Barbara Hill · Jillene Harris ·
Ruth Bacchus   *Editors*

Teaching Aboriginal Cultural Competence

Authentic Approaches

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Springer

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the inheritors of the oldest continuous cultural traditions in the world and traditional owners and custodians of Australia and its islands since time immemorial.

We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This book is inspired by our Biripi sista and distinguished educator Associate Professor Wendy Nolan who started the fire in our hearts to make a difference and whose work still influences the national landscape. She has always been and always will be cared for by Ancestors from Wiradyuri Country and Ngiyeempaa Country. We are in her debt.

This book is dedicated to Jemma Louise Ritchie.

You arrived with the morning light but now your sun has set. The path we shared on our journey was easier with your smile, laughter and wit. Gone but never forgotten. Jemma Louise Ritchie, RIP 14 January 2019.

Foreword: Yaliilan's Poem

My dearest Elders, it is because of you that I hold my head high, that I strive to be a better Yinaa (woman). It is the struggles you have each overcome that allow me to achieve what I do today. It is because of each of you that I have the resilience, the fighting spirit and the fire within my belly to make the world a better and safer place for all our people worldwide.

It is because of you that I can … It is because of you that I believe that I can ... It is because of you that I am …

I say I cannot do what must be done for our people. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

I say I cannot be wise, intelligent or brave enough to be a voice for our people. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

I say my skin is not black enough to make the difference of who I aspire to be. You say, "You are a Wiradjuri/Dharawhal woman, your skin colour does not matter, your voice, spirit and heart do". You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

I say I can never measure up to those brave Ancestor women of mine and what they have fought for. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

You remind me time and time again of who I come from and of who I really am.

I say I do not believe I have the ability to make a difference and influence. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

I say my voice is not loud enough to be heard. You say, "Your voice is your secret weapon; your ability is to whisper and be heard" You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

You remind me time and time again of who I come from and of who I really am.

I say I am but only one person, asking if I can really make a difference. You say to take one step at a time. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

I say I am frightened I can't be the person that all believe that I can be. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

I say that I do not know why you continue to stick by me and believe in me, as I do not. You say, "I believe in you and of course you can".

You remind me time and time again of who I really am.

You remind me time and time again of who I really am. Now I believe I can,
Oh I believe I can, yes I believe what you say of me.

Oh, how I now I believe can.

Yaliilan Leanne Windle

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About the Editors

Associate Professor Barbara Hill, BA ANU, MA Deakin, Ph.D. UNSW is Academic Lead, First Nations Curriculum & Lead of Gulaay, First Nations Curriculum and Resources Team in the Division of Learning and Teaching at Charles Sturt University. Additionally, she leads Gulaay, Indigenous Australian Curriculum & Resources team and is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK). She has extensive experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and community members and has been involved with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support and student advocacy in higher education for over two decades. With Associate Professor Wendy Nolan her research and work in this area has been acknowledged with a Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning in 2014 for leading respectful professional partnerships to implement sustainable pedagogical frameworks for Indigenous Cultural Competency and Australian Universities. She has specifically worked with both Ngiyeempaa and the Wiradyuri Elders for over two decades and is acknowledged for her ongoing commitment to the work of social justice.

Jillene Harris is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology at Charles Sturt University (CSU), where she co-teaches a first year foundational subject—Indigenous Australians and Psychology in partnership with the School of Indigenous Australian Studies. She is the Indigenous Liaison Person for the School of Psychology and has experience in integrating support frameworks between community, education and health sectors. She was the Arts Faculty representative of the Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating group which oversaw the implementation of this strategy across CSU. Most recently she was part Australian Indigenous Psychology Education Project (AIPEP). This project was jointly funded by the OLT and the Australian Psychological Society and considered best practice for increasing Australian Indigenous curriculum, students and workforce preparation in Psychology Education.

Ruth Bacchus is a Lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Charles Sturt University (CSU), where she teaches Children's Literature, Creative Writing and Politics of Identity, a subject soon to be re-developed with a more cultural studies focus. In both Children's Literature subjects, and, in particular, in Politics of Identity, she draws upon resources made available as part of the Indigenous Education Strategy among others, to explore with students' issues around Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities and experiences and the relationships between them.

Cultural Mentors

Assoc. Prof. Wendy Nolan (retired) was the Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies at Charles Sturt University. She holds a *Bachelor of Arts (Aboriginal Studies)* and *Master of Arts (Aboriginal Studies)* through the University of South Australia and commenced a Ph.D entitled *Changing Paradigms, Changing Practices: The Construction of a Best Practice Model of Cultural Competence Training for Undergraduate Psychology Students*. She is acknowledged as a leader in the development of cultural competence pedagogical frameworks for incorporating Indigenous content into university degree programmes in Australia and has received a number of research grants for her work in this area. She is the primary author of the National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities commissioned by Universities Australia, the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council and Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Her work in this area (with Associate Professor Barbara Hill) has been acknowledged with a Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning in 2014 for leading respectful professional partnerships to implement sustainable pedagogical frameworks for Indigenous Cultural Competency and Australian Universities.

Dr. Beryl Philp Carmichael Aunty Beryl Philp Carmichael (whose traditional name is Yungha-Dhu) was born and grew up at the Old Menindee Mission, New South Wales. She attended school there until the age of 12. Most of her life was spent on stations in the top end of New South Wales until 1966. When she and her family moved to Menindee Township she became active in Aboriginal community affairs and education and has held a number of public positions. These include Founding Member of the Western Aboriginal Legal Service and the Alma Bugdlie Pre-School in Broken Hill. She was actively involved in the State Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and was also an Aboriginal language Support Officer advising the New South Wales Board of Studies. In 2004, she was awarded the New South Wales Department of Education and Training's Meritorious Service to Public Education Award. She has also been awarded a Centenary of Federation

Medal for devotion to cultural awareness and contribution to Australian society. A documentary about her life, called *Aboriginal Culture in the Murray-Darling Basin: Aunty Beryl's story,* was made in 1996.

Uncle Brian Mallyan Grant Uncle Brian Grant Wiradyuri Elder is a Senior Member of the Council of Wiradyuri Elders Member of Bathurst Wiradjuri & Aboriginal Community Elders group (BWAACE). He is a former Public Servant with over 40 years' experience in Aboriginal health & delivery of Cultural Awareness Training programmes. His educational qualifications include studies at the Undergraduate and Diploma level pertaining to Anthropology & Aboriginal Culture with Deakin University, the University of South Australia and the Open University where he completed courses in Indigenous Studies: Australia and New Zealand & Anthropology (Be Human).

Jade Yanhadarrambal Flynn is a Ngiyampaa man living in Wiradyuri country. He works closely with Bathurst Wiradjuri & Aboriginal Community Elders group (BWAACE) and is known as *Yanhadarrambal* which is Wiradyuri for "wanderer". He is the Media Technologist (Indigenous Resources) and works as part of Gulaay Indigenous Australian Curriculum & Resources team in the Division of Student Learning at CSU and is responsible for overseeing the "Indigenous Education Resources Collection" which is housed in CSU's Digital Object Management System (DOMS). This collection serves to support the Indigenous Australian Content in CSU Courses Policy (2016). He monitors, maintains and oversees the collection as well as sourcing and creating original digital resources. A key aspect of his role is liaison with Aboriginal Elders and Community members, internal and external stakeholders and maintaining connections with Indigenous organisations which enables the oversight of the collection, as well as the creation of new resources.

Aunty Wirribee Leanna Carr-Smith Leanna Carr-Smith proud descendant of the Wiradyuri People. Married to a Gamilaroi man from Moree, she has four fantastic buraay (children) and two beautiful grandchildren. She has worked in the depart-ment of education for many years in lots of different roles, but most recently a position in special education which she says has been most satisfying and rewarding. She was one of the lucky people who was able to work with Uncle Stan Grant and in doing so completed her certificate 1-2-3 in Wiradyuri Language. Currently, she is completing a Bachelor of Indigenous studies. In community, she has worked closely for many years with the local Bathurst and Aboriginal Community Elders and more recently has been asked to join them at the table an Elder in training which involves sitting with them and learn directly from them.

Uncle Bill Dinawan Dyirribang Allan Jnr. Dinawan Dyirribang was raised and educated in the Bathurst area. He has been a member of BWAACE since its inception in 2013. Dinawan Dyirribang engages in cultural teaching including Men's Business and acts as liaison between the wider community and The Bathurst

Aboriginal community. Since BWAACE was formed as way an Autochthonous Sovereign Entity, they have engaged with the wider community of the Bathurst region to achieve many significant and cultural milestones including the dual naming of Wahluu (Mt Panorama) and the presentation of a possum skin cloak to the Office of Mayor for the City of Bathurst—to name a few.

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Chapter 1
Working with Respect and Working with Cultural Safety

Uncle Mallyan Brian Grant, Aunty Beryl Yungha Dhu Philp Carmichael, Aunty Wirribee Leanna Carr-Smith, Uncle Dinawan Dyirribang Bill Allan, Yanhadarrambal Jade Flynn, Annette Gainsford, Lloyd Dolan, Barbara Hill, Jillene Harris, and Ruth Bacchus

Words from the Elders

This book covers a lot of territory and landscape, literally, physically and we argue as Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders, spiritually as well.

We as Elders who have the Cultural Authority to speak for Country in both Wiradyuri Country and Ngiyeempaa Country are the Traditional Owners and Knowledge Holders of *our* Nations. We have never ceded our sovereignty of our lands.

We always work with cultural respect and use our cultural manners and we expect that of others if they are to walk with us and to work with us.

In Wiradyuri we work with the sacred lore of *yindyamarra*; we go slowly, we show respect, we are gentle, we are polite and we do everything with honour.

In Ngiyeempaa we work under the Ancestral beings and ask for *Guthi Guthi mookamigadar ngalia*; we ask the Sacred Ancestral Beings to watch over us all.

Many ask of us what cultural competence is. We as Elders know that the journey to cultural competence begins first with a conversation about cultural safety.

Cultural safety is based on our cultural practice and philosophy. As Wiradyuri Elders we are guided by the lore of Yindyamarra. As a Ngiyeempaa Elder our Ngiyeempaa peoples are guided by Guthi Guthi, the Ancestral Creator Spirit that carved out the lakes, rivers and mountains, and Ngurri, the emu, who looks after the people and brings guidance and warns us, and whose meat we can eat, but only if it is dug into the ground and no juices spill on the earth.

Cultural safety means an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity.

U. M. B. Grant · A. B. Y. D. P. Carmichael · A. W. L. Carr-Smith · U. D. D. B. Allan ·
Y. J. Flynn · A. Gainsford · L. Dolan · B. Hill (✉) · J. Harris · R. Bacchus
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It is about shared respect, shared meaning, knowledge and experience, of learning together with dignity and truly listening.

The impact that an acknowledgement of country conveys is the message that one's link to Country is acknowledged as an important part of Aboriginal life and signals that the link is understood and held in esteem.

These are the words of the Elders of Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang, Mallyan, Werribee, Dinawan Dyirribang and Yanhadarrambal and Ngyieempaa Elder, Aunty Beryl Yungha Dhu Carmichael-Philp, 2019.

Calls for Change

The calls for change in Aboriginal and Torres Strat Islander education have been many and varied. In this we all sit on the shoulders of giants. As Associate Professor Wendy Nolan recorded[1] these are some but not all of those calls: *Education for Aborigines: Report to the Schools Commission* (Aboriginal Consultative Group, 1975), *Access to Education: An Evaluation of the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme* (Watts, 1976), *Aboriginal Futures: A Review of Research and developments and Related Policies in the Education of Aborigines* (Watts, 1981), *Aboriginal Education* (House of Representatives Select Committee on Aboriginal Education, 1985), *Report of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Programs* (Miller, 1985), *Report of the Aboriginal Education Policy Task Force* (Hughes, 1988), *A Chance for the Future: Training in Skills for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Community Management and Development* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, 1989), *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Johnston, 1991), *Review of the Training for Aboriginals Program* (Johnston, 1991), *Review of the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy* (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, 1994), *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Yunupingu, 1995), Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council Strategic Plan 2006–2008, *Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education (IHEAC, 2005),as well as the Bradley Review of Higher Education* (2008), *The National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities (2011), Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* (2012) *and finally Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy* (2017–2020). These were and are calls for including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and knowledges into Primary and Secondary education and all University curriculum.

Despite all these calls we know that generally in Australia there is still an uneven exposure in all curriculum to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge

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[1]Nolan (2009). Personal and professional teaching notes. Cited and used with permission. Psychology, University Learning and Teaching, Exercise Science, Health and Physical Education, Communication and Advertising, Health Services Management and Nursing.

systems, epistemologies and ontologies, and that over 320 000 graduates each year emerge from our institutes of higher education ill-equipped in any cohesive way to engage intellectually, morally, ethically or politically with the emerging debates and thinking around such matters as constitutional change and constitutional reform and are also ill-equipped to understand the essence of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Makarrata that underpins it. Meanwhile, the Gap between socio-economic determinants and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples still remains and in some cases only widens. That graduates may carry a lack of knowledge and skills into their professional and personal lives as the change makers and citizens of the future is alarming.

Teaching Aboriginal Cultural Competence: Authentic approaches addresses a multitude of discipline areas including Allied Health, Law, Social Work, Physiology, Arts, Education.

The Journey: Answering the Call

The authors of these chapters grapple with these ideas and concerns from their own cultural, personal and professional standpoints. Everyone involved in writing these chapters has had the opportunity to engage with Elders, not only to see and discuss their own cultural viewpoints but to try to understand the view points and cultural standpoints of the Elders and the communities they lead and care for in cultural perpetuity. Some of the relationships between Elders and authors are long-standing; some are more recent; some are personal; some are professional; and many are both. Regardless, every one of us represented in this book is on the journey of Cultural Competence. Some just beginning and some further down the road (and some possibly around the corner too) but no one ever arrives. This is a never- arrived at destination—but it is a journey that must be embarked upon and it is the movement forward that matters.

Universities Australia's (2011) national documents guiding this work view 'Cultural awareness' and 'cultural safety' as sharing common elements with that of 'cultural competence'. It has been argued that cultural competence encompasses yet transcends notions of cultural awareness and safety to include critical reflexivity of self and profession, capacity building of skills and decolonisation of organisational paradigms, policies and procedures (Nolan, 2008). We suggest all these elements are as important as the other.

One of the reasons we embarked on this book was a lack of stories from our Elders, our staff and our students about the experience 'at the chalk face'. We know about the national push and the institutions working hard to embed cultural competence—about governance and aspirations to governance and leadership—but what is happening in the classrooms and in the lives of those who are working in this space? What is happening to our students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal; what is happening to our staff as students, our undergraduate and postgraduate students—while on this journey? What does a lived experience look like in this space?

Who We Take on Our Journey: From the Editors

To go on a journey you need trusted friends and colleagues. In times of learning, testing and intrigue on a journey—it is always good to have company to share those moments with.

These chapters embrace Wiradyuri and Ngyieempaa Elders, Elders from other Nation groups who support this work, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal university academics as well as Aboriginal students at varying levels of attainment. It is from the latter—our students—that we as editors were most challenged and transported. We all agreed our futures are in good hands.

