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Editorial

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Welcome to the inaugural edition of this new scholarly publication, *The International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies*. Instigated and conceptualized by Aileen Moreton Robinson this first issue is the culmination of a substantial endeavour to deliver an Indigenous centred scholarly journal.

We perceive the epistemological boundaries of Critical Indigenous Studies as marked by analyses of contemporary colonising power in its multiple forms in different contexts. This first issue brings together a diverse group of international Indigenous scholars who are politically and intellectually engaged in theorising from their respective standpoints as well as spatial and geographic locations. As such these essays enable dialogue across and within different colonial power contexts addressing epistemological ethical and methodological concerns within the broad field of Indigenous studies. In each essay a connecting theme is the need for intercultural and comparative work and to import Indigenous agency in the writing of history.

In the first essay Steven Salaita argues that the project of Indigenous Studies is inherently comparative. He demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach by exploring the historical, cultural, and political relationships among Native North Americans and Palestinian Arabs. This comparison sheds light on new directions in both scholarly and activist communities. Salaita's proposition resonates with the work of the next author, Jose Antonio Lucero, who critically and comparatively advocates the use of theorists whose work can inform Indigenous historical accounts of political struggles and ongoing efforts towards decolonization. His essay examines the continuing relevance of Bolivian Indigenous intellectual Fausto Reinaga—a major theorist of the anti-colonial ideology known as *indianisimo*—by exploring his “Atlantic encounter” with theorist Frantz Fanon. Mishauna Goeman's essay also speaks to Indigenous studies through explicating a new way of using “land as language”. She explores the geopolitical importance of land as a keyword in the field to interrogate the multiple social and geopolitical meanings that make land a central concept in Indigenous political struggle. By critically examining the processes of colonialism that distort land as an abstract claim, Goeman draws on the narrative dimensions of land in the writings of Indigenous scholars to intervene in the limited meanings of land imposed by state regimes.

The absence of Indigenous agency from history resounds in the next two essays Maggie Walter and Louise Daniels re-contextualize and retell their Tasmanian story to address the problematic Aboriginal absence from the “history wars” in Australian scholarship. Their embodied intellectual work documents the personal, familial and community stakes for the descendants of the traditional people in this contested field. Woretemoetyenner's story reframes Tasmanian colonial history and critique debates, highlighting the poverty of Keith Windschuttle's authoritative claims. In the concluding essay John Maynard advocates that writing Indigenous histories from Indigenous perspectives is an important strategy for developing the field. His essay explores the concept of colonial history vis-à-vis the metaphor of the shark. He also critically engages aspects of Keith Windschuttle's book, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal history*, but with a specific focus on both the massacre at Risdon Cove in 1804 and the demeaning assessment of the relationship between Aboriginal men and women. Maynard's work confronts the persistent reliance among dominant Australian historians on the colonial archive as the be all and end all of the historical record. His essay demonstrates how ideological and political strategies inform the interpretive frameworks operationalised by non-Indigenous historians in their accounts of history.

There are also within the first issue two book reviews. Bronwyn Fredericks reviews *Rebuilding Native Nations: Strategies for Governance and Development*, Edited by Miriam Jorgensen (University of Arizona Press, 2007), and Fiona Nicoll reviews *High Stakes: Florida Seminole Gaming and Sovereignty*, by Jessica Cattelino.