"Pride and Honour": Indigenous Dance in New South Wales Schools

Katie Wilson

Abstract In this chapter, I discuss the positioning of Indigenous dance performance in Australian school education where European knowledges and beliefs dominate educational policies and practices. The discussion about the role and the integration of indigenous dance within curriculum takes place in the context of research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools in a regional area of the state of New South Wales. More than two centuries after colonisation, dispossession and attempted deculturation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the positive value of cultural learning and practices in education is acknowledged in policy and included in curricula as a means of engaging Indigenous students with dominant education. However, while schools welcome and acknowledge the significance of Indigenous students' participation in dance performance, this activity and related acquisition of skills and knowledges by dancing students are not accredited academically.

Keywords Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students • School education • Indigenous dance • Curriculum

1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the performance of Indigenous dance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (the Indigenous peoples of Australia) school students in educational contexts in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. My observations emerged from doctoral research in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students shared their experiences of cultural learning in schools. Although I am not a dance educator, the positioning of Indigenous dance in some school discussions illustrates the difficulties of achieving an inclusive, culturally responsive curriculum where the cultural knowledges, skills and intangible heritage of non-dominant, indigenous

K. Wilson (✉)
Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 3438, Wellington 6140, New Zealand
e-mail: katie.wilson@vuw.ac.nz; http://works.bepress.com/katie_wilson

L. Ashley, D. Lines (eds.), *Intersecting Cultures in Music and Dance Education*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 19,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28989-2_5

peoples are recognised and integrated equally with dominant practices and knowledges.

I consider the role of indigenous dance performance in colonised societies such as Australia within Indigenous peoples' cultural learning, education and the place of Indigenous dance in contemporary society. Through the perspectives of some Aboriginal students and staff in three schools, I discuss the positioning of Indigenous dance at the intersection of cultures within the NSW educational curriculum.

A note about terminology: The term indigenous refers to broad discussions of indigenous issues; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and Indigenous are used in the Australian context; Aboriginal is used when discussing New South Wales education policy as specified in policy documents, and as preferred by the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

2 Background

I was born in Aotearoa/New Zealand from Māori (Te Ātiawa, Taranaki) and Pākehā (non-Māori) ancestry, and I have lived the latter half of my life in Australia. Recently, I undertook doctoral research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the state of New South Wales regarding their cultural learning in schools. I held discussions with primary and secondary students, and interviewed principals, Aboriginal support staff, and teachers in six schools within the land of the Gumbaynggirr nation in the mid-north coast of NSW. From discussions with students and some staff in three schools, questions emerged about the educational role and positioning of Indigenous dance within a curriculum where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the dominant Euro-Western culture intersect.

Aboriginal Australians are the First Nations peoples of the land colonised by the British in 1788, later federated as Australia in 1901. Aboriginal peoples, a generic term that describes many nations of peoples, identify by land and language and live in all Australian states and territories. Torres Strait Islanders are the original inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands north of Australia, annexed by the British colony of Queensland in 1879 (Torres Strait Island Regional Council 2014), later becoming part of a federated Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples comprise the Indigenous populations of Australia. Through colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were displaced and dispossessed of their lands. Deliberate policies of assimilation in the twentieth century disrupted education and knowledge learning customs, and separated many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and cultures, forcing them into British lifestyles, foster families and institutions. The thousands of people affected by this practice are known as the Stolen Generations (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997). Further, inequitable policies and practices denied the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and participate in a full education and to learn and practice their languages, cultures and knowledges. The exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander peoples and histories from Australian education curricula and text books until the 1980s (Reynolds 2000), together with assumptions of cultural superiority and prejudice, has contributed to ignorance and misunderstanding within the dominant, non-Indigenous Australian population.

The recovery of dance and performance among indigenous peoples living in colonised nations, along with visual and performing arts, is part of an ongoing assertion of indigenous rights to history, language and culture. In societies where indigenous peoples have been subjected to colonising practices, such as Africa, Aotearoa, Australia, Canada, the Caribbean and the United States, performance of indigenous dance was forbidden through the oppression of people's ways of life, languages and cultures. Cultural dance, integral to heritages, communicated and "embodied knowledge" (Cruz Banks 2009, p. 360), and the denial of dance performances was instrumental in the subjugation of indigenous knowledges and cultures. Within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, dance functions as ceremony and as entertainment. Dance performances embodying deep knowledge and skill have continued as an integral part of practised culture and custom in some communities, particularly in northern Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. In other areas, as a result of the assimilative and forced movement practices discussed above, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' regular connection with cultural dance has lessened. However, contemporary Indigenous dance performance is flourishing, drawing on "historical practices" (Casey 2011, p. 54) as well as creating new dance that incorporates histories, political and social issues of concern to Indigenous peoples, and landscape.