We begin and end the book with chapters written by Aboriginal students. Sharman Okan's chapter *Who are the Experts? Where the 'self' and the 'other' meet when Building Relationships with Aboriginal Elders* uses the work of Parker (2004) to examine an academic reflexivity process for qualitative research in Aboriginal contexts. Sharman urges us not to lose the art of perceiving and understanding the ineffable, unmeasurable interactions between people, both in clinical and naturalistic settings. She also uses the work of psychotherapist Dr. Ann Jauregui (2003) to explain moments when transmission of an experience and/or feeling occurs, the commonplace drops its disguise, and life becomes saturated with deeper meaning, creating an epiphany (a sudden grasp of meaning and/or reality). In her experience listening to Elders, really listening, leads regularly to epiphanistic moments. Okan also cites Ralph Waldo Emerson, the nineteenth-century philosopher, who explained it thus: 'There is a depth in those brief moments which constrain us to ascribe more reality to them than all other experiences' Emerson (1884, p. 219).

Yaliilan Leanne Windle's *When the Elders Govern Your Learning* was written as part of a Life Writing subject, and charts her journey, through her experiences of higher education, towards a place of strength and power in her identity as a Wiradyuri/Dharawhal woman.

Leanne courageously lays bare her struggles and triumphs in an intimate, personal and deeply reflective way.

In the discipline of Psychology Jillene Harris, Uncle Mallyan Brian Grant, Aunty Wirribee Leanna Carr-Smith, Simone Gray and Leonie Miller in their chapter, *Authentically modifying a first year psychology subject,* consider how a first year foundational psychology subject was modified to make it more culturally safe. It considers the way that Wiradyuri ethics; Yindyamarra, and Wiradyuri pedagogy; yindyamaldhuray yalbilinya mawang were used to redesign this subject from its existing Western framework towards a decolonized approach. The chapter considers the modification of the subject as a journey rather than an end point. It makes the point that seemingly big changes in teaching approach can start with quite small changes to activities and assessment.

Lloyd Dolan, Barbara Hill, Jillene Harris, Melinda Lewis and Bruce Stenlake in their chapter *The benefits of In Country experiences at the tertiary level* discuss, from their various cultural viewpoints and perspectives, some of what they feel, both personally and professionally, Learning *in* Country can bring to the academe as a key

aspect in building authentic and meaningful relationships with Indigenous Australian peoples.

In *Exploring identities: challenges in the classroom*, Ruth Bacchus describes teaching a subject called Politics of Identity. The subject explored various facets of collective and personal identities, including gender and sexuality, class, culture and ethnicity, 'race', national and global identities, embodiment, and technology. Of these, issues of 'race', and of relationships between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians seemed to be the most confronting and difficult for students and the most challenging to 'teach'. Partly because of this, but equally importantly because of Ruth's growing and valued personal relationships with members of the Wiradyuri, Ngiyeempaa and Biripai communities, she decided to emphasise and strengthen the subject's focus on the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. This chapter describes how she drew increasingly on material that reflected and respected the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and more specifically on the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars, to help students begin developing skills in cultural competence.

Annette Gainsford, Alison Gerard, and Kim Bailey in '*Yindyamarra in Action': Indigenous cultural competence as core business within legal education and law schools* challenge us to think about how law and the institutions that teach law have remained traditional and elitist for too long. The realities of the legal need and incarceration rates in Australia show there is a desperate need for lawyers who are trained to think and act in culturally competent ways. The legal profession has failed to address the problems of Indigenous offending, youth incarceration, access to justice, rural/regional/remote legal need and social change. This has been acknowledged by the NSW Department of Justice and in repeated Royal Commissions. The authors describe an alternative; a degree that is unique because, unlike any other law programme, it has embedded cultural competency throughout as a whole pedagogical approach. Charles Sturt University's LLB programme is producing graduates who can now work cross culturally, and who are committed to social action and policy change in corrections, justice and government.

Dave Ritchie's chapter, *Doing what is right: Behavioural change in service delivery at the higher end of cultural competence. A psycho-socio-cultural model for undergraduate and postgraduate health care professionals*, uses a simple framework of define: measure: value: choose to address some of the differences in thinking and reasoning that can be used to better understand the roles played in improving the health status of individuals, families and communities. The content of this chapter should encourage a reconsideration of the significance of a bio-medical model and a greater engagement with a more complex psycho-socio-cultural model.

Natalia Bilton, John Rae and Tyson Yunkaporta in their chapter, entitled *A conversation about Indigenous pedagogy, neuroscience and material thinking*, describe how the 8 Ways of Indigenous Knowing can inform the design of learning activities to support student engagement with anatomy and physiology across a broad range of educational settings. Their chapter provides a unique framework and starting point where academics can foster creativity in their teaching practice and help build on the discourse of Indigenous andragogy in the tertiary education sector.

Linda Ghys and Simone Gray critically reflect, in their chapter *Practicing what we preach: reflecting on culturally competent practice in the teaching of Indigenous Australian content*, about how to think about our teaching practice and the ideas surrounding and informing it. The challenge, they argue, is to take step back and consider thinking through a series of questions related to the reflective act. The complexities of this are added to when teaching outside of a culture that is not our own. So specifically, they critically reflect on their own positions as non-Indigenous women teaching Indigenous content to students from a variety of disciplines.

Chelsea Litchfield and Jaquelyn Osborne, in their chapter *Using developments in sport in Australia to promote cultural competence in higher education courses at CSU*, examine how a number of sporting and accrediting bodies have recently recognised the importance of education in this space for athletes, coaches, sport journalists and exercise professionals. One example, they remind us, has been the implementation of reconciliation action plans by sporting associations (such as the AFL, NRL and the 2018 Commonwealth Games).

Recognising the importance of cultural competence in sporting spaces provides a pertinent context for teaching cultural competence in the discipline of sport and exercise science at the tertiary level.

Caroline Robinson's chapter *Curriculum to scaffold the students' journey of cultural competence: whole-of-program approach in allied health* examines the continuum of cultural competence and its relevance to assessment tasks across the entirety of an undergraduate allied health course. She forcefully argues that a whole of programme approach to assessment offers the opportunity to design a curriculum which frames the students' experience of their developing cultural competence and enhances the quality of learning.

In *Reflections on a nursing curriculum: lessons learnt* Jessica Biles examines Indigenous Australian morbidity and mortality as a significant national concern within Australia. She discusses how various strategies have been implemented within healthcare, all with limited success and cites that one major inhibitor experienced by Indigenous Australian peoples engaging with mainstream health services is racially motivated care exhibited by healthcare professionals. She argues that in Australia, nurses represent 57% of the healthcare workforce and ensuring that undergraduate nursing curricula are tailored to the development of culturally competent care is paramount.

Denise Wood and Greg Auhl in *Course and subject design facilitating Indigenous cultural competence* explore how the embedding of cultural competence can occur as part of a disciplined, consistent approach to course design, ensuring that Graduate Attributes and the Graduate Learning Outcomes of the university form a part of the guiding framework. Their work describes how a transparent process based on feedback from stakeholders across the institution and supported by a bespoke software system empowers course teams to have input at all stages of design and development.

In *The biases we bring: 'Debiasing' higher education curriculum through the dynamics of implicit and unconscious bias* Melinda Lewis and Bruce Stenlake argue that cultural competence can be challenging for teachers because both student and teacher are embedded in their own cultural context. They discuss how personal stories

built upon everyday experiences may risk reinforcing narratives that counter cultural competence. Instead they call for debiasing, or surfacing and uncovering one's own biases through reflective activities to offer liberating experiences. Ultimately they ask, 'How do we work towards managing the dynamics of curriculum to mitigate the unintended consequences of bias?"

In her chapter, *The place of individual spirituality in the pedagogy of discomfort and resistance*, Susan Mlcek discusses cultural competence in the context of social work education. Susan describes the many fascinating ways a spirituality derived from her Maori identity can lend power to a fight against 'the overpowering whiteness of everything as a contemporary process of erasure; whitewashing history and current events in order to rub out the subtleties of oppression on so many levels'. She discusses the idea in the work of Audre Lorde (1984) who wrote in 1983, 'I cannot afford the luxury of fighting one form of oppression only. I cannot afford to believe that freedom from intolerance is the right of only one particular group. And I cannot afford to choose between the fronts upon which I must battle these forces of discrimination, wherever they appear to destroy me. And when they appear to destroy me, it will not be long before they appear to destroy you' (n.p.). An overwhelming sense of despair is evident in the above refrain, but there is also a pedagogy of hope that comes from a galvanising depth of social action.

Anne Llewellyn, in writing *Scaffolding students' cultural competence through unstructured learning*, recounts how her final year advertising students were briefed for an assessment item in their course to develop a marketing communications strategy to encourage Indigenous student enrolments in Bachelor of Communication courses. Students were required to research attitudes of potential Indigenous students to develop their campaign recommendations. Low student numbers, student entry, student retention, racism and cultural ignorance were issues that had to be considered. The impact this experience had on the students was significant. They were deeply moved by learning about problems facing Indigenous students. A far greater understanding of the experience of Indigenous Australians in general, and Indigenous students in particular, was achieved as a result. Their campaign recommendations reflected a deep and emotional connection to the issues surrounding Indigenous Australians. In a second example, another cohort of marketing communications students was briefed by an Indigenous organisation to develop recommendations to promote an authentic Indigenous education programme for school children. Their investigation into the market reinforced to them the importance of the authentic education programme being offered by the Wiradyuri Elders, and the cultural significance of the programme. Additionally, students' understanding of Indigenous issues and cultural competencies was maximised by this authentic experience.

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Chapter 2
Who Are the Experts? Where the 'Self' and the 'Other' Meet When Building Relationships with Aboriginal Elders

Sharman Okan

Abstract Working and researching in Australian Aboriginal contexts is a privilege. At the same time, it can be complex and demanding to learn to relate with the oldest continuing culture in human history in a way that is respectful of historical context and wisdom, and compassionate towards issues that have evolved since European colonisation. This chapter attempts to weave anecdotal stories from Aboriginal Elders, with colonising academic research requirements, to demonstrate how they can co-exist, and what is required in order for this to be a respectful and effective process for both parties.

There is an old fella sitting on my verandah alone, soaking up the north facing sun…he seems to be talking to himself… I tip-toe past as quietly as possible so as not to disturb, and I hear him say: 'You know I love you very, very much'. At this point he has his arms outstretched to the sky and I realise he is communing with his Creator. Uncle[1] is an Original[2] Senior Lore Man and Nankere (Medicine Man) who loves the life force that animates all things; he meditates and communes with that life force regularly. When I hear him communing like this, privately, in his Original Language and in English, I am struck anew, each time, at the enduringly rich, devotional, and tender inner lives of my Original Elders. This inner life is something they carry carefully and quietly, and the best way I know how to experience it, is to literally shut up, be still (sometimes for long times) wait, and listen. The late Uncle Bejam (Denis Walker) said: '… learn how we do it—and you learn by listening. That's all you have to do. Listen and you'll be told' (Personal communication, 2015).

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[1]Original Elders are respectfully called 'Aunty' or 'Uncle' by Original (and non-Original) people. This is an inclusive practice across family and language groups.

[2]Throughout this chapter the respectful title 'Original' will be used for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people/mobs. This is in honour of the late Uncle Denis Walker (Bejam) who described himself as "a sovereign, tribal Original person" (Personal communication, 2017).

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If any of the Elders who have given me permission to write this chapter should honour me by reading the start of it, I want to begin by saying a few very important things that they will expect to see that I have understood. Then I will digress into addressing colonising academic expectations. Firstly, how could I write about working with Elders if I do not ask permission from them to do so, at the outset? Accordingly, I went to my local, Senior Lore Man and requested his permission to write this chapter. Asking permission in these terms is indivisible from receiving the cultural blessing for good and successful work. When I explained what the work was about, Uncle said: 'The best thing is to be quiet and wait until the Elders have finished speaking, and then speak if you have something of value to offer. If you want to know something, patiently go one by one to your Elders and ask them'. I couldn't agree more. In the white fella[3] way of promoting autonomous *self*-sovereignty, there is always an opinion to be had, whereas in the black fella way of animist *group* sovereignty, often, less is more—less talking, less self-promotion, less movement here and there. Why is this so? My Senior Lore Woman describes it perfectly when she reminds me: 'Kami (granddaughter) you cannot hear the spirit of anything—the land, the creatures, the people — if you fill up all the spaces by talking and moving about all the time'.

So… as an Anangu (central desert) woman living on Bundjalung (north coastal NSW) country, the first thing for me to do when seeking rapport with Elders is to ask for permission for any cultural work I am planning on undertaking. I ask local, and central desert Elders. If I do not get permission, I do not pursue the project. When I am given a "no" to any request, I have learned not to take it personally. All it may mean is that there are things that are not in their rightful place for me to undertake the work or project at that moment, and/or there are things I do not know, and cannot know at that time. As an Uncle said to me: 'Bub, sit still and wait on the will of heaven'. With at least sixty thousand years of continuing culture, at the mob's[4] back, sometimes working within Aboriginal contexts is like asking an ancient, vast, deep, slow-moving river to change course—it takes time—and that 'time-taking' process is not personal; it is collective,[5] and must take into account the wider cultural picture before any such change is initiated. At the same time, I have learned that a 'yes' from one Elder does not necessarily constitute a 'yes' from all Elders. It is at times like this that the way forward may not be immediately clear. My best advice for these moments is to self–reflect, be patient, and do not fall foul of the pressure to fulfil white fella deadlines.

Many Original Elders, with whom I have had the honour of conversing and working, operate within a different relationship to 'time' than many non-Original

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[3]This can specifically mean 'white man/men' or can mean white people, or non-Original people in general. 'Black fella/s' refers to an Original man, or Original people in general. Both are considered to be non-offensive, collective terms, used by Original people (Creative Spirits, n.d.).

[4]'Mob' or 'the mob' is a respectful, collective term for Original people across language groups.

[5]As opposed to individualistic cultures, collectivist ones (such as aboriginal cultures from around the world) operate from the perspective of shared resources and benefits, and a concern for the social group as a whole (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Original culture in Australia reflects this in the way that Elders are collectively referred to as Aunty or Uncle.

Australians. I cannot adequately stress how important it has been for me to respect and accept this different relationship with time. The lack of reliance on technology (computers and phones) of some Elders has challenged me to be creative, and, most of all, patient. To cultivate good relationships, it is pivotal to meet Elders on their own sovereign terms. I have learned, and will continue to learn, when to step in, be persistent, and press for action and/or information, and when to step back—leaving the space open to see what comes along to fill it. For the most part, I have found that speaking with Elders in person is more productive than communicating via the written word or telephone calls. This has meant lots of driving and travelling to facilitate sitting down face to face with Elders for yarning[6] about significant matters. I have also learned to seize the moment when an Elder is available, as oftentimes when I have rescheduled, or was not able to spontaneously respond to an Elder's request to meet with them, the opportunity would slip away and be very difficult to retrieve in a different time and place. At other times I have spent three or four days waiting in town for an Elder to show up. They do show up…in their own time…which is the right time within the bigger, collective picture….

