

## International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies

Volume 9, Number 1, 2016

### Editorial

Guest Editor  
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The higher education sector is experiencing a sustained push toward Indigenising agendas in both institutional and disciplinary contexts. Indigenous scholars make a tremendous contribution personally, culturally and intellectually to support this work, particularly in the educative role that Indigenous staff are inevitably required to undertake with our students, colleagues, faculties and institutions. In each of these contexts, the Indigenous scholar is “the subject of inquiry and mode of instruction” (Hart 2003), which poses an array of challenges that often go unnamed and unnoticed, but remain part of the routine challenges facing Indigenous scholars. While we welcome the impetus for including Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in curricula and institutional efforts to enhance Indigenous cultural competencies, we remain critically cognisant of the burden placed on the Indigenous scholar (or Indigenous unit/school) and the challenges that they encounter in facilitating culturally safe, transformative learning opportunities in environments of resistance, resentment and racism.

This special issue of the International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies explores the accounts of Indigenous educators within Australian higher education institutions to give voice to these challenges and understand how they are navigated in daily practice. The special issue includes an array of personal, reflective accounts from Indigenous and collaborative teaching teams in traversing individual, disciplinary and institutional Indigenising agendas. This special issue was inspired by an Office of Learning and Teaching fellowship that I was awarded, aimed at encouraging greater dialogue among Indigenous educators to support culturally safe teaching and learning environments specifically in the Australian higher educational context. However, it is anticipated that these experiences and accounts contribute to international indigenising discourse and practice.

The first article, by Fredericks and Bargallie, chronicles the authors’ journey while developing and implementing a mandatory cultural competency training programme across a regional university campus. Fredericks and Bargallie argue for the inclusion of critical race and whiteness within institutional, Indigenous cultural competency training and describe how they navigated the expectations of workshop participants who appeared more preoccupied with learning about the cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples.

The second article, by Butler, an Indigenous sociologist, interrogates the capabilities of an indigenised sociology. Butler observes the notable absence of Indigenous sociologists and Indigenous knowledges within curricula and concludes by presenting a case study of her teaching practice in relation to the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledges via guest lecture programming.

The third article, by Sjoberg and McDermott, a collaborative teaching team, outlines a pedagogical approach to addressing the racialised imaginings of Indigenous peoples among health science students attending an Indigenous health course. They explain the development and implementation of a ‘Deconstruction Exercise’; an assessment task that examines and deconstructs students’ misconceptions about Indigenous



peoples and Indigenous health inequalities in order to produce culturally safe health practitioners.

The final article is authored by Rosas-Blanch, a Yidindji and MBararam woman who teaches Indigenous studies to pre-service teachers. Rosas-Blanch draws on Weheliye's "racializing assemblages" in making sense of her place and performativity as an Indigenous educator to support a praxis of Indigenous humanness in the teaching and learning environment.

### **Reference**

Hart, Victor. 2003. "Teaching Black and Teaching Back." *Social Alternatives* 22 3: 12-16.