The praxis and critical pedagogy of dance in education is recognised as a powerful embodiment of identity and healing that contributes to indigenous students' critical understanding of their worlds (Cruz Banks 2009), as well as to the knowledge of non-indigenous students (Mackinlay 2005). The recently introduced national *Australian Curriculum* recognised the "deep knowledge traditions and holistic world view" of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) n.d.), and designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures as one of three cross-curriculum priorities. Dance is one of five elective subjects in the Arts Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2013). Throughout the curriculum and the Arts syllabus, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and cultures intersect with the predominant Euro-Western culture as an optional cross-curriculum priority. As a guideline only, the Arts Curriculum refers to developing all students' understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural arts protocols and practices, but the extent of the inclusion of such cultural learning is a choice made by individual schools and teachers. However, this position is threatened. A recent government commissioned review of the *Australian Curriculum* criticised the place of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives cross-curriculum priority (Wiltshire and Donnelly 2014). An arts specialist commented that there was "too much emphasis on dance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture" and recommended the expansion of "Asian and European…cultural references" (p. 217).

By comparison, in Aotearoa, the role of Māori dance performance and movement is acknowledged and integrated within the secondary curriculum. *Kapa haka* (dance in rows) is recognised as a culturally responsive school pedagogy and dance activity that is accredited academically, as a subject contributing credits towards the National Certificate of Educational Achievement and towards a National Certificate in Māori (Whitinui 2010a). The inclusion of *te ao kori* (expressive movement) as a Māori dimension in school physical education curriculum since 1987 contributes to the strengthening of identity and self-esteem of Māori students and non-Māori students through the embodiment of Māori culture (Legge 2011).

3 Indigenous Dance in Australia

Among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, dance has ceremonial purposes, communicating knowledge about spirituality, heritage and culture, connecting with land, place and customary practices through stories. As a result of forcible movement and disruption of the lives and customs of many communities, the practice of dance as ceremony was interrupted. Within some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, however, historical dance (following Casey (2011, p. 66), I use the term 'historical' rather than 'traditional' because of assumptions that 'traditional' refers to an unchanging culture) has continued to be performed, for example, in the Yolgnu nation North-east Arnhem Land in northern Australia (Burarrwanga et al. 2013). The public performance of Indigenous dance re-emerged in the 1980s as part of a "cultural renaissance in Indigenous arts and culture" (Miller 2005). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples teach, dance and perform with young people and school groups at local events, arts and cultural festivals throughout Australia. Some contemporary Indigenous dance groups combine culture, music and stories with dance moves and expressions, collaborating with Elders and artists from different nations.

Indigenous dance companies with international profiles include the Bangarra Dance Theatre based in Sydney, NSW, formed in 1990, and Marrugeku, based in Broome, in north Western Australia, formed in 1994. Bangarra distinguishes between "contemporary (dance) that is newly created, using original movement" and "traditional (in dance) … dances that are handed down from one generation to the next, transferring story, cultural life and cultural practices" (Bangarra Dance Theatre 2014). For example, in *Terrain*, a dance referencing Lake Eyre, an inland sea, Bangarra (2014) weaves embodiments of country into contemporary choreography, exploring the strong connections between Aboriginal peoples and the land, including land rights. In *Patyegarang*, dancers tell the story of a young woman from the Eora nation who shared her knowledge and culture with an eighteenth century colonial Lieutenant, as recorded in his diaries.

The powerful role of Indigenous historical and contemporary dance in contributing to the well-being, cultural knowledge and educational engagement of Indigenous students within school education in Australia is recognised in the literature.