I have learned about, and engaged the use of, the inimitable Original people's grapevine—the way in which information often gets passed around the mob to find its way to the one who will act upon it. Following is an example. While working as a provisional psychologist for an organisation, I was allocated clients of Original heritage. It was quite common for a client in this cohort not to have a personal mobile phone. However, their cousin, brother, or another relative would have one. Even if these relatives did not live in the same house as my client, if I wanted to contact my client, I would call the relative—who had a phone—and ask that they let the client know I was wanting a yarn about something. I recall a colleague saying: 'If the cousin has a phone, why not the client?' A logical question—however—'logic' for Original people may be quite a different process than the 'logic' white fellas are used to. The animist, family-oriented way in which the mob tends to function, can be either ignorantly criticised as inefficient, or deeply understood as part of a profound indigenous way of knowing and being (Simonds & Christopher, 2013). Such understanding may highlight, for white fellas, the difference between 'being white' and 'being whitely' (Sullivan, 2006, p. 160). The first is the physical self, and the latter is the way in which a person thinks and acts which stem from racial hierarchy and white privilege (Ranzijn, McConnochie, & Nolan, 2009).

A story about meeting Elders on their own terms… recently I was asked by one of my Senior Lore Elders to drive him to visit his daughter—about one and a half hour's drive. I was at work at the time. I decided to seize the opportunity and told my work boss I was leaving early to attend to some cultural business. She (a white fella Scotswoman) was, as ever, embracing of this concept. As we drove, Uncle was sharing many things about the country we were driving through—things I could not have learned from anyone else. He asked if he could smoke in the car. I do not smoke and do not like being around the smell of cigarettes very much. However, I

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[6] 'Yarning' loosely translates to sitting down and talking. It often involves sitting around a campfire, sharing cups of tea, silence, stories, and giving a conversation time to unfold.

heard myself responding by saying: 'Yes Uncle, however, I will need the windows down'. He smiled, saying: 'You don't smoke do you'. 'No, I don't. But I also know that in this situation, your breath carries your Dreaming[7] and so if I refuse to inhale that, even with the strong smell of tobacco on it, I am not only denying your way of Dreaming at this moment, but I am also denying myself the opportunity to ride on that smoke and share in your Dreaming, AND, I will need the windows down'. Uncle turned in his seat, looked at me, nodded approvingly, and said: 'Ahhh yes… good… you understand.

You know, when I am out with the old fellas and they are sniffing their spirits, I don't join them, but I am willing to sit there and breathe in the smell of their breath and ride with them that way into their Dreaming. We are always in the Dreaming. We had our natural ways of Dreaming denied to us—dancing, singing, storytelling, language, ceremony—and so we had to find any way we could to stay connected to the Dreaming because if we are not connected to it, things aren't good for us—not good for us at all. When the white fellas look at us and think we are just drunkards, what they don't see is that this is all some black fellas may have, to stay in the Dreaming, because everything else has been taken away'.

This was an epiphany[8] for me. I realised how easy it is to be fooled by the way things, people, may look, at surface value. However, at least sixty thousand years of continuing culture (some anthropologists are now saying more like a hundred thousand years; Gammage, 2011), *the oldest continuing culture in human history*, has sustained through the most catastrophic invasion, colonisation and genocide (Harff & Gurr, 1988) by staying connected with the Dreaming in any ways available. The humility and sacrifice of that state of being was at once deeply devastating and remarkably inspiring to me. It was profoundly reassuring to understand that the Elders are still Dreaming… no matter what it may look like to the contrary. I feel humbled by that resilience, and I remind myself to carry that humility and respect into my interactions with my Elders.

My Senior Lore Woman has told me that, in Original Lore, when there are no more Elders Dreaming, this country and all on it, will cease to exist, as it is the ongoing Dreaming that keeps it all in corporeal manifestation. In whatever context that is true for the mob, either actually or metaphorically, I am forever comforted by the fact that the Elders are always Dreaming—Dreaming things into existence for us to cherish and experience. I am reminded of the utmost priority to take care of

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[7]The Dreaming is the manifestation of Original creation. It gives meaning and interconnection to everything. The Dreaming also creates the lore for the interrelationships between people and the land, and all of creation. It gives identity to Original people; shared Dreaming usually denotes shared family and mob. It is a present, and evolving, state of being i.e., not a past 'time'. Therefore, the most accurate term is 'the Dreaming' rather than 'the dreamtime' (Creative Spirits, n.d.).

[8]Psychotherapist Dr. Ann Jauregui (2003) explained that at moments when transmission of an experience and/or feeling occurs, the commonplace drops its disguise, and life becomes saturated with deeper meaning, creating an epiphany (a sudden grasp of meaning and/or reality). It is my experience that listening to Elders, really listening, leads regularly to epiphanistic moments. Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher, (1803–1882) explained it thus: "There is a depth in those brief moments which constrain us to ascribe more reality to them than all other experiences" (1884, p. 219).

our Elders, and to ensure the passing on of the light of Original culture and Lore to subsequent generations.

Researching in Aboriginal Contexts

The Importance of Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process by which a researcher critically reflects upon their own biases and assumptions and how these may, or may not have influenced the research development and outcomes. Taking a specifically academic trajectory now, I would like to speak about the need for reflexivity when researching in Aboriginal contexts, and while relationship building with Elders, and mob members in general. When I was asked to write a chapter for this book, I was given a brief, which included the phrase: 'The book will reinsert the "I" into academic writing and include personal voices, individual experiences…'. I was greatly encouraged by this intention, as to remove the 'I' from Aboriginal contexts is to be defeated before beginning. In the Pitjantjatjara language of my own mob, the Anangu people of Uluru, the idea of 'I' and 'ownership' has been expressed very differently to white fella ways of understanding this concept. For example, an Anangu person would have said (in their Original Pitjantjatjara Language) 'I hand' (for 'my hand') or 'I country' (for 'my country') or 'I child' (for one's son or daughter). Accordingly, there was no differentiation between the sense of self, and the expressions of that 'self'—within the broader concepts of one's land and country—and also within closer 'ownership' concepts such as possessions, body parts, children, and so on. Consequently, to exclude the 'I' in Aboriginal research contexts, is to exclude the very fabric of the vast and animistic sense of 'I' for many Original people of this land. Lamentably, as the Anangu people have learned to speak English, there has been a degree of loss of this important and unique 'I' language phenomenon. However, some Elders remember it, and uphold the intricately nuanced meaning of the 'I'.

In the spirit of good reflexivity, I keep a verbal recorded diary of impactful meetings—things that were said, realisations that I have about myself, and/or the wider context. This has been an especially important process for me because, as an Original person I emerged from the Dreaming over sixty thousand years ago, and as a first fleeter (one of my white descendants arrived on the First Fleet) I came across the seas only yesterday in comparison. I am indigenous and non-indigenous to this land. The non-indigenous part of me upholds autonomy, self-actualisation, and seeks diversity. The indigenous part feels, irrefutably, the wisdom and spirit held in land and country, and seeks the strength that comes from the collective. Hence, there is a lot to reconcile!

I can recommend an academic reflexivity process for qualitative research in Aboriginal contexts based upon the work of Parker (2004). Parker analysed reflexivity in terms of the first person (self-confessions); second person (how the position

of the researcher influences the research); and third person (the researcher's role). I have found this direction to be compatible with ethnographic Aboriginal research. I have discovered, at times, that there needs to be some conflation in these three approaches, due to the phenomenological nature of qualitative research in Aboriginal contexts i.e., the distinctions between self-researcher-participant are often less delineated than represented in quantitative, or even qualitative constructivist work (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). I do not believe there is any need to feel conflicted about this, as it is my belief that in the push to be recognised as a science, by focusing only on what is measurable, and/or constructed, psychology is in danger of losing the art of perceiving and understanding the ineffable, unmeasurable interactions between people, both in clinical and naturalistic settings (Josselson, 1996).

While researching in Aboriginal contexts I have found that many of the mob Elders generally relate in very different terms to white fellas. Often when I ask a question, I receive a story in reply, rather than what I may perceive to be a 'direct' answer. In embracing this, in accepting that yarning in the present moment is a vital medium of kinship in Aboriginal contexts, I have touched in on ineffable and inexplicable aspects of myself that I have struggled to understand in white contexts. These have included narratives centred on my own belonging and identity as one of the mob, my relationship with the land, my way of communicating via stories and anecdotes, and my collectivist, animist affiliation with life that I have often attempted to wrestle into compatibility with the 'scientific' approach to western psychology.

As such, reflexive processes have assisted me to assess my intellectual and academic investments in any Aboriginal research; such processes insist that I unearth, define and abandon hitherto unconscious (Layton, 2004) intentions which motivate a specific 'researcher' position. These have included being outcome-focused, which inhibits my capacity to stay present in qualitative interviewing. I also have come to realise that it is best to relinquish positioning myself as a detached observer, a position ordinarily adopted in psychology research to preserve the integrity of the investigation (Davey, 2011). This type of detachment—whether from white fella or black fella researchers—often does not sit well with Elders, and makes it problematic for me to fathom and document the authentic lived experiences of Aboriginal consultants and participants via the qualitative interview research process.

Phenomenology

Given the phenomenological nature of qualitative, ethnographic research, it is not always possible, or necessary, to remain rigorously detached from the research (Davey, 2011). On the contrary, I have discovered that immersing myself in the narrative (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013), into the yarning, elicits a greater intimacy of understanding of the lived experience of Original people. According to many Elders with whom I have spoken, this is the only acceptable way to understand them, their expertise, their definitions, and their frames of reference (Arbon, 2008). If, as a researcher, I hope to understand Original people ever more deeply, I must be willing

to view them as experts and meet them on their own terms—to overlay colonising research parameters would not only be insulting, but produce irrelevant research outcomes and findings—findings that echo with the hollow absence of Elder input and Original authenticity.

Narrative: Yarning with a Purpose

Narrative is found in many oral and written traditions such as legends, fables, myths, music, songs, dance, books, dramas and history (White, 2007). Narrative is also present in every age, place and culture, in its diversity of forms. There have never been people without narrative, and, in particular, indigenous cultures have depended on narrative for the transmission of knowledge to subsequent generations (White, 2007). Aboriginal narratives are to be found in every stone, tree, mountain, creek, flower and animal of country.[9] The narrative approach upholds the fact that everyone has a story that feeds the family, the environment, the spirit, the animals and the culture (Arkinson & Delamont, 2006; Wingard & Lester, 2001). Yuval-Davis (2006) stated that when people are invited to engage in storytelling, the individual and group identities become narratives: 'stories people tell themselves and others about who they are and who they are not' (p. 202). Yuval-Davis also described that within the narrative approach, the identity is fluid: 'always producing itself through the combined processes of being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong' (p. 15).

The narrative method of data collection is notably compatible with the yarning way of communicating amongst Original people, and can be used to write, and rewrite the storylines of Original identity and belonging (Denborough, 2014; Garvey, 2007). Consequently, from a narrative discourse perspective, the narrative style has been acknowledged as the therapeutic, and conversational research approach of choice in a number of Original people's communities (Wingard & Lester, 2001). It is the narrative discourse method of communication and meaning-making that is particularly useful for Aboriginal research. It is an effective method for keeping the Original voices intact—keeping them as expert (Wingard, Johnson, & Drahm-Butler, 2015; Chilisa, 2012)—and not buried/lost in Western research frameworks.

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[9]Original people's relationships to 'country' are intricate and inter-relational. Original people will often use the singular word 'country' to make the connection to family, tribe, mob, and other important associations with specific parts of this land that has become known as Australia (Creative Spirits, n.d.).

Things to Keep in Mind When Relating with the Mob and/or Engaging in Research

The Dilution of Mob Identity and Its Impact on Psychosocial Health of Original People

Research documents a strong, mutually reinforcing link, between dilution of mob identity (predicated by invasion, colonisation, the stolen generations[10] and ensuing transgenerational trauma[11]), disruption to bonds of family and country, and the psychosocial health of Original people (Atkinson, Nelson, & Atkinson, 2010; Cunneen & Libesman, 2002). Further, the manifestation of transgenerational trauma within the mob appears—at face value—to be a tacit example of intergenerational transmission of psychosocial behaviour and symptomologies. Such intergenerational transmission has been found to occur across demographic trajectories such as age, income, education, and living location, due to societal processes that influence the life course, and operate within family and community structures (Liefbroer & Elzinga, 2012). These processes appear to be the most vulnerable to trauma. In relation to the mob, the trauma of invasion, colonisation and the stolen generations—past, and ongoing—would apply.

Assimilation Processes and Their Connection to Genocide

Moses (2000) and Tatz (1999) assert[12] that the assimilation processes of colonisation inflicted on Original people have amounted to genocide. Harff & Gurr (1988), in their

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[10]The 'stolen generations' refers to Original people who were forcibly taken from their parents, families and country to be raised in Christian missions or white families as a way to 'assimilate' them into white culture (Australians Together, 2014). This government practice was largely carried out between 1886 and 1970; however, removal of Original children is enforced to this day at higher rates than ever (Cunneen, 1997; Cunneen & Libesman, 2002; Grandmothers against Removal, 2016).

[11]Transgenerational trauma refers to trauma that is so illimitable, that it transfers from the generation of origin to subsequent generations. It is passed on through the repeated experiences that are the consequences of government policies and practices, through the repeated experiences of racism and discrimination, through repeated socioeconomic disadvantage and psychological and spiritual suffering (Ranzijn et al., 2009).

[12]The philosophy of 'assimilation' was central to the stolen generations in that the Australian government assumed white superiority over black inferiority, promoting 'natural' (when it was actually enforced) elimination and/or assimilation of Original people into white cultural contexts (Ranzijn et al., 2009). The Darwinistic, unilinear, anthropological perspective favoured in the late 1800s meant that Original culture was viewed as 'backward'; Original people were seen as physically inferior, with psychological deficiencies. They were believed to be physically and culturally unchanging, and therefore a dying race (Oldmeadow, 1968). Tragically, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Original people had been stereotyped as "primitive Stone Age curiosities" (Ranzijn et al., 2009, p. 182).

discussion of hegemonic and xenophobic genocide, may offer an appropriate model for thinking about genocide as appertains to Original people. They described hegemonic genocide as the forced submission of racial, ethnic, religious and/or national groups to the authority of the state.

Given the Australian Government's policies (e.g. assimilation) during colonisation and the stolen generations, it can be said that Original people have been victims of hegemonic genocide.

Harff & Gurr (1988) go on to explain xenophobic genocide as the murder/massacre campaigns by the state for national protection and/or purification of victims who are deemed threatening or alien. As such, the extensive and intentional massacres of Original people during invasion and colonisation between 1788 and 1928 (Elder, 1998) are tacit examples of xenophobic genocide. These dark chapters in Australian history have inexorably contributed to the transgenerational trauma of Original people (McKendrick et al., 1992). This, in turn, has made belonging to the mob not just a vital mechanism of personal and cultural identity for Original people, but often a fraught kinship based on psychosocial survival through extreme adversity (Ganesharajah, 2009).

The Psychology of Childhood Trauma and Its Consequences for Belonging to the Mob

The many deeply moving stories from victims of the stolen generations notwithstanding, there is a paucity of information/research on contemporary attachment experience/theory as may apply to stolen generations victims. The consequences of early trauma are only just beginning to be fully understood. Furthermore, assumptions are made about how ruptures in belonging to the mob may affect Original identity (Carson et al., 2007). However, there is a lack of literature on trauma and its sequelae that particularly relates to the childhood removal from family, and the transposition into an alien, and not always attuned or caring, separate environment (Bowlby, 1979; Winnicott, 1957) and how that may affect the wellbeing of Original people. The importance of the early mother–child relationship for positive adult functioning was first recognised by object-relations[13] and attachment theorists. They were further elaborated in self-psychology and the emerging field of infant research. In the third millennium (of Western psychological theorising) understanding continues to increase through fields of neuroscience, developmental psychology, and trauma studies. The extent of trauma experienced by Original people post colonising European contact, and the effects of that trauma, are yet to be fully acknowledged, let alone researched. It has included murder, fatal illness—for which Original people

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[13]Object Relations Theory (Fairbairn, 1952; Winnicott, 1957) proposed that the human psyche evolves in direct relationship to significant others. As such, it supports the importance of the child/primary-caregiver bond. Disruption to this primary relationship significantly impairs the development of the personality and sense of self in the world (Bollas, 1987).

had no immunity—kidnapping and abuse of children, the dissolution of community and culture, loss of relationship to country and language, and interruption of good parenting.

