE), the cognate area of Indigenous studies is separate from Indigenous education and is housed in the School of Humanities within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, where it sits alongside Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology, Politics, History, and Peace Studies. Most units are delivered as external study or distance education using online technologies. Students may be local, Australian, or international. Until recently, Indigenous studies had its own badged degree program, though now the area provides a major sequence in the Advance Diploma in Arts, Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Graduate Certificate in Arts and double degrees. Higher degrees by research are also

available. The program offers a strong comparative component, emphasising that Indigenous studies are not merely an Australian concern even though the focus is primarily on the Australian experience. In contrast, UNE has a separate Indigenous education unit, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre. The charter of this unit is to support and advise 'internal and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the University of New England' (University of New England, 2012). This is, as the discussion above demonstrates, distinct from the work done in the School of Education about Indigenous education as method.

Our final case study comes from Western Australia. At Curtin University, the Centre for Aboriginal Studies is an Aboriginal-managed academic school. Although there have been programs for Aboriginal people since the mid-1970s, the centre was officially opened in 1983. Today the Centre offers a lively academic program to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The focus is on both the historical elements and contemporary social and political factors affecting Aboriginal people. Importantly, Curtin University's Centre is an integrated teaching, research and support centre. Based in Perth, with a large Aboriginal population, the centre draws its students from all over the country. They offer a major in Aboriginal studies, to students of Aboriginal and settler descent, which emphasises Indigenous cultural diversity and history. Like Monash's centre prior to the separation of the academic program from student support, the two aspects inform each other, and the teaching area is described as 'underpinned by principles of social justice' (Curtin University, 2012).

None of these case studies necessarily offers a perfect solution to the complexities of Indigenous studies and Indigenous education and little is known about the variety of pedagogical decisions being made to support the creation of these programs. It is clearly not a case of 'one size fits all'; however, we argue that the specific complexion of Indigenous studies and Indigenous education at any given institution needs to address the engagement and dialectical tensions of these two areas, heeding the advice that these are different but related areas.

Discussion

Bruno Latour (1993) reminds us that we should not reduce objects of knowledge (human and nonhuman) to politics, things, or discourse. Rather, he argues, where others see singularities he sees composites. These are (after Michel Serres) quasi-objects/quasi-subjects. Indigenous studies cannot be separated from these other areas, for at least in the period post-dating European settlement, Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures are constantly in dialectical engagement with each other. Similarly, all aspects of Indigenous studies — historical, anthropological, archaeological, linguistic, political and so on — influence each other so that the cognate area becomes a prolific hybrid, which is much more than the sum of its parts.

Australian Indigenous studies, as it is experienced and taught in universities, has had a chequered history and complicated future. It has found a home nestled within Education and Arts faculties, only to be shifted to autonomous centres and on occasion back into faculty structures. In part, we argue that this has been a result of a lack of cohesive sense of what Indigenous studies is as an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary research and teaching area, and the complexity of its relationship with Indigenous education as a professional method subject within faculties of Education. In the absence of a common pedagogical approach for teaching, and multiple research foci with different methodologies, methods of data collection, analytical tools, or interpretive frameworks, it can appear to those outside the area that Indigenous studies and Indigenous education are difficult to define. This is confirmed when a review of the Bureau of Statistics, Field of Research Codes (FOR) is undertaken. FOR codes are vitally important in the modern academy as research grants and publications coded to a given area generate funding quantum that feedback into the university coffers. Indigenous studies are split over several FOR codes, which means that, as a cognate area there can be significant research funding consequences.

Indigenous studies specialists, though fiercely interdisciplinary, like areas such as gender studies, peace studies and other, must assign FOR codes to their research as a matter of course. For example, Indigenous studies researchers working in the creative arts field (FOR Division 19) has a specialist category: 190401 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Performing Arts. Anthropology or anthropological writings are confined to Division 16 studies in human society; yet a further complication comes when the work is specifically Australian in focus as one subsection moves from anthropology per se to studies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society. Separating out Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and archaeology from Australian history and archaeology immediately dislocates the area and creates a false dichotomy (Australian and Indigenous as discrete entities), which much of the Indigenous studies research intentionally contradicts.

In the area of Indigenous education, the situation is equally complicated. Indigenous education could conceivably be placed into a subsection of division 13 Education. Depending on the inclination of the researcher, and their choices, work in the area might be categorised as subsection 1303 specialist studies in education that includes 'educational issues related to specific ethnic groups', or subsection 130301 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.

Conclusion

This article comes out of a series of conversations we have been having over the last decade: as one of us situates their intellectual career firmly in the Indigenous studies camp

(LR) and the other in Indigenous education (ZMR). In trying to think through some of the differences that these cognate areas might have and remain sensitive to their connections, we have attempted to find some coherence in the debate. Interestingly though, we conclude that as the tension between these two areas gives rise to fruitful intellectual collaboration, it also represents their greatest threat.

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Zane Ma Rhea has worked with Indigenous communities over the last 30 years in various capacities. She is recognised internationally for expertise in improving the quality of education services to Indigenous people using a rights-based framework, focusing on teacher professional development, organisational change management, and the preservation of Indigenous knowledge in mainstream schooling through meaningful school–community–university partnerships with Indigenous families. She teaches across the Indigenous Education program at Monash University, undertakes research in workforce development, and supervises a number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars undertaking research in the fields of Indigenous Leadership and Education.

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