Incorporating Aboriginal cultural heritage, including a dance group, in a NSW primary school helped to reduce suspensions and absenteeism among Aboriginal students (Britton 2000). Jampijinpa (2008) related with passion the power of *Milpirri*, a dance performance developed in an Aboriginal community in *Warlpiri* country in northern Australia: how it reconnected young people with Elders and their culture and contributed to increased school attendance. A "rap curriculum" for young *Nunga* (Aboriginal) young men in South Australia provided the potential to perform identity and agency in a contested school education environment through critical thinking (Blanch 2009, p. 125). Thorpe (2011) explored the development of the *Watbalimba Dance Group* and a holistic method of teaching and learning culture through the language of song, story and dance as a means of embedding local Aboriginal cultural knowledge within education systems. Wannik Dance Academies for Koorie girls in three schools in the state of Victoria are a government dance programme "aligned to the regular school curriculum" (Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2013). Aboriginal dance can be a powerful tool in teaching mathematics with Aboriginal school students (Matthews 2012). Bangarra Dance Theatre offers *Rekindling* (2014), an education workshop programme for secondary school students from regional New South Wales to research stories within their communities and develop performances. Through the NSW Department of Education and Communities, Bangarra Dance Theatre provides opportunities for secondary students to learn and perform contemporary Aboriginal dance in Aboriginal Dance Workshops, from which a small number of students is selected to join the NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company (NSW Department of Education and Communities 2014).

4 About the Research

In 2012 and 2013, I undertook doctoral qualitative research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in six schools within the land of the Gumbaynggirr nation in the mid-north coast region of New South Wales. Through the research, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students shared their experiences of learning cultural knowledges and perspectives through the curriculum, cultural events and activities held at the schools.

Respecting indigenous ethical requirements, I co-constructed the research with the local Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group (AECG), the key representative body in New South Wales, and divided the research into two phases, obtaining a separate ethics approval for each phase. Phase one was a feasibility study, where I discussed with the AECG the proposal for research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The AECG recommended schools, appropriate protocols and required the presence of an AECG member at each discussion group. In phase two, I employed a research methodology of group discussions with open-ended questioning (approved by the AECG) to engage in conversation with students in three primary schools and three secondary schools about their cultural learning experiences.

Thirty-nine students from Year 3 to Years 11/12 who identified as Aboriginal (38 students) and Torres Strait Islander (one student) participated in two discussion groups at each of the six schools: 26 girls (10 in three primary schools; 16 in three secondary schools) and 13 boys (6 in three primary schools; 7 in three secondary schools). Principals, Aboriginal staff and Aboriginal education co-ordinators invited the students to participate, and obtained consent for their participation from parents or caregivers and the students. I interviewed each school principal, teachers of Indigenous perspectives, and "yarned" with Aboriginal support staff about cultural learning and activities in their schools. Yarning is an indigenous methodology in which the participants and the researcher negotiate and build relationships of trust and share information (Dean 2010).

The location in which the research took place is regional, coastal and semi-urban. Through the nineteenth and twentieth century colonial government policies and practices marginalised access to land, ways of living, language and cultural practices for the people of the Gumbaynggirr nation (Somerville and Perkins 2010; Thomas 2013). Many were forced to live on reserves or church-operated missions (Arrawarra Sharing Culture n.d.). Some communities, however, maintained connections with the land, living in coastal camps, leading later to successful land rights claims (Smith and Beck 2003). Speaking language and practising culture was prohibited in schools and local knowledge and history were ignored. However, in the last two decades the establishment of a Gumbaynggirr cultural centre and a language and culture co-operative has revitalised the language and connections with culture, including dance (Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative 2008; Somerville and Perkins 2010).

In the 2011 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011), 3.2 % of the population counted in the region was Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The schools participating in the research varied in population, size and their connections to culture. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations ranged from 4.9 % (five students) in one primary school to 13 % in one secondary school. Discussions with Indigenous students focused on the subject areas in which they learn Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and knowledges; the extent and delivery of the content; their thoughts about such learning; the cultural activities and events they participate in at school; and the involvement of local community Elders in their learning. I recorded and transcribed discussions for analysis and review with students and staff. From these discussions, Indigenous dance emerged as a significant and meaningful experience for some students. I discuss next the perspectives of these students and staff regarding Aboriginal dance emerging from the research.

5 "Aboriginal Dancin'": Student and Staff Perspectives

The New South Wales school curriculum recommends all students have opportunities to experience and appreciate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander historical and contemporary dance as "integral to the expression of Aboriginal cultural identity"

(Board of Studies New South Wales 2009, p. 5). For example, Creative Arts K-6 lessons include students dancing to contemporary Aboriginal music, and incorporating historical dance moves. However, such content is optional and inclusion depends on individual schools' leadership, staffing, resources, skills and connections with local communities. The learning and performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance discussed by students in this research is not positioned as a discrete subject, although dance was an elective for some secondary students. The student dance performances and activities were extra-curricular, a "cultural 'add-on'" (Whitinui 2010b, p. 20). Although the schools acknowledged the positive value of dance for the Aboriginal students in terms of leadership and cultural connections (Myers 2007), dance performances did not translate directly to academic credits in the educational system.