The sequelae of such trauma tends to be currently discussed predominantly in terms of enduring Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It has also been linked to the development of personality disorders (Raphael & Swan, 1997). However, the research that focuses on archaic trauma as a result of catastrophic disruption—in an object relations sense—has not been researched specifically from the perspective of Original people. The traumatic rupture of early childhood bonds that were inflicted en masse by invasion, colonisation and assimilation is rarely considered in the context of the unique psychological disposition of Original people. It is suggested here that this may partly be due to lack of research into the differences in psychology of Original people and Caucasian Australians. The latter represents the population norm. Consequently, I would strongly discourage anyone working in Aboriginal contexts from making assumptions about Original people based upon white, privileged, colonising, psychological concepts.

Unfortunately, Original people are often blamed for the difficult behaviours resulting from the impact of transgenerational trauma (Behrendt, Cunneen, & Libesman, 2009).

Concurrently, the mob is frequently burdened with unrealistic demands enforced with little understanding of the origin of the behaviours, or the damage from which they have evolved i.e. pivotal archaic trauma as a result of catastrophic disruption, and the breaking down of Indigenous cultural norms (Purdie, Dudgeon, & Walker, 2010). According to Ranzijn et al. (2009) this equates to unearned disadvantage.[14] Blaming the victims (Roberts, 2016) is a primary mechanism for invalidating Original people's lived experience, thereby adding to the cycle of oppression (Ranzijn et al., 2009), persistent psychosocial deficits and ruptures to psycho-emotional and spiritual wellbeing (Purdie et al., 2010).

As such, it is pivotal—in participating in principled research and/or interactions with Original people—to look through and beyond any personal or cultural symptoms of trauma—to see the breathtaking expertise and resilience that has allowed for at least sixty thousand years of actively continuing lineage. Looking through that lens, the next step is to engage in respectful interactions that can be recognised by mob members as supportive—on their terms. In research contexts, this will include looking over every single written word multiple times, and asking Original people to assist in this process, to assure positive, resilience-recognising language. At the same time, it is important to take every opportunity to engage in the kind of compassionate truth-telling that educates non-Original people about historical and contemporary contexts that uniquely and directly impact Original people. If contemporary Australian society in any way takes pride in the unique, iconic aspects of this land's Original people that are often used to symbolise Australian culture as a whole, and wishes to continue to

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[14]The term refers to the idea that Aboriginal people are disadvantaged just because they are Aboriginal, as opposed to unearned privilege that says that white people are advantaged just because of their 'whiteness' (Ranzijn et al., 2009).

promote them at home—and on the world stage—then it must cherish our Original Elders, help take care of, and protect the mob, and only support government and social policies that allow the mob to flourish and be well.

I will conclude this chapter by returning to Uncle sitting on the couch, on my verandah, in the Winter sun. 'This spot right here is good' he says, 'I can feel the sun and I can feel the breeze on my face, and listen to the trees telling me their stories'. I sit on the ground beside his couch—get set to stay longer than may feel comfortable—and prepare myself to be silent for more time than I have to spare today. For experience tells me that this is the only way that my 'self' can meet his expert 'self'. It is in the silence, and the powerful and affecting whispering of the trees, that the Dreaming stories, on *this* day, will be transmitted to me. *This* is the time, the place, and the way the 'self' and the 'other'—whomever and whatever they may happen to be today—Uncle, me, the trees, the breeze, the sun, the unknown— will find each other in the Dreaming…the Dreaming that is always here, has always been here…and is always being Dreamed by the Elders…

In Gratitude for My Elders Past, Present and Emerging…

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Chapter 3
Authentically Modifying a First-Year Psychology Subject

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Abstract This chapter describes the way that collaboration with local Elders led to revision of a first-year psychology subject. We outline the changes that were made to several critical areas including teaching students about critical reflection and how to work effectively. The Wiradyuri way of living and pedagogical framework were foundational to the revision. This new approach led us to reflect on, and change the nature and types of assessment. In this chapter we illustrate the way that authentic Aboriginal knowledge and pedagogy became an integral part of an existing subject. It demonstrates that the process of decolonising curriculum can occur through partnership under the guidance of local Elders. We anticipate that this will lead to greater cultural safety and better learning for Aboriginal and non-aboriginal students and teachers.

Introduction

We start this chapter by introducing ourselves.

Jillene: I am a non-aboriginal woman from Sydney NSW, living in Wiradyuri country (Bathurst, NSW). The first person in my immediate family to complete a tertiary degree, I have worked as a university lecturer for 17 years. I co-wrote and taught the subject that is the topic of this chapter in 2009 with the aim of addressing the gap in knowledge of First Nations Australian history and cultures in Psychology.

Mallyan: I am a Wiradyuri Elder who is 75 years old. I was nurtured by my birth mother and by Wiradyuri women whom I all referred to as mother and was initiated into manhood by my father and a group of male Wiradyuri Elders. From the beginning I was taught that Yindyamarra is not just a word, it is the way of life for Wiradyuri people that encompasses a set of principles that is adaptable to many other cultures.

Wirribee: I am a proud Wiradyuri woman from Dubbo NSW. I currently live on my father's part of Country Bathurst NSW. I have always been immersed in my

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Wiradyuri culture ever since I can remember. I honour my Old People by passing on cultural knowledge through education.

Simone: I am a non-aboriginal woman living in Dubbo on Wiradjuri country, teaching at University for 9 years. My cultural knowledge has been gained through experience, including learning from my extended Aboriginal and Tongan family. I hope for greater knowledge, understanding and an appreciation of Indigenous Australian cultures will allow for meaningful Reconciliation in this country.

Leonie: I am a non-aboriginal woman from Sydney NSW, living in Yuin country (Wollongong, NSW). I am the first person in my immediate family to complete a tertiary degree and have worked as an academic for 10 years. I have been involved with Indigenous knowledges and perspectives at UOW since early 2018, I participated in the Jindaola programme that challenges academics to find authentic, meaningful ways to integrate Indigenous knowledges into their discipline teaching.

This chapter is about the modification of a first-year psychology subject which had been part of the curriculum for 10 years. The original subject was created to meet the requirements of the Indigenous Education Strategy (IES) of the university, an aim of which was to embed Indigenous Australian perspectives throughout all degrees.[1] The initiative at the university followed closely from the Curriculum Guidelines for Psychology (Ranzijn, McConnochie, Day, Nolan & Wharton, 2008) which suggested that a first-year subject which focused solely on pre and post invasion Aboriginal culture and history, contemporary issues and the role of psychology would provide a solid foundation. It could then be followed by scaffolded material throughout later years, culminating with a third-year elective subject. This approach became known as the UniSA model as it originated at the University of South Australia (Ranzijn, McConnochie, Nolan & Day, 2007). The original first-year subject was based on this model.

The subject was taught conjointly by the Schools of Indigenous Australian Studies (SIAS) and Psychology. The former presented and assessed the Indigenous foundational material in the first six weeks and the latter the relevant psychology and professional development content in the final six. The subject was taught online and consisted of 12 topics, supported by live, weekly online sessions and a discussion board. A good working relationship between the two Schools and the convenors meant that problems and divisions between the first and second half of the subject were mostly avoided. It was first taught in 2009 and for the first five years the convenor from SIAS was from Kamilaroi. When this person retired, Simone took her place. This change appeared to be seamless but it meant that now the subject was being taught by two non-aboriginal academics (Simone and Jillene).

Evidence from annual student evaluations and student performance suggested that overall the subject was successful at achieving its aims. Responses to mandatory questions and voluntary open-ended comments were mostly positive. The averages of these evaluations were the same or better than the School of Psychology average. The distribution of grades was also comparable to the School.

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[1]This initiative preceded a similar objective by Universities Australia in 2017.

There were a couple of problems which required modifications to be made. Teaching online at times restricted voluntary student participation: some students would discuss material on the discussion board but others didn't engage. Our concern was that, given the emotive nature of some of the content, it was hard to know whether students were distressed. Nor could we gauge their support at these times. It seemed imperative to have some face-to-face classes, but there did not seem to be a clear way to do this as the student cohort was geographically disparate and the subject was a 'distance' subject, which was not intended for face-to-face contact.

A problem of deep concern was that a portion of Aboriginal students reported that they did not like the subject. It's important to realise that this feedback was mostly given anecdotally and seemed to contradict formal evaluations. One of the main reasons students disliked the subject was that Aboriginal culture was being taught by non-aboriginal people using white methods. Thus unintentionally, the subject had fallen into the colonial trap of 'white-fellas telling black–fella history' (Uncle Baribun cf. Okan, in press, p. 15). One student was critical of enrolling in a subject where they knew more about culture than the person teaching. Some of the students commented that the subject assumed that all students were white. This made them feel excluded. It also made it difficult when responding to assessments on white privilege. These students did not like the Western pedagogical framework. As convenors, this was a serious issue for us; one of the main reasons for the subject was to represent First Nations reality and knowledge in a way that was relevant and encouraging for Aboriginal students. Albeit a small number, the feedback from these students indicated that we were failing.

The reason for change however, preceded the feedback from Aboriginal students. Rather, it came about from a heart-felt need. Engagement with the local Wiradyuri Elders and the belief that traditional knowledge holders would teach things in a way that opens minds and engages hearts drove it. From this perspective, the desire to make changes was less about meeting a set of learning outcomes or solving problems and more about giving each student a first-hand experience of the beauty, gentleness and strength of some of the sovereign cultures of our nation, and to open their minds to the idea that Aboriginal methods and knowledge could renew psychology making it more appropriate and relevant for contemporary Australian society. As the sovereign authorities, Elders are the source, and they teach from the heart. We believe that this experience is life-changing for the learner. The idea that Aboriginal pedagogy delivers intangible and holistic changes for learners is becoming well-recognised (Department of Education and Communities, 2012; Yunkaporta, 2009; Yunkaporta & Kirby, 2011). Our involvement as non-aboriginal learners in this space has shown us that Elders give an experience that we think is lacking in Western education, and desperately needed. We believe that once they experience this, *all* students are hungry for more.

Reflection—Simone

Teaching into Indigenous Australian studies as a non-indigenous woman has its challenges and these have been compounded with my personal experiences of mental health in my extended Aboriginal and Tongan family. The issues that are taught in this subject have been dealt with either inefficiently or positively within the family, so I have often felt rather than thought and drawn on personal anecdotes to make the connection between readings and what students desperately want to know— what role can they play in 'fixing'? Yet I now realise that it is more a balance between imparting knowledge, and teaching the students to be agents of change in their profession. Assessing students' knowledge about what they understand to be cultural aspects is fraught with challenges if, teaching online, you cannot understand or see the cultural identities of the students. The most common feedback has been; 'why is this subject taught online?'.

Other feedback received from students has been cause for reflection. How do we teach stressful content and then only be available on the other end of the phone? Can we be flexible about their learning pace—when encountering hard facts about treatment of people by racist policies? Issues of identity are raised by students who openly identify online as having Aboriginal heritage.

Knowledge and Scholarship Around the Topic

On the topic of embedding First Nations Australian knowledge and perspectives into the curriculum in psychology it has been argued that a decolonised curriculum is the optimum approach (Castell, Bullen, Garvey & Jones, 2018; Darlaston Jones et al., 2014; Dudgeon, Darlaston-Jones, Phillips et al., 2016). A decolonised curriculum is one which challenges the assumptions and narrative of the dominant cultural group (Darlaston Jones et al., 2014). It allows the systemic oppression that leads to First Nations Australian disadvantage to be identified. This is critical for bringing about broad scale societal change. Further, a decolonised approach recognises First Nations Australians as sovereign and their perspectives central to knowledge production.

The curriculum guidelines from a recent project conducted in partnership with the Australian Psychological Society, the Australian Indigenous Psychology Education Project (AIPEP) argued that in order to recognise Aboriginal perspectives as integral, rather than token or 'other', the assumptions and practices of the dominant group must come under scrutiny (Darlaston-Jones et al., 2014; Dudgeon, Darlaston-Jones, Cranney et al., 2016). Therefore, instead of teaching 'about' Aboriginal people, the philosophy and assumptions of all cultures are subject to critical analyses. Importantly, this includes the dominant culture, so that rather than being normative, it is opened to questioning (Dudgeon, Darlaston-Jones, Phillips et al., 2016).

Practically, a decolonised approach represents a giant leap; changes to both content and pedagogy of whole courses. To remedy this, the AIPEP curriculum guidelines (Dudgeon, Darlaston-Jones, Phillips et al., 2016) provided steps to transition curriculum. However, many Australian psychology courses seem to be steeped in a traditional Western empirical approach and taught by staff who have acquired their expertise from this approach (Dudgeon, Darlaston Jones, Phillips et al., 2016a, b). This then provides the model of pedagogy that they adopt. While decolonising curriculum is a worthy aspiration, it requires deep-seated changes to staff ways of thinking and expertise. This takes time. But, our experience is that contemporary university affords very little time to develop such changes. The culture of the tertiary sector and the pressures of maintaining accreditation and quality standards can make this task seem too hard, especially when it is often not clear how to progress incrementally and still meet the agendas set by deadlines and outcomes.

Conversation with Elders; Mallyan and Wirribee—Jill

Originally, I asked for advice about how to better teach and assess critical reflection. From a white perspective these initial discussions seemed very general and not about critical reflection at all. At times I became impatient. I was also painfully aware of how rude this was. In my defence, I can only say that it was very hard to operate in the time-pressured, outcome-driven environment which is contemporary university culture, while simultaneously having the careful, and deliberate way of considering a topic that is the Elders' way. One of the key challenges as an academic working in this space is to be the buffer between the demands of the institution and the unhurried, thorough and purposeful way of working that the Elders require. There is no right way to do this; being guided by my humanity and 'fighting the good fight' were my starting point.

I was aware from prior experiences with Elders that what seemed like unrelated ideas in fact had deep and sensible connections. It was my white-fella tendency to be a reductionist and my inability to see the big picture at the time that made for the perception of disconnect. I made an explicit decision to ignore the university deadlines. Instead, I decided to slow down. I made a commitment to trust the process, to work with the Elders and learn what I needed to learn. This meant abandoning some of my white-fella ways, one of which was a need for control. Very quickly, following this conscious decision, the collaborative work on the subject began in earnest.

There were many very concentrated immersion sessions where knowledge of culture was shared with trust and willingness. Working together, all aspects of the subject were considered. Coming from a Western education, it was hard to adapt to the Aboriginal tendency to see the big picture first and then to deconstruct this into smaller pieces. The Western approach is often the reverse of this; a linear approach starting with the first step and working to the end. Maybe each approach has its merits. But for each of us it required a big shift in perspective, almost like learning

a new language. Wiradyuri lore, way of living and ways of teaching were explained along with very rich, pragmatic and varied suggestions for teaching different aspects of the subject.

Yindyamarra and Wiradyuri Pedagogy: Wirribee

Two principles formed the basis of initial changes to the subject. Most importantly, they provided very clear guidance on the way of teaching and interacting with the students. The first of these was Yindyamarra which is the Wiradyuri way of living. It means to honour and respect, to go slowly, and to be gentle and polite. The expectation is that while on Country people will abide by lore and behave accordingly. The footprint of the university is in Wiradyuri country. So, Yindyamarra extends to academic staff and students and applies to all aspects of teaching. To honour this, teachers need to gari yala (speak the truth) dhuluyanha (walk straight), i.e. walk the talk.

The second principle was the pedagogical framework; Yindyamaldhuray Yalbilinya Mawang (Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Elders) which means respectful learning together. It is the name given to a comprehensive, five-phase framework which takes the learner on a journey from novice to independent.

The intellectual property of this pedagogical framework Yindyamaldhuray Yalbilinya Mawang is owned and copyrighted to Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Elders, we are the only ones who carry the intellectual knowledge to teach this pedagogical framework.

These knowledges have been passed on to us by our Old People and Ancestors.

The framework came about when yarning about the 8 ways of learning, and it was created because 8 ways didn't suit our Wiradyuri context. The Framework is copyrighted so that any permissions, changes or modifications need to come through Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Elders. Therefore its use in this context in Psychology is also copyrighted to us.

From a Western perspective, the question is not so much how we teach students about these principles, but how we emulate these principles in our teaching. If we are behaving according to Yindyamarra, pedagogy follows. For example, respect is two way and starts by teachers demonstrating respect and care for students. Being gentle and going slowly means for example, providing the time and space to learn and to understand the concepts, and giving due time to answer questions. Yindyamaldhuray Yalbilinya Mawang (Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Elders) provides the necessary space for students to make mistakes and then learn from these. According to this framework it is expected that mistakes are part of normal learning and not a reason to fail. Importantly, teachers walk the learning journey alongside their students and support them until they reach independence.

Critical Reflexivity

There is strong evidence indicating that to work effectively professionals from the dominant culture need to become aware of and question the foundations, beliefs and values of their culture and themselves. This reduces the risk of further oppressing First Nations people (Dudgeon, Harris et al., 2016a, b; Ranzijn et al., 2008). Ranzijn, et al.'s (2008) curriculum guidelines were informed by interviews with Aboriginal people who regarded psychology as a white profession that had little to offer (Ranzijn et al., 2007a, b). This was further supported in the AIPEP workforce guidelines (Dudgeon, Harris et al., 2016a, b) which were based on interviews with psychologists and other mental health professionals who worked with Aboriginal clients. Dudgeon, Harris et al., (2016a, b), reported that the majority of psychology students were from a white middle-class background and that awareness of their privilege and culture was needed to work effectively with Aboriginal people. The interviews indicated that many graduates did not have this awareness.

The essence of critical reflexivity is turning the gaze inward to inspect our own culture. For many non-aboriginal psychology students, their culture is invisible. As a consequence, being required to identify and inspect their culture and the associated beliefs and values is both novel and challenging. Many have not previously been asked to think about or describe these things.

Simple Ways to Encourage Reflection: Mallyan

The starting point for many (white) students is that the gaze is outward. The gaze needs to be turned inward. This is uncomfortable for them, so they need to learn to sit with the discomfort. They need to consider their own world views, assumptions, beliefs and how these are formed intergenerationally. It's a matter of meeting students where they are, i.e. tailoring learning to their starting point. We can do this by asking some simple questions. This gets them where they are at.

It is crucial to engage students' humanity. This starts with the realisation that we are all people, and regardless of culture, we can find things that we have in common. Empathy, the ability to take on another person's perspective and imagine what they are feeling (Rogers, 1975) is required to form meaningful connections and engage with people in a healing relationship. Psychology has identified three kinds of empathy; cognitive, emotional and compassionate (Goleman, 1995). To have empathy, we need to reflect on our own feelings in our interactions with a client and consider the impact of what we are doing on that person. Sometimes simple and gentle exercises such as slowing down to look at a face and consider the feelings being portrayed and the feelings that it brings up in us can be effective. This engages both emotional and compassionate empathy. A gentle and empathetic approach by the teacher can also assist, by modelling this for the student. As we are encouraging students to expose

their vulnerability, it is important not to abuse their trust. This became important in assessing critical reflection.

Assessment

Feedback from students suggests that Western teaching practices can be culturally unsafe for many learners, both Aboriginal and non-aboriginal. This includes assessment. We maintain that the ways that traditional Western pedagogy assesses what is learned is not always conducive to learning that aims to develop deep knowledge and reflective practices. Failure to acknowledge and address the characteristics which actually inhibit learning then limits the potential of students.

From our combined teaching perspectives, it could be argued that Western assessment tends to be deficit rather than strength-focused. What is wrong or missing from a piece of work is often given more weight than what is correct. While this reflects a tradition that aims to achieve excellence through challenge and critique, we argue, it does not empower or encourage students. It is not a gentle or slow approach and does not respect or honour the learner. Further, student evaluations reflect that contemporary students have difficulty learning from this kind of assessment.

We have found that the time-limited nature of assessment tends to reward instant, uncomplicated results. A deadline without options to resubmit tends to circumvent a full understanding. Instead, to survive, students shortcut a full understanding rather than committing to a personal journey and individual development. A consequence can be inauthentic responses from students such as writing what they think is required in order to pass, rather than writing what they really think and testing out their ideas. Poignantly, feedback from one student suggested that this was an approach they adopted in order to pass.

Despite these shortcomings, there is a formal educational requirement to assess. Most often this is summative. But, valid assessment can be formative, providing feedback about the acquisition of concepts and knowledge to students, as well as feedback for instructors about the effectiveness of their teaching. As teachers, the question is how to assess in a meaningful way to ensure that students have obtained the fundamentals and to also provide feedback in a way that is not punitive or judgmental and encourages exploration, mistakes and personal growth? In this space it is also part of trying to create a safe learning environment so that we don't automatically shut down the students' genuine emotional responses (i.e., close their hearts).

Applying Gari Yala and Dhuluyanha to Assessment: Wirribee

Together, we considered a better way to design and assess activities. A process with cultural integrity will be able to identify when information has been transformed to personal knowledge. This assesses the student as knowledge creator and as an active learner. It also recognises that learning evolves slowly over time. Yindyamarra provides some guiding principles for assessment. One of these is the need to go slowly and be gentle. In assessment this meant recognising that students will take time to learn the material in a meaningful and lasting way. It also means to go gently when marking. In essence, assessment needs to be formative, forgiving and encouraging of the journey. There were times when, what seemed like a very good assessment for critical reflection was not used because the rules for the subject dictated that it had to be graded and grading this kind of work was not in keeping with Yindyamarra. In order to gari yala and dhuluyanha we had to consider other ways to assess.

In practical terms this meant providing the time for students to submit work and receive feedback. This was difficult because of large class sizes. A first step was to set up some very basic tests of knowledge which provided immediate feedback and then give the students the opportunity to revisit and resubmit.

Another change to assessment came from Yindyamaldhuray Yalbilinya Mawang (Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Elders). If staff and students are engaged in respectful learning together, then students cannot fail. Instead, the learning journey is continued until independence is obtained. An interim step towards achieving this was to remove fail grades from the marking rubrics and replace them with 'have not achieved sufficient learning at this time'. This may seem a very minor difference. But, it represented a significant change in the way that we thought about assessment. A further progression in this approach is to reduce the number of assignments, and instead work towards one assessment which is scaffolded; made up of multiple parts, where students receive feedback and are then enabled to rework these segments into the final whole.

A final principle of assessment was adopted from Yunkaporta's pedagogical framework whereby knowledge is assessed by its usefulness to community. 'Students and teachers need to be constantly asking: What does this knowledge mean for me and my community and how can I use it for local benefit?' (Yunkaporta, as cited in Department of Education & Communities, 2012, p. 15). From this perspective learning has important community obligations and as teachers we need to assess from the position of what the student is expected to do with this knowledge. In our case this was to work inclusively and collaboratively with First Nations people. In adopting this approach, assessment became much more practical, centred on imagining work and knowing what to do.

We used *Cassie's Story: Dyan Ngal*, an online digital narrative given by a young Aboriginal woman (CSU, 2011) to set the framework. It is based on a contemporary case study presented by Associate Professor Wendy Nolan in staff cultural competency training sessions. Cassie's narrative is about the situation in a local NSW town

and the experience of forced removal of her community from their homes. There is a clear continuity between past practice and policy and the contemporary experiences of Cassie and her community; issues such as forced removals and evictions still continue (Hill et al., 2016). In the first-year assessment, students are asked to imagine they will be working with Cassie.

Student Voices: Simone

The use of Cassie's Story is consistent with Yunkaporta's (2009) assertion that the 8 Ways pedagogy can work by incorporating Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning—in this case, a narrative. Using this allows students to relate on a more personal level. Feedback included comments such as 'I really did learn a lot about myself and the way I view others'. Reflective writing also allows students to explore themselves and their knowledge, skills and attitudes, forming the basis for ongoing cultural competency.

Working Effectively

A topic at the end of the subject was about working effectively. The modification to this lesson probably best exemplifies the way that teaching collaboratively, under the guidance of Mallyan and Wirribee, brought real-world relevance to the subject. Previously, the topic had content based on the latest research. But it lacked pragmatic know-how. For example, a lot has been written about working effectively (e.g. Dudgeon, Garvey & Pickett, 2000; Dudgeon, Milroy & Walker, 2012; Purdie, Dudgeon & Walker, 2010). However, there are few guidelines about ways to navigate in new country in order to find the people with cultural knowledge and how to engage. It is recognised that when new to a community, a psychologist needs to become known (Crawford, Dudgeon, Garvey & Pickett, 2010; Garvey, 2008). The problem is finding the people you need to talk to. Anecdotally we know that this limits many graduates who go to remote communities and do not have this knowledge. Ultimately, it means that they are a lost resource to the community until they work out who to talk to and how to engage.

Mallyan created a simple flow chart for finding the right people and engaging with them to provide a straight forward, pragmatic guide. The method of culturally safe engagement with clients was illustrated in a recorded interview with Kelly Hyde, who is an Aboriginal mental health worker with a psychology degree. These authentic additions to the topics gave real value. They provided concrete ideas for students on how to work effectively, so that when they enter the workplace they know where to start.

Conclusion

Wiradyuri Elders, Mallyan and Wirribee have many strategies for teaching in this space. This chapter demonstrates that these evolved once collaboration on the design and teaching of the subject commenced. With the benefit of hindsight, the Wiradyuri way of living and pedagogical framework has become an alternative way to achieve a decolonised approach.

Teaching provides the model of demonstrating multiple perspectives, which ultimately leads to questioning the dominant view (Yunkaporta, 2009). Further, it has been argued that through teaching and deep learning, common ground and reconciliation between perspectives is achievable (Nakata, 2007; Yunkaporta, 2009). Importantly, in the current case, it provides the opportunity for non-aboriginal academics to learn, develop and change. Rather than being inauthentic experts, academics become learners in this process and are taught by the Elders alongside their students. This Yindyamaldhuray Yalbilinya Mawang (Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Elders) models the curious and open attitude for students that is necessary to learn about culture. It also redefines the hierarchical teacher/student relationship to become more equal, respectful and empathic. These relationships make learning more culturally safe for all learners, but especially for Aboriginal students.

It is important to recognise that while the subject takes a decolonised approach, at the time of writing, overall the School of Psychology did not. This may seem incoherent. But, we believe that there are still merits. It is anticipated that students will enjoy the benefits of this approach to learning and that it will be more meaningful. A taste of this experience will lead them to look for other areas of enquiry that use this approach, and will lead to questioning the traditional approach to teaching psychology. It could be argued that this in itself is change agency in action.

The Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020 requires that Australian First Nations perspectives and knowledge are embedded in university courses in all disciplines (Universities Australia, 2017). As a consequence, it is anticipated that many Schools of Psychology are currently trying to incorporate content into contemporary courses, but for the reasons outlined earlier, cannot simply dispense with the Western approach to existing curriculum and start again. Rather than seeing the task as all too daunting, this chapter provides some examples for modifying an existing subject. This may create opportunities for further developments elsewhere. Importantly, with collaborative partnerships, change can evolve slowly as relationships between First Nations Australian knowledge holders and academic staff are strengthened through trust and mutual goals. We also should not overlook the influence that modelling these partnerships has on students (W. Nolan, personal communication, January 17, 2009). Indeed, this may be as significant as the content in providing concrete examples of how to work collaboratively.

As a result of abandoning the Western agenda of deadlines and outcomes, modifications to the subject were still evolving at the time that this chapter was written. Because it is a work in progress, we have chosen to illustrate the way in which some of what was learnt was incorporated into the subject. This collaborative work

is ongoing. We are currently planning to team-teach the subject and working through the way to do this across campuses or online. The big picture is still emerging, and we wait with eager anticipation to see the effect on students.

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Chapter 4
The Benefits of in Country Experiences at the Tertiary Level

Lloyd Dolan, Barbara Hill, Jillene Harris, Melinda J. Lewis, and Bruce William Stenlake

Abstract This chapter explores the notions of connection to Country and culture from both Wiradyuri and non-Wiradyuri perspectives. It also explores how immersion in Country—in Wiradyuri Country and Ngiyeempaa Country—can be an educative tool that is both powerful and empowering but also comes with certain risks. This chapter is marked by multiple voices, opinions and viewpoints which honour the unique perspectives and experiences of each person. This polyvocal approach (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2015; Thimm, Chaudhuri, & Mahler, 2017; Tobin & Davidson, 1990) provides an opportunity for individual reflections both personally and professionally on what the authors feel learning in country can bring to the academe as a key aspect in building meaningful relationships with First Nations people.

Let's start by introducing the multiple voices. Hello, my name is Lloyd Dolan, and I am a Wiradjuri man born in Hay, New South Wales (NSW). I have spent almost

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[1]Wiradyuri and Wiradjuri are used interchangeably in this chapter and refer to the same nation in Central West NSW. The Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri-Dyilang (Plains people of the Wiradyuri) do not pronounce 'j' and instead use 'y'. So when the material referred to in this chapter comes from this area, 'y' is used. Otherwise 'j' is used.

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30 years in the tertiary education sector, working with First Nations communities, government agencies and Non-government agencies across NSW. I am Jillene Harris, a non-Aboriginal woman from Sydney NSW, living in Wiradyuri[1] country (Bathurst, NSW). The first person in my immediate family to complete a tertiary degree, I have worked as a university lecturer for 17 years. I am Barbara Hill a non-Aboriginal woman who has worked in Indigenous Higher Education for three decades. I have walked with First Nations people as an ally over that time and will continue to do so into the future. I am Melinda Lewis reflecting on thirty years of professional and academic practices supporting health science education. With a near-completed PhD, A story of PhD as People, I am interested in story in all forms, and value the pleasure of deep-time learning with First Nations Elders and knowledge holders. The last voice here I am Bruce Stenlake an educator with thirty years of teaching in science, management and psychology. I am passionate about learning experiences that lead to deeper levels of human connection and being, and have found his time working in country profoundly rewarding.