Aboriginal students active in dance performances discussed opportunities to perform, connect and engage with their culture. Students at one primary school discussed dance activity when celebrating NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) with the local community, demonstrating their active involvement with dance through the cultural centre:

> *…NAIDOC week down at [the local cultural centre]* (Year 4 girl)
>
> *…and down there we like make food and stuff and dance, do the Aboriginal dancin'…* (Year 6 boy).
>
> *Yeah, animal dancing…kangaroo…emu* (All)
>
> *…in NAIDOC week with [Aboriginal staff member] we … went around in circles, stomping our feet, Aboriginal dancing… and he said you can see inside like a snake* (Year 6 boy).

The students engaged enthusiastically in discussions about participating in these dance activities within the cultural event celebrating NAIDOC. For students in other primary schools, there was less dance activity. I invited students to draw and/or write about their cultural learning and their desires, and one student wrote that she would like to learn "*Aboriginal dance moves"* (Year 6 girl), suggesting a lack of opportunity at school. The school principal commented on the difficulty of teaching and obtaining funding for cultural knowledge and activities:

> *…it'd be nice if we had more Indigenous teachers or Elders or people with knowledge who'd be happy to come to our public schools for free… I don't think we should be paying for it. I have a moral issue with us having to pay to educate the whole community of Indigenous culture.* (Primary Principal)

In one secondary school, a student discussed her experiences learning dance at primary school:

> *Before I came here my old school used to like have Aboriginal people come in and teach us all the dances. I did that for about three years …but they don't do it anymore. I wish they still did it …* (Year 7 girl).

In two secondary schools, students discussed their engagement with learning and performing dance. An Aboriginal boys' dance programme in one school began as a project initiated by the Aboriginal staff member and became highly successful through the dedication and commitment of the staff, students and with support from

the school. Dance performance as part of ceremony was less common in the area, as one student commented (see below.) The school's Aboriginal Education Officer became aware of the positive value of connecting with culture for the Aboriginal students' well-being and engagement with learning. He related how he drew on his own experiences to introduce the dance programme for Aboriginal students in schools. He had learned to play *didjeridu* (the Aboriginal musical instrument also known as a *yidaki*), taught a friend to play, and together they developed Aboriginal dance to be accompanied by *didjeridu*. Building on their knowledge of historical dances that imitate and incorporate animal moves, they used "ochre…to decorate bodies…went into the bush to observe animals…", and recreated dances based on the observed animal behaviour. Through this process and recreating the dance the staff member connected with his culture and heritage, and recognised the power of this connection. He introduced the programme in two secondary schools for Aboriginal students, and commented that they engaged and connected strongly with learning and performing the dance, more than any departmental programme or activity. This reflects the potential of cultural dance to enable students to develop critical understanding of the worlds they live in (Cruz Banks 2009).

The Aboriginal boys in the secondary school discussed the meaning for them of participating in dance performances:

> *It's been 20 years since anything like this has happened… in Gumbaynggirr country…we thought just to bring pride and honour back into our community* (Year 11/12 boy).
>
> *…a couple of the boys got asked to go and do the dancing, that's how it all started. And we just started getting noticed from other people you know, every now and then we get a phone call or an email asking us to go and dance and perform for them …which is pretty good* (Year 11/12 boy).
>
> *…there's about 15 of us… from* [year] *7 or 8* (Year 11/12 boy).
>
> *I really hope that we keep going… (*Year 8 boy).

The Aboriginal boys' dance group is invited to perform at many events in the area. The school sought additional funding to continue the programme, and brought students from nearby primary schools to participate. The school principal spoke of the value of the boys' dance programme in engaging the students and in developing leadership skills, but acknowledged that performances took some time from study, especially the Year 12 students:

> *…something that we are really proud of. Sometimes it's an administrative nightmare because the Year 12 boys complain that they're out of class too often and I understand that completely… but it's still worthwhile… maybe when the boys or girls get into Year 12 we sort of say it's time to concentrate on your studies. I do think the Year 12 boys miss too much class…but it was good for them in terms of leadership so that was the payback.*

From the principal's perspective, the intensive dance engagement was meaningful for the school and the students' skills development. Yet the principal's comment regarding the dance performance conflicting with Year 12 class study suggests a lack of a model to incorporate the dance as valid study within the curriculum structure.