Learning *in* Country (rather than *on* Country) has been an integral part of education for Indigenous Australian peoples since time immemorial. Without Country there would be no stories, no care, no law, no continuity or sustainability, no transfer of culture and no enrichment and maintenance of cultural practices. It has only been recently however, that the higher education sector has come to a shallow appreciation of these deeper concepts and ways of knowing, being and doing. As Anthony McKnight (2015) reminds us, respecting Country is very complex and doesn't always sit well with Western Academic ways of knowing. In the past two decades in particular there has been an uneven adoption of *on* Country cultural immersion experiences at universities in Australia for both staff and students, even when it has been established that experiences such as these are one way for non-Indigenous students and staff begin to be exposed to what it means to build relationships with Indigenous Australian peoples.

Language Imbued in Country: Geography and Learning with Elders

This chapter explores the notions of connection to Country and culture from both Wiradyuri and non-Wiradyuri perspectives. It also explores how immersion in Country—in Wiradyuri Country and Ngiyeempaa Country—can be an educative tool that is both powerful and empowering but also comes with certain risks. Pedagogical approaches based on *Mambuwarra ngaaminyagigu, Wudhagarbinya wudhadhuray-gigu, Winhangarra gulbaligigu (Wiradyuri* ways of seeing, hearing and knowing), the sharing of ancestral cultural voices in Western academic structures (McKnight, 2015), Indigenous pedagogy (Yunkaporta & Kirby, 2011), community of practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002) and the power of storytelling as a pedagogical approach (Fahy, 2007) impact the ideas in this chapter. Place-based pedagogy

is not new. How place impacts our ways of seeing, hearing and knowing has been the way Wiradyuri and Ngiyeempaa have taught for millennium. If you belong to a place you see it differently, you hear it intimately and you can understand and know it essentially. Over time this perception only deepens and evolves, as does the sense of belonging, and being a part of place. How we as people experience this sense of belonging is ultimately unknown and possibly unfathomable, even when the stories of this belonging are powerfully told. What we can experience however, is the power of connection, relationship and care—of the land and its environment and of each other—which cultural immersion affords us.

National Contexts

We know that each year Australian Universities teach 1.4 million students who have little, uneven or no knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Indeed our University staff (unless they are the exception rather than the rule) come with a similar uneven and surface exposure to understanding their own culture let alone someone else's. In some cases some students and staff don't even acknowledge they have a culture at all, hence the unexamined centrality of their world view is invisible. Fredericks and Bargallie (2016) eloquently identify the importance of exposing staff and students to not so much a focus on culture alone but also a focus on 'race' addressing things such as bias, discrimination and we would argue to include the wider discourses of *whiteness* and *white fragility* (see for example Di Angelo, 2019).

In the tertiary sector *on country* experiences have occurred in sporadic pockets despite it being well established that cultural immersion is one of the most effective initiatives for introducing cultural awareness. In Australia, the National Best Practice for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities (Universities Australian, 2011) which is endorsed by every Vice Chancellor in the country, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework (Department of Health, 2012), which effects and influences nearly all our major disciplines in the health services sector, both recommend cultural immersion as an important initiative to introduce students and staff to deeper issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to break down any perceived 'barrier' of both guilt and blame.

What Does Immersion Mean? Barbara

To understand your own culture takes a lifetime. To understand another's is almost impossible, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try. The conversation across cultures can be as rich as they are varied, they can also be tense and violent. Regardless, reaching out to each other is at the core of what makes us human, to keep connecting in an attempt to understand, and to communicate. How we are enculturated happens

for some of us from birth, and for some of the Uncles and Aunties I work with and the First Nations people I have met and spoken with, ancestral enculturated connections stretch back millennium and are all an integral whole of the perpetuity of culture.

For the past 30 years I have been trying to reach out and to connect. I have been trying to understand myself and to better understand others. The times and people and places have changed over the years although some important constant figures remain, but it is *the where* this learning has taken place that has impacted most on my lessons as a non-Indigenous person in this place. As Wiradyuri Elder Uncle Bill Allan says constantly to us at this University, 'All of you have spirits and you were born here and because you were born here we need to take care of your spirit in the same way we take care of our own people. You are part of this country and when you die here we need to teach your spirit where it should go' (Personal communication, June 7, 2017). Uncle Bill's words of course echo other Elders and the words of the late Charlie Perkins and speak also to the long generosity shown by Aboriginal people to white people that spans back to invasion. To merely reach out and have between possibly 60 000–120 0000 years in the carbon atoms of the red soil at your fingertips is a mind-boggling responsibility. But it is a responsibility. When I go anywhere now in Wiradjuri Country or even back to Ngiyeempaa Country I am aware of the deep layered connections of the First Nations peoples who have cared for Country for thousands of years. The places where we take our staff and students on cultural immersion are imbued with this ancientness and everywhere is a classroom. The classroom demands more than your time. It demands a deep listening and it demands that you return whether corporally or in your mind and heart.

Since 2010 Charles Sturt University has been taking both staff and students on immersion experiences in Ngiyeempaa (Menindee and surrounding areas in Far Western NSW) and Wiradyuri Country (Bathurst and surrounding areas in NSW) as a way of what Wiradyuri Elder Uncle Mallyan Brian Grant suggests is 'orientating people to their own culture in a way to explore culture together'.

Immersion and Cultural Safety: Bruce

A vignette of wisdom sharing when conversing on country with Uncle Brian:

I can't count the number of seminars and workshops I've attended that were supposed to help me understand, or communicate, or appreciate the cultures of First Australians. I came away with the requisite knowledge, the sense of regret, the desire to make change. But it wasn't until I stood in the sun with Uncle Brian in Menindee and listened to his stories that, for the first time, I really felt connected with Australian Indigenous culture, or at least the Wiradyuri culture of Uncle Brian.

For a week in November, the Charles Sturt University cultural immersion brought me to a station near the small town of Menindee on the Darling River, welcomed by Aunty Beryl to Ngiyeempaa country. There were no lectures, there wasn't a teacher in any formal.

sense. There was a small community of people living together and learning about one another in a warm, engaging manner. There were traditional activities such as making clapping sticks, there were welcomes, fire ceremonies, and sharing of experience. There was cooking and cleaning and tending the fire. Mostly, there was chatting and laughing and walking and sharing stories and making meaning and cups of tea.

And there, sharing stories with Uncle Brian and just being, I realised that we were present in one another's cultures, and thereby creating a bridge of understanding. When Uncle Brian told a story, he invited me over the bridge to his side, his experience. When I told a story, I invited him to my side, my experience. But the bridge is something that we created together. It was constructed from our shared experiences, our shared openness and our shared intention to connect. It felt like home. It was like when all of my aunties and uncles and all the kids would come together and sit in small groups or large groups, drinking cups of tea and having some fruitcake and talking about all manner of things. It felt safe.

Uncle Brian told me that cultural safety was an important part of the way he interacted with students and academics as he welcomed them to country and ran other cultural workshops and ceremonies. After some reflection, I came to realise how important Uncle Brian's words were. We need to feel safe to learn about another culture.

Contemporary understanding of human brain and behaviour provides an appreciation of why safety is so important. It suggests that we are sophisticated and social animals with a fundamental need to belong. As social beings we are motivated towards acceptance and are extremely sensitive to our social environment and potential rejection from our group (Heatherton, 2011). Importantly, we perceive social threats with the same intensity as physical threats. The same parts of the brain are activated with either type of threat, and once activated inhibit other parts of the brain that enable higher cognitive functions such as curiosity and empathy. Under threat, our ability to build relationships, understand and appreciate others, or simply remain curious is curtailed.

It is therefore essential that we create a safe environment for learners. When we feel safe, we are much more able to be curious about how others behave and can become closer to their lived experience and cultural realities (Bin-Sallik, 2003). Without curiosity and empathy, we cannot possibly begin to understand the lived experience of another fully. In the words of Uncle Brian; 'without safety, there can be no cultural learning'.

Yindyamarra and Working with Respect Inter-Nationally

The Wiradjuri Elders recognised the cultural and social context of teaching and learning when they developed the *Yindyamarra* protocols, a framework that grounds language learning experience in a cultural framework. This framework is governed by culture and.

reflects the philosophical positions referred to as ontology, epistemology and axiology (Matthews & Ross, 2010; Moreton-Robinson & Walter, 2009; Sullivan, 2016). *Yindyamarra* is embedded in the ways of seeing, hearing and knowing which directly governs our ways of being and ways of doing within Wiradjuri culture and society.

Mambuwarra ngaaminyagigu—to hear, think and listen for the purpose of understanding and knowing) How do we see the world? For Wiradjuri people it is the connectedness to the natural, spiritual and social worlds. Grant and Rudder (2014) identify that '*within the Wiradjuri cosmos [world] everything is known to be in relationship to everything else and nothing is excluded including language itself*' (p. 4).

Winhangarra gulbaligu - to hear, think and listen for the purpose of understanding and knowing. How do we know things? The relationship between the researcher and the community is restricted by cultural protocols, community expectation and cultural authority. While the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researcher plays multiple roles from activist, spokesperson, language teacher, language learner and politician within the community and academia (Gerdts, 2017; Smith, 1999).

Wudhagarbinya ngaaminyagigu—to be always listening, hearing and thinking for the purpose of being able to see. What are our values? Asking us to consider *Yindyamalawaygunhanha* (respect, politeness, honour, be gentle and going slowly as a continual and long-term process). Creating a way of knowing in a cycle of self-reflective practice.

In country, culture is modelled through Aboriginal pedagogy. Indeed, Yunkaporta (2009) suggests that the way that culture is taught is more important than what is taught. Immersion is Aboriginal pedagogy in action. Learning in country removes students from Western pedagogy which we believe is moving further and further away from a safe, personal, experiential approach. The consequence can be that learning is threatening which then leads to a shallow, survival-oriented approach, rather than one that is motivated by interest and a genuine desire to learn. Moving out of the classroom and into country changes this.

One of the first things that happens is that the pace slows. *Yindyamarra;* to respect, go slowly, be polite, be gentle and honour is the foundation of this experience. Slowing down and politely waiting to receive knowledge provides the mental space for students to listen and learn on a deeper level. From this receptive space, students become aware of how they feel.

Uniting heart and mind engages us more deeply (Aunty Beryl Philip-Carmichael, personal communication, April 14, 2010). When placed in country, students can share the experiences of the Elders, share feelings and position themselves. Elders lay bare the deep principles that are important. Removing busyness, slowing down and connecting with each other with our heart instantly removes 'othering' and from this place we become aware that 'we are all human, we all breath air, we all feel pain, and one day we will all die' (Aunty Gloria Rogers, personal communication, April 14, 2010).

Immersion is experiential, the knowledge shared is immediately relevant because it comes from lived experience. All learners, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal,

need to see the way that learning is situated in the world around them (Yunka-porta & Kirby, 2011). It is one thing to read that Aboriginal people's livelihood and food sources were taken when their land was occupied by settlers. When situated in country, it is much more meaningful to walk on land that was once a viable and rich source of food, and to see that it is now laid to waste or replaced by a carpark. This learning is deep, lasting and life changing.

Immersion leads to personal engagement with Elders. This deepens empathy and disarms fear, doubt and guilt. Many non-Aboriginal students have not knowingly met or spent time with an Aboriginal person (Universities Australia, 2011). When they learn about the history of Australian colonisation, some are fearful that Elders will be angry, or that they will be blamed or made to feel guilt. The engagement that comes from immersion with Elders is disarming. While the personal stories from Elders leave no doubt that the experience of colonisation and its continuing legacy are an awful and destructive force in Aboriginal lives, there is no blame or anger. Instead, the stories are told candidly with gentleness and care for the students' wellbeing and safety. This is reflected in the following comment by a student following immersion:

> …I have had such an insightful past two days, and even though the experience was challenging and overwhelming at times, the Elders and the group were able to turn the environment into such a safe and comfortable space. I felt deeply connected and accepted by everyone. On my way home I couldn't stop thinking about the strength that the Elders have shown; truly inspirational! They were sharing their stories and continuing challenges with us while staying so strong, polite and calm; yet we were the ones tearing up. They gave us hugs and compassion and made sure we were okay… I can't help but think that, it should have been the other way around. And not only their strength was inspiring, but also the trust they have given us. I feel so honoured and privileged. It almost feels as if I left something behind and that this experience has initiated a long journey ahead.

The central aspects of learning are the establishment and maintenance of relationships both within the formal learning space and outside of the classroom. Learning in country sets up these relationships guiding both the behaviours and responsibilities of learners and the teachers. While developing knowledge and experiencing relationships in a formal setting governed by Wiradjuri ways of teaching and learning creates a feeling of internal conflict. As students have expressed; their Wiradjuri ways conflict and fight with their non-Wiradjuri ways of being and seeing. As a consequence of this experience, students often become advocates.

Reflections on Yindyamarra and the Teaching of the Elders: Lloyd

Learning in Country is central to teaching Wiradjuri language and to the delivery of classes. Language belongs to Country and to teach out of Country changes the relationship dynamics between learners, teachers and community: While Wiradjuri language is one of the few languages that is open to anyone to learn, the local community still sets limits and expectation on who can teach and who can attend

local community classes. At Charles Sturt University the classes are made up of Wiradjuri, Other First Nations people and non-indigenous people.

Wiradjuri language, culture and heritage teaching and learning in a university setting brings challenges, expectation and community responsibilities to both the Wiradjuri, non-Wiradjuri and non-indigenous staff and students. Though the Elders have been central in establishing the programme, the continued presence of Uncle Dr Stan Grant Snr at the residential school plays a vital role in ensuring cultural integrity of the programme. With the programme being made up of mature aged students, some of whom are Elders within their own right, this in itself creates a classroom setting based on cultural knowledge, cultural behaviours and cultural relationships. Learners of Wiradjuri are coming to language programmes for a multitude of reasons. The reasons they want to learn language include: to teach to others, be they family or at educational settings; to reconnect with culture; to rebuild family and kinship networks and reaffirm identity and belonging; for non-Wiradjuri and non-indigenous students the focus tends to be on finding their role supporting Wiradjuri Nation rebuilding.

Teaching approaches are also eclectic. Drawing on the many teaching methodologies available and strategically selecting from those that have something to offer the language situation and the students' needs, means creating a diverse and varied approach to teaching the revitalisation of language to adult learners in Wiradjuri country. The Teaching and Learning Cycle (Derewianka, 2015; NSW Department of Education, 1992) supports the knowledge and skills development for reading, writing, speaking and listening. But the transference of this model to the Wiradjuri language adult teaching and learning context embraces the Aboriginal Ways of Learning (Yunkaporta, 2009). Adapting these approaches provide students with the opportunities to move between speaking and listening experiences both of which support and extend their language learning and usage (Christie, 2005).

During my ten years of Wiradjuri language course development, teaching and engagement with communities, Elders and students there are common threads that appear. The majority of participants are not simply attending to gain a qualification, but are instead driven by desires to re-learn language and to re-establish culture. These factors shift the value of the educational experience to one of personal growth, cultural belonging, a sense of pride and strength in their identity. Learners are searching for ways to be able to reintroduce language, cultural practice and a sense of pride in their heritage within both their families and their communities.

Language Revitalisation: Mambuwarra ngaaminyagigu, Wudhagarbinya wudhadhuraygigu, Winhangarra gulbaligigu (Ways of Seeing, Hearing and Knowing)—Lloyd

Learning in Country is a vital and integral part of embracing First Nations Australian cultures and ways of seeing, hearing and knowing. Connections, relationships and caring: for the land, for the environment and for each other are at the core of learning

in Country. Embracing these links lead to a better understanding of self and of others and our place in the world. This is life-changing for all who experience it and facilitates a change in values. These experiences are crucial for lifelong learning and personal growth.

This journey of the revitalisation of Wiradjuri language affords me the different ways of *Mambuwarra ngaaminyagigu, Wudhagarbinya wudhadhuraygigu, Winhangarra gulbaligigu (*ways of seeing, hearing and knowing) which directly governs my ways of being and ways of doing within Wiradjuri culture and society. Expressing existence, relationships and identity in Wiradjuri language is a logical step in reaffirming my identity as a Wiradjuri man.

Wiradjuri language is not a new endeavour for me. Originally, I embraced Wiradjuri language learning in 2005 when Uncle Stan Grant (senior) returned from Canberra to live in Narrandera. This move was the impetus for the establishment of Wiradjuri language learning programmes with TAFE NSW Riverina Institute, Narrandera Campus, followed by Dubbo Campus. I then broke from language learning for almost ten years before re-engaging with Uncle Stan and Dr John, once again as a student in 2014.

While taking the opportunity to re-engage with language, culture and heritage the opportunity to engage with Elders and both Wiradjuri citizens and citizens of Wiradjuri has shifted the way in which I identify and my ability to engage students in learning in a cultural context. Struggling to identify as an Aboriginal person was not because I did not know or grow Aboriginal, but rather that Aboriginal for me was a foreign concept that did not seem to fit in my Wiradjuri world view. I struggled to identify with what is or was seen as Aboriginal cultural practices and Aboriginal language. Following conversation with Elders such as Aunty Flo Grant, Aunty Iris Reid, Uncle Stan Grant and Uncle Paul Brydon I started to realise that I am not Aboriginal and I am not Indigenous: I am Wiradjuri.

Relationship Building with Students: Jill

One of the challenges of teaching undergraduate students is getting them to embrace the knowledge in a heartfelt way. It is only by doing this that the knowledge will remain in their minds and engage their values. In over a decade of tertiary teaching, my experience is that Western pedagogy has largely removed experiential and emotive aspects of learning in an attempt to increase class sizes and efficiency. In doing so it has removed something vital.

Cultural immersion is an example of a better way: Aboriginal pedagogy. Going into country with Elders, listening to stories, observing reverence for land, feeling the Elders' care and non-judgmental openness for each learner, opens hearts, disarms and engages students. It's authentic, lasting and life changing. From the deep and lasting effect of my first immersion experience, I knew that the same would work for students because I am a student too.

The hardest part of creating a cultural immersion subject was to convince the university that a two-day camp with Elders was not only viable tertiary learning, but also transformative and crucial education. Once this happened, the rest fell into place. I had total trust in the Elders. The 'curriculum design' and 'pedagogical plan' took a few discussions, mainly because there was so much that we could do, but students also needed time to think, feel and of course, to savour and enjoy!

It was immensely rewarding watching the students learn, relax and become friends with the Elders. It is one of the most memorable teaching experiences I have had. All students (including me) were incredibly grateful. Importantly the students loved it. The assignments based on the experience show that authentic Aboriginal pedagogy is a successful way (the only way) to provide a lasting experience which teaches students about sovereign Australian cultures.

Conclusion

Relationships built through time spent in country help to create a bridge between people, regardless of cultural background. Shared experience helps to unite knowledge (in the head) and feeling (in the heart). This creates understanding and empathy that deepens learning. It creates a culturally safe space for all learners.

Safety is vital for a deep understanding and connection. By creating a sense of safety we are able to gently challenge what we hold dear in our knowledge and our beliefs. We can accept such challenges when in supportive spaces. Hence the work we mostly do as facilitators is 'holding' space, to enable us all to let thoughts rise and fall, to allow feelings to well and express, to enable bodily sensations (e.g. tightening, or tears or releasing tensions) to come and go. In the collective, we are there to hold each other in a largely liminal learning space, required for authentic engagement and transformative learning. The implications for the academe are complex because often this kind of connection is difficult to maintain within the structure of corporations with their competing and sometimes conflicting agendas. Learning *in* Country takes time, effort and sensitivity as well as willingness to journey. It must follow an ancient deep time rhythm as dictated by the Elders and the land itself. This ancient rhythm sometimes does not beat in unison with the inherent expediency of the many drivers and influences on institutions and those who work within them.

What we know is that place is ultimately critical for cultural work such as the revitalisation of the Wiradjuri language. Learners come to this space for personal and cultural enrichment.

Being in Country in the presence of Elders is vital to ensuring the cultural integrity of this process. What is without doubt for those who will be the future teachers of Wiradjuri language—the presence of Elders, the dynamics of relationships between learners, teachers who are required to gain cultural knowledge, cultural belonging, cultural pride and identity—is absolutely key.

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Chapter 5
Exploring Identities: Challenges in the Classroom

Ruth Bacchus

Abstract For several years I had the privilege of teaching a subject called Politics of Identity. The subject explored various facets of collective and personal identities, including gender and sexuality, class, culture and ethnicity, 'race', national and global identities, embodiment, and technology. In both on-campus and online modes students seemed to find both intellectual and personal resonances with at least some of the material. I am a woman of European heritage living on Wiradyuri land, which I share with a member of the Wiradyuri group of Elders. The subject came to have a particular focus on the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities in Australia and on helping students begin developing skills in cultural competence. This chapter describes how this came about, and the several approaches and resources I found to be useful, and includes some student responses to the material.

I am a woman of European heritage living on Wiradyuri land, which I share with a member of the Wiradyuri group of Elders. I value and have learned much from personal relationships with members of the Wiradyuri, Ngiyeempaa and Biripai communities, some of them Elders, including Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, Aunty Dindima Gloria Rogers, Aunty Wirribee Leanna Carr-Smith, Uncle Mallyan Brian Grant, Uncle Dinawan Dyirribang Bill Allen Jr, and Aunty Beryl Yhunga-Dhu Philp Carmichael and her family from Menindee, with whom I spent time on Country that was both exhilarating and humbling.

Politics of Identity was structured around the idea of identities as fluid and multi-dimensional, with each facet or element intersecting and interacting with others. A premise was that identities are necessarily political since they involve inequalities of and struggles for access to resources—both tangible resources, such as health care, housing, education, employment and transport, and less tangible resources, such as representation and agency, the capacity to have one's voice heard, to determine one's own destiny—both of the latter were asked for in the Makarrata, or Uluru Statement from the Heart, rejected by the Turnbull Coalition government in 2018. The

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subject also hinged on the idea that knowledge, representation and power are inextricably linked and that only some forms of knowledge are legitimised as 'truth'—my thinking about this was shaped by Western theorists following Michel Foucault, but also by Gayatri Spivak and Aileen Moreton-Robinson among others.

Of all areas explored in the subject, issues of 'race', and of relationships between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians seemed to be the most confronting and difficult for students and the most challenging for me to 'teach'. It was partly because of this, but equally importantly because of my growing and very valued personal relationships with members of the Wiradyuri, Ngiyeempaa and Biripai communities, some of them Elders, including Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, Aunty Dindima Gloria Rogers, Aunty Wirribee Leanna Carr-Smith, Uncle Mallyan Brian Grant, Uncle Dinawan Dyirribang Bill Allen Jr, and Aunty Beryl Yhunga-Dhu Philp Carmichael and her family from Menindee, with whom I spent time on Country that was both exhilarating and humbling, that I decided to emphasise and strengthen the subject's focus on the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. To do so I drew increasingly on material that reflected and respected the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and more specifically on the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars.

Students, and indeed all Australians, may often find it difficult to confront issues of inequalities structured by class, gender, and race, especially when it can mean acknowledging their own privilege. And as recent events and discourses in Australian politics, sport, and media would also suggest, 'race' is perhaps the most confronting. As non-Indigenous Australians, we reap the benefits of invasion; we work, live, and travel on Indigenous country, and do so at the cost of the dispossession of Indigenous owners, but we often dislike being reminded of it. As Moreton-Robinson puts it, 'our [Indigenous] relation to land, what I call an ontological belonging, is omnipresent, and continues to unsettle non-Indigenous belonging based on illegal dispossession' (2003, p. 24). Many of the students had spent their most formative years in country towns and in the politically and culturally conservative climate that followed the election of the LNP government in 1996 and the later rise of parties like One Nation. School-leaver students, in particular, had grown up in the shadow of John Howard's views: that colonisation was a form of 'settlement' that happened long ago, that present generations of non-Indigenous Australians are not responsible for the policies and practices of past generations, and that any kind of national apology for dispossession and massacres on a scale amounting to genocide in terms of loss of life and destruction of cultures, and for the kidnapping of the many Indigenous children now known as the Stolen Generations, was unnecessary.

Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews and Bronwyn Carlson (2013, p. 14) discuss a phenomenon they refer to as new or modern racism. They argue that considerable resistance has emerged in Australia with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support initiatives across varying sectors, including higher education. This resistance is not framed as racist, but tends to be justified within a discourse of opposing affirmative action aimed at reducing the inequities endured by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students when compared to all Australian students since it violates principles of equality—this discourse focusses on a concept of individual

merit and effort. In an instance, I think, of what Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson, call 'new racism', some non-Indigenous students expressed the opinion that as a result of reforms intended to narrow the gap, in health, education, and incarceration rates, for instance, Aboriginal people were given some 'special privilege' (though nothing could be further from the truth) or that Aboriginal students 'got Abstudy' while they themselves had to engage in paid work. Although the 'legal' definition of an Indigenous person has been fairly clear since the early 1980s (Dodson, 2003, p. 32), many students thought people 'pretended' to be Indigenous in order to access these 'privileges'. This of course emerges from a racialized discourse dominant in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Australia, that 'defined' Indigenous people using terms like 'half-blood' or 'quarter-caste' as well as more specific and often contradictory terms and phrases, usually with the aim of controlling and dominating (see Anderson, 2003; Dodson, 2003).

Over the years I have asked others about the problems of racism in the classroom, and about what to do with my frustration and even anger at the comments made by students The great Biripai educator, Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, advised me to allow students to express racist thoughts and feelings, as it was often those students who would gain the most from the subject. And I have found this to be true: the students who were most overt in their racism were perhaps so because they were most confronted by the material—and this perhaps because they were most on the cusp of change. These students had very often, by the end of the session, expressed a complete reversal in their thoughts and feelings. However, any responsibility to allow one learner to 'work through' their racist thinking, partly by verbalising it, is far outweighed by the responsibility to make classrooms culturally safe for all students and in particular to protect Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students from such verbalisations and the hurt they cause. It is vital that Indigenous students feel safe from both overt and covert racism in the classroom, especially given the failures of the education system which mean not as many as we might wish make it to university, and that it is all too easy to damage the resilient few who do. It is also vital that an Aboriginal learner not be asked to offer an opinion or expertise based on their 'Aboriginality', as this can make the student feel, as my friend Trevor Dodds once put it, 'like the token black'.

I began the classes by acknowledging that we were learning on what is and always will be Wiradyuri land, and asking students to assume that there might be people in the class who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and to be sensitive and respectful as a result. However, this seemed pedagogically inadequate since it made the issue seem merely personal—as though it were simply about not hurting anyone's feelings (which is of course important) without necessarily altering the broader discourses at play, and might also seem a repressive strategy ('you can't say that') rather than a liberating one. I wanted students to understand racism not just in terms of personal behaviours but also at the deep, historical and structural level that means Indigenous Australians are more likely to be incarcerated, live in poor housing, or have a chronic or fatal illness earlier in their lives, and less likely to have access to education and health care, as well as certain forms of power. I also wanted students to understand something of the impact and intergenerational trauma

of past—and present—practices and policies. Drawing on the work of Indigenous scholars and Elders was a way of 'presenting' this kind of understanding, but it was also part of my effort to show—and model—respect for the Indigenous students and their cultures and perspectives.

I drew on this work as far as possible across the subject, for example asking students to read Wendy Holland's essays, 'Mis-taken identity' (1996) and 'Rehearsing multiple identities' (2007) as part of our exploration of the idea of identities as fluid, multi-layered and often fractured, which also suggests that one might inhabit or 'live out' several forms of 'identity' either at once or at different times. Indeed the focus on relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians came to permeate most aspects of the subject—for instance our work on the power/discourse/knowledge nexus was a way in to considering how the 'other' of colonisation might be constructed as a cornerstone of the colonising process in Australia; our exploration of national identity rested on Benedict Anderson's view of the nation as an 'imaginary community' and necessarily one that excludes many who live within its geographical boundaries; our exploration of embodiment considered issues of racialized as well as sexed and gendered bodies; and our work on the idea of identification (the idea that a given person identifies with certain discourses and to a certain extent constructs an identity through creating a narrative of the self)—all these are threaded through with possible considerations of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities.

Related to, and even enfolded into, new racism is another, perhaps more insidious because even less visible form: epistemological racism. Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson (2013, 2016), drawing on the international work of Scheurich and Young (1997), discuss this 'long-term, resilient, and intrinsic racial bias' (2013, p. 4), which is one of the most damaging forms of racism since it is 'the one we do not see, that is invisible to our lens—the one we participate in without consciously knowing or intending it' (Scheurich & Young, 1997, p. 12, cited in Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2013, p. 4). Epistemological racism exists in educational practice, research, theory, and teaching, and 'has arisen out of an overemphasis (and sole emphasis) on the lens of the social history and culture of the dominant race', and in Australia, worked to effectively exclude participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in constructing research design and theory, even when such 'research' focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs (Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2013, p. 4). The argument that Indigenous Australians should be recognised and respected as knowledge holders is also one expressed by Aunty Beryl and members of the Wiradyuri group of Elders. Again, part of my effort to overcome this form of racism, in myself, in my scholarship, and in my teaching, was to draw on the work of Indigenous scholars and to ask students to engage with this work so they had a direct and unmediated access to at least some of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. We watched video material of Aunty Beryl telling stories and discussing her connection to Country, and Moreton-Robinson's 2015 keynote address to the Indigenous Foucault conference at the University of Alberta.

I also designed two of three compulsory assessment tasks to reflect this. I decided on tasks that asked students to engage directly with material written by Aboriginal

or Torres Strait Islander scholars for the reasons above, but also because as a white woman, I was reluctant to try to teach 'Indigenous' content both to non-Indigenous students and, crucially, to some Indigenous students who would know so much more than me about both Indigenous and non- Indigenous cultures and the relationships between them, though they might articulate their knowledge in a different way. I wanted **all** students to learn by reading the words of Indigenous academics who speak to them not, as Moreton-Robinson puts it, as 'native informants' but as experts (by necessity) in two knowledge systems and perspectives. Megan Boler's (1999) idea of a pedagogy of discomfort also informed this idea; Boler argues that students' affective responses of discomfort—anger, guilt, fragility—can also prompt them to critically interrogate their beliefs, assumptions and ways of doing and being. However, I wanted to enable students to 'sit in' the discomfort that might arise from challenging material in the slower, quieter, and more private space of reading, rather than the possibly more pressured and riskier space of the classroom with its clamour of opinions and voices. I wanted to give students time to understand and absorb the material, to reflect, to consider, and perhaps reconsider their positions.