At the same school, a Year 7 girl wrote "girl dancing" in her 'wish list' developed in the discussion group, suggesting girls are also interested in learning

Aboriginal dance following the success of the boys' group, and the boys' responses. At a third secondary school, female students spoke of their participation in workshops with the Bangarra Dance Theatre, and performance with the Aboriginal Dance Ensemble at the annual NSW Schools Spectacular:

> *…we had an audition to get in and we got in, there were 4 of us… someone from Bangarra dance studio was there …There was exactly 300 indigenous students dancing into one dance, from Sydney to Dubbo and the north coast… We had to have our hair slicked back… and have white paint…in our hair…and down our body across our chest and across our back* (Year 11/12 girl).

Some students take dance electives within class study, but although the dance performance was acknowledged proudly as a major achievement in the school and community, the performance was not accredited towards study.

The students' comments indicate the value for them of Aboriginal dance and cultural performance, of pride and cultural connection, and their participation involves a substantial time commitment. Benefits of dance performance are affirmed in research literature. Aboriginal students' dance includes skill-learning "not only in telling about ontology and epistemology, they physically become one with ontology and epistemology" (Williams 2007, p. 227). In the same way, Aboriginal people express a powerful and intangible sense of belonging and well-being when they reconnect with language and culture (*Aboriginal women's heritage: Nambucca* 2003; Somerville and Perkins 2010) and when they maintain living with cultural ways (Burarrwanga et al. 2013). However, for the NSW schools discussed in this chapter, dance performance was extra-curricular and without academic accreditation. While there was some recognition of the contribution to student cultural well-being, critical understanding and overall learning, a lack of cultural measures or standards for evaluating the contributions to Indigenous students' education through dance performance (Whitinui 2010a) limits the formalisation of the educational and academic values of Indigenous dance performance. At the intersection of cultures in education, the "cultural interface" (Nakata 2011), integrating Indigenous dance into curriculum remains a challenge in Australia, and other colonised countries. Despite the accreditation of *kapa haka* in secondary education in Aotearoa, Whitinui (2010a) noted the difficulty of moving Māori dance beyond the periphery in some mainstream schools.

6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed Aboriginal students' expressions of engagement, pride and connection with their cultural heritage in response to their participation in Aboriginal dance programmes within three NSW schools. While the value of such participation is acknowledged and celebrated in the schools, academic recognition of extended or ongoing Indigenous cultural dance performance is limited. The current Australian government's challenge to the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance within the optional cross-curriculum perspective in the national *Australian Curriculum* complicates the position for schools and staff.

Intersecting with a dominant culture, and against a history of multigenerational systemic and structural opposition towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and languages, the equitable inclusion of Indigenous cultural learning, including dance, in mainstream education in Australia continues to be a challenge for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and students, teachers and school principals. Because of its perceived ideological basis, the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives and practices is contested still by some teachers (Nakata 2011) and politicians. While the personal development gains for all students of dance programmes are acknowledged through curriculum, the recognition of the educational skills, pedagogies of learning, movement, performance, and contributions to "cultural and social wellbeing" (Whitinui 2010a, p. 3) of Indigenous dance would contribute towards achieving equality within a curriculum that claims to be Australian.

References

Aboriginal women's heritage: Nambucca. (2003). Retrieved from http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nswcultureheritage/AboriginalWomensHeritageInNambucca.htm

Arrawarra Sharing Culture. (n.d.). *Fact Sheet 1: Gumbaynggirr nation*. Retrieved from http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact_sheets/pdfs/01_Gumbaynggir_Nation.pdf

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Census Quick Stats 2011: Coffs Harbour statistical area level 3*. Retrieved from http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). (n.d.). *The Australian Curriculum v. 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures*. Retrieved from http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/CrossCurriculumPriorities/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-histories-and-cultures

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). (2013). *The arts.* Retrieved from http://www.acara.edu.au/arts.html

Bangarra Dance Theatre. (2014). *Bangarra dance theatre*. Retrieved from http://www.bangarra.com.au

Blanch, F. R. (2009). *Nunga rappin: Talkin the talk, walkin the walk: Young Nunga males and education.* Unpublished master's thesis, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia.

Board of Studies New South Wales. (2009). *Cross-Curriculum content: Mapping of Aboriginal and Indigenous cross-curriculum content in mandatory K-10 Syllabus*: Board of Studies New South Wales. Retrieved from http://ab-ed.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/go/7-10/cross-curriculum-content/

Britton, P. (2000). *Improving the self-concept of Aboriginal students: A holistic approach*. Paper presented at the Aboriginal Studies Association 10th annual conference, University of Western Sydney.

Burarrwanga, L., Ganambarr, R., Ganambarr-Stubbs, M., Ganambarr, B., Maymuru, D., Wright, S., & Lloyd, K. (2013). *Welcome to my country*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.

Casey, M. (2011). Performing for Aboriginal life and culture: 'Aboriginal theatre and Ngurrumilmarrmiriyu'. *Australasian Drama Studies, 59*, 53–68.

Cruz Banks, O. (2009). Critical postcolonial dance recovery and pedagogy: An international literature review. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 17*(3), 355–367. doi:10.1080/14681360903194368.

Dean, C. (2010). A yarning place in narrative histories. *History of Education Review, 39*(2), 6–13. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/08198691201000005.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (1997). *Bringing them home: Report of the national inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families*. Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Jampijinpa, P. S. (2008). Milpirri: Performance as a bridge that joins the ancient with the modern. *Ngoonjook, 33*, 53–60.
Legge, M. (2011). Te ao kori as expressive movement in Aotearoa New Zealand physical education teacher education (PETE): A narrative account. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education, 2*(3), 81–95.
Mackinlay, E. (2005). Moving and dancing towards decolonisation in education: An example from an indigenous Australian performance classroom. *Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, 34*, 113–122.
Matthews, C. (2012). *Maths as storytelling: Maths is beautiful*. Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
Miller, L. (2005). Creating pathways: An indigenous dance forum report. *Dance Forum, 15*(4), 12–13.
Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative. (2008). *Gumbaynggirr language revitalisation*. Retrieved from http://www.muurrbay.org.au/languages/gumbaynggirr/
Myers, T. (2007). Raising the bar: The Aboriginal education priority. *Teacher: The National Education Magazine*, Nov, 54–56.
Nakata, M. (2011). Pathways for indigenous education in the Australian curriculum framework. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, 40*, 1–8. doi:10.1375/ajie.40.1.
NSW Department of Education and Communities. (2014). *Aboriginal dance workshops.* Retrieved from http://www.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/events-initiatives/aboriginal-dance-workshops
Reynolds, H. (2000). *Why weren't we told?: A personal search for the truth about our history*. Ringwood: Viking.
Smith, A., & Beck, W. (2003). The archaeology of no man's land: Indigenous camps at Corindi Beach, mid-north coast New South Wales. *Archaeology in Oceania, 38*(2), 66–77.
Somerville, M., & Perkins, T. (2010). *Singing the coast*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
Thomas, L. (2013). *Aboriginal history of the Coffs Harbour region*. Retrieved from http://libraries.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/Local-Heritage/collection/Pages/Aboriginal-history-of-the-Coffs--Harbour-region.aspx
Thorpe, W. (2011). *Watbalimba: Language of song, story and dance.* Unpublished MEd thesis, Monash University.
Torres Strait Island Regional Council. (2014). *Torres Strait Island history*. Retrieved from http://www.tsirc.qld.gov.au/our-region/torres-strait/history
Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. (2013). *Wannik dance academies for Koorie girls*. Retrieved from http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/aboriginal/pages/wannikdance.aspx
Whitinui, P. (2010a). Indigenous-based inclusive pedagogy: The art of Kapa Haka to improve educational outcomes for Maori students in mainstream secondary schools in Aotearoa, New Zealand. *International Journal of Pedagogies & Learning, 6*(1), 3–22.
Whitinui, P. (2010b). Kapa haka 'voices': Exploring the educational benefits of a culturally responsive learning environment in four New Zealand mainstream secondary schools. *Learning Communities, 1*, 19–43.
Williams, S. T. (2007). *Indigenous values informing curriculum and pedagogical praxis.* Unpublished PhD thesis, Deakin University, Melbourne.
Wiltshire, K., & Donnelly, K. (2014). *Review of the Australian Curriculum: Final report*. Retrieved from http://www.studentsfirst.gov.au/strengthening-australian-curriculum

Katie Wilson PhD (SCU), GradDipVisArts (UNSW), GradDipLib (Canberra), BA (VUW). Katie's PhD explored the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in relation to Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in schools. Her research interests focus on children and young people in schooling; higher education; collaborative and indigenous research methodologies; and indigenous education policy and curriculum. Katie was born in Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand and is a descendent of the Te Atiawa people of Taranaki.