A first assessment task asked students to recognise and explore facets of their own social and cultural positions and the values and worldviews associated with or arising from them—a vital step towards recognising and respecting the cultural values of others, especially as many students begin with a view that they don't 'have' cultural identities or values or worldviews ('I'm just an individual') that both comes from and leads to a kind of universalising of 'whiteness' as neutral. The second task builds on this. I asked students to read Moreton-Robinson's article, 'The white man's burden: patriarchal white epistemic violence and Aboriginal women's knowledges within the academy' (2011), and Fiona Nicholl's 'Are you calling me racist?' Teaching critical whiteness theory in indigenous sovereignty' (2007). Both discuss, among other things, how certain kinds of knowledge are understood as being 'real' or valid knowledge—or not—by particular people. I asked the students to write an essay discussing one or both articles, or a few arguments from each, and to try to relate their ideas to the earlier work we had done on the links between knowledge, discourse and power.

Nicholl's article discusses some of the issues raised by teaching issues of gender and race in university classrooms and confronts the idea that students can feel they are being accused of racism if they are asked to learn about and acknowledge aspects of Australia's history involving the displacement and cultural and actual genocide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (see Mark McKenna, 2018 for a compelling account of why this is so important) or the contemporary lived experiences of many Indigenous peoples. It also suggests that students can resist the idea that whiteness confers privileges that many are unaware of. I felt this discussion would work to hold a sort of mirror to such resistance. Moreton-Robinson's article focuses more explicitly, as its title suggests, on the idea of patriarchal epistemic violence or the violence done to the knowledges of Aboriginal women by epistemological racism.

Student Voices

Most students were able to draw on the ideas raised earlier in the subject about knowledge and power and read them in the light of Nicholl's or Moreton-Robinson's articles. The extracts from students' responses provided below suggest that students made connections between the more theoretical material on the relationships between discourse, knowledge and power and the more specific and concrete outcomes of these relationships:

> Those in power promote a knowledge that benefits them by confirming their position, oppressing those defined as 'the other' by simply defining them as 'the other' and denying their knowledge and identity.

> By accepting standard discourse we leave ourselves vulnerable to naivety, accepting judgments made on identity that come only from the powerful (and most often about the oppressed, promoting for example racism, classism, sexism, ableism, etc.).

> Referring to historical contexts and considerations … reveal[s] how policies and practices reflect patriarchal white subjectivity and put into effect disciplinary power to not only produce social constructions and identities, such as defining 'Aboriginality', but to also reflect the cultural and symbolic value of whiteness within knowledge production.

Some students were able to draw connections between the ideas and concepts presented in the material and current issues that had not been mentioned, suggesting a deep and reflective level of learning. One described the racial abuse of Adam Goodes in 2013 and its aftermath, and concluded that

> Race … plays a big part in the way in which public discourse is controlled in our society … Australia would deny being a racist country, but with example after example of race driven issues constantly directing public discourse it is hard to get away from.

For others, Nicholl's article seemed to work as the kind of mirror I'd hoped:

> …Nicholl points out that whiteness can be invisible … meaning that within the race discourse binary where the 'white is dominant and the 'black is subordinant, there is no need to identify with being white, only to identify the 'Other;' as non-white.

> Nicholl … questions why whiteness is never the 'other' with discussion of Indigenous Australians trapped in a language of Aboriginal 'problems' and 'issues' … flipping the language used though challenged many of her students, who saw it as symptomatic of political correctness and in fact reverse racism … By viewing knowledge through this different lens we can see that established academic and general knowledge is entirely framed by power … the powerful have the ability to define knowledge from their position of privilege.

Several students were able to reflect upon both their own positionality and the ways they were able to understand it in relation to Nicholl's and Moreton-Robinson's work:

> By reading Nicholl's and Moreton-Robinson's work those with privilege (including myself as a white, middle-class, educated woman) can be woken up to the power structures that frame knowledge, in the academic world and everyday … To deny other systems of knowledge is to deny that systems of power exist, from which you may be drawing privilege.

> My place in the world … in a patriarchal sense female is subordinate to the normative male … However, I also know the world through a discursive position of power as in the 'racial binary, being 'white' is dominant and 'non-white' subordinate.

Students seemed also to grasp the epistemological significance of Moreton-Robinson's arguments and to see both the difficulties and the liberatory possibilities of recognising Indigenous women's knowledges in the Western academy:

> Moreton-Robinson's … knowledge and that of other Indigenous female academics is stuffed into [Western] understanding of knowledge … [there is a struggle] to grasp the existence of different knowledge, especially that as presented by Aboriginal women.

> It is only those without privilege who can truly identify and challenge the knowledge structures in our society, created and purported by those with power e.g. the white man. Moreton-Robinson is a prominent female, Indigenous academic, her identifiers marking her as writing from the position of the oppressed with experience to challenge power.

Both Moreton-Robinson and Nicholl, in different ways, discuss the issue of Indigenous sovereignty, one of the more difficult for many Australians to conceptualise, let alone accept. As Moreton-Robinson argues, 'our ontological relationship to land marks a radical … difference between us and the non-Indigenous … [and] constitutes a subject position we do not share, and which cannot be shared' (2003, p. 31) with non-Indigenous people.

However, some students *were* able to approach the idea, however tentatively:

When laying bare the epistemological rhetoric of *Terra Nullius* surely we as a society must question why there has not been further pressure applied to successive governments to recognise through plebiscite the Indigenous Australians' rightful recognition of sovereignty.

> This lack of right to self-determination and right to land which provides the spiritual and culture basis for indigenous communities has disadvantaged the indigenous people at every level.

> It is critical to recognise the importance of Indigenous sovereignty in the establishment of non-Indigenous/Indigenous relations.

For the third and final assignment in the subject, I asked students to provide short answers to five of twelve possible questions, but specified that they answer at least one of the first two, which related to a digital Indigenous Cultural Competence resource, *Dyan Ngal* or *Cassie's Story* (CSU, 2011). Many answered both. *Dyan Ngal* was created in close consultation with and input from Wendy Nolan, Aunty Gloria Dindima Rogers and Aunty Beryl Yungha-Dhu Philp Carmichael, and has been found to be an effective pedagogical tool, not least because it combines the personal story of Cassie, a seventeen-year-old Wiradyuri woman, with broader issues to do with past practice and policy and contemporary experiences, and the resonances between them (see Hill et al., 2016). The story, narrated by Cassie, is based on the forced removal of Indigenous Australian peoples from their homes and other parts of town in Dubbo, NSW. In each scene are links that take viewers to historical, cultural and contemporary information drawn from archival and current documents, and these have further links to official reports such as that from the Royal

Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The first question asked students to explore Cassie's experiences and expectations of education, and of the justice system, and the second asked them to discuss the threatened relocation of Cassie's community and to consider the link/s between historical policies or practices that led to Indigenous Australian dispossession from country and contemporary circumstances for Indigenous Australians.

Students were able to give detailed and thoughtful answers to these questions, drawing on Cassie's personal story, the information and links contained in *Dyan Ngal*, and their broader research:

> The juvenile justice system provides the linchpin for the criminalization and removal of a new generation of indigenous children which can be linked to factors relating to policing and the administration of justice and the underlying social and economic issues which are linked to intervention. This is evident when Cassie had to go to court for stealing and broke her bond and doesn't have the money for another bond so she has to go back to juvie. The government maintains this disadvantage and subordination through their policies and strategies in responding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

> … as described by Cassie, many Aboriginal peoples find themselves out of place within the schooling system and therefore disconnected from the educational system. Cassie's story provides an account of why she chose to leave high school. She states that she felt 'too black… for all 'em white fellas' (*Cassie's story, Dyan Ngal)* … both local and federal education departments … continually fail to engage children within communities such as Cassie's. The notion that one can feel 'too black' to attend state schools is itself a portrayal of the issues pertaining to Indigenous Australians.

> Cassie's story … through detailing Nana Clara's spiritual education, which brings attention to the lack of traditional Aboriginal education being provided within the curriculum enforced … a practice which was enforced until as recent at 1960's, still effects people such as Cassie today.

> The contemporary relocation of Australia's Indigenous peoples and its effects on the population is reflective of the dispossession felt by the community throughout Australian history … The historic dispossession of the … community, as explored by Cassie, has continually caused …The separation and breaking of relations [that] has had a deep-rooted effect on not only families and individuals but further to the communities and the culture.

> The loss of language is an example of the loss of culture and identity that has been the result of Aboriginal displacement. The complex cultural dynamic … is continually effected by the current day dispossession felt by Aboriginal people.

> Cassie reflects on the contemporary issues facing many Aboriginal communities … her narrative is able to engage and explore the way in which such generational trauma still affects her community.

> Contemporary policies of removal … continue to cause disengagement of many from their culture and community …For many whom were directly affected by historical practices, present day government policy is of little improvement.

Several other questions could be answered with some consideration of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Australia. For instance, students could consider the question: whose interests and experiences are reflected

in the notion of an Australian identity? All who did so mentioned the exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from historically hegemonic conceptualisations:

> The systematic exclusion of the Indigenous peoples from Australia's development as a nation is reflected in the histories of various legislation that sought to categorize the Aboriginal population as 'others' … the Aboriginal population of Australia weren't considered citizens as have their unique culture and presence been a largely disregarded part of Australia's national history.

One of the possible tasks for students in this final assignment was to write about the ways anything learned in the subject had affected their thinking about their own identity or those of others. Responses were fascinating across the range of facets of identity and many more could be included here:

> Being aware of this was really confronting but once I got past it, it became a great tool as I could understand … why I was called a 'wog' in a majority 'white' school. I understand why I feel like I've had to prove my Australian-ness more than a 'white' Australian and always being the 'other'.

> My mother is Māori but was adopted out very young and so had little cultural upbringing. Only this year were we all officially welcomed into our family Marae and started learning about our Māori roots (we are descended from war leader Te Rauparaha) which has complicated my understanding of family.

Below is an extended extract from the response of a student who wrote that the subject 'has directly impacted me and my understanding of identity … through my deeper understanding of Aboriginal communities, identity and my own identification as an Aboriginal person':

> Being a fair skinned granddaughter of an aboriginal man, I was particularly engaged by Holland's article *Mis-taken Identity* and the experiences she describes growing up and engaging with both parts of her racial identity. In understanding her own 'cultural hybridity' … Holland's understanding and description of racial affiliation within aboriginal communities was an issue familiar within my own childhood community. Hearing terms such as 'coconut' used to describe an aboriginal family who were wealthy, or who didn't live in the housing commission area was a common place occurrence. In many instances, the use of such a term was demeaning to the concept of ones' aboriginality, directly challenging a person's identity … The construction of my own identity and further understanding of the issues surrounding aboriginal identity has been a product of the racism as described by Holland. Holland's article is able to further [my] understanding as it engages in the notion of multiple identities … I found myself out of place. Although I understood my heritage and was accepted among those within my community, I struggled to understand the concept of being both 'white' and 'black', as to many, you are either one or the other… The concept of multiple identities furthered by Holland's explanation of her own understanding, was critical in the deepening of my own understanding to the way in which there is a more fluid way of looking at ones identity.

An important part of my journey as an educator, and one that evolves alongside my personal journey towards cultural competence (neither of which will ever be completed!) is learning to navigate between the voices, needs and learning styles of a range of students. A university classroom might ideally be considered a space for open discussion, for thrashing out different arguments and for all voices to be equally heard. But however important this is, it is overshadowed by the importance of ensuring the cultural safety and personal comfort of Indigenous students. I think the

responses from students shown above, as well as others not included here, suggest that asking students to engage directly with the work of Indigenous scholars across a range of fields can achieve this, while allowing all students the opportunity to embrace different perspectives and experiment with different ways of thinking and knowing about the world and themselves. I have certainly learned much both from my own direct engagement with the material, from members of Indigenous communities, and from my students. However, I know there will always be much more for to learn, both as a teacher and as a human on the path to cultural competence.

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Chapter 6
"Yindyamarra in Action": Indigenous Cultural Competence as Core Business Within Legal Education and Law Schools

Annette Gainsford, Alison Gerard, and Kim Bailey

Abstract   This chapter reflects on our journey of embedding of Indigenous cultural competence across the design, development, and delivery of curriculum and pedagogy in the Bachelor of Laws at Charles Sturt University. It also reflects on our journey in building strong Indigenous community partnerships to underpin the embedding of Indigenous cultural competency across legal education. The three co-authors were heavily involved in the iterative development of the law program, and the establishment of the Centre for Law and Justice (CSU's law school equivalent), which has achieved best practice recognition within CSU, nationally and internationally. In this chapter, we examine three aspects of the law program and the Centre for Law and Justice that offers undergraduate degrees. First, Alison Gerard, who founded the law program and law school at CSU, reflects on the design of the program alongside the knowledge and scholarship of law and legal education as it relates to Indigenous cultural competence. Second, Annette Gainsford analyzes the development of curriculum including place of critical reflexivity as scholars, teachers, and researchers and the establishment of Indigenous community partnerships. Third, Kim Bailey outlines pedagogical approaches to the delivery of curriculum including teaching and learning and compliance with professional accreditation frameworks. This chapter offers insights on "Yindyamarra in Action": multi-level processes—top-down, bottom-up and peer-to-peer—for authentically and respectfully incorporating Indigenous cultural competence in law. We labor for a law program that is based on principles of respect for First Peoples' cultures, histories, and knowledges and is grounded in "Yindyamaldhuray yalibilinga mawang," meaning two-way learning in Wiradyuri language, and reciprocal relationships that build change. While our journey to cultural competence will never end, it is important to celebrate milestones

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along the way and offer this learning to the growing, vibrant community of practice on Indigenous cultural competence.

We start this chapter by introducing ourselves.

Annette: I am a Wiradyuri woman and Indigenous academic.

Alison: I am the former Foundation Director of the Centre for Law and Justice at Charles Sturt University. I am a non-Aboriginal woman born and raised on Wiradyuri Country. I am now Head at Canberra Law School, University of Canberra.

Kim: I was born and raised on Biripi country on the mid-north coast of Australia. I am a non-Aboriginal woman and a solicitor who was admitted to the Supreme and High Courts. I have also practiced in insurance litigation. Now employed at Charles Sturt University as an academic, I wrote a number of the foundational subjects of CSU's Bachelor of Laws program and lecture into these.

Designing Indigenous Cultural Competence into Legal Education—Alison

Leading scholars and higher education organizations have emphasized the important role of universities in incorporating Indigenous cultural competence (Behrendt, Larkin, Griew, & Kelly, 2012; Biles, 2018; Burns, 2014; Burns et al., 2019a; Harvey & Russell-Mundine, 2019; Hill, Tulloch, Mlcek, & Lewis, 2018; Power et al., 2016; Sherwood & Russell-Mundine, 2017; Universities Australia, 2011a, 2011b, 2017). Key law and criminal justice inquiries have added to calls for change, including the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Johnson, 1991) and the Bowraville Inquiry (New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice, 2014) and the more recent Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory (2016). However, law accreditation bodies that regulate legal education and law schools in Australia have been, so far, absent from the organizations pushing to see the embedding of Indigenous cultural competence in universities. One of the central recommendations of the Indigenous Cultural Competence for Legal Academics Program, a three-year project that concluded with its Final Report in 2019 (Burns, Lee Hong, & Wood, 2019c), is to lobby law accreditation bodies to make Indigenous cultural competence a core part of law programs across Australia. Notwithstanding this reluctance from the law accreditation professional bodies, a clear framework is now in place for universities (Ranzijn, McConnochie, & Nolan, 2009; Universities Australia, 2011b) and is reinforced by the latest *Universities Australia Indigenous Strategic Directions Statement 2017–2020* (Universities Australia, 2017). With the Vice Chancellors of

every university making a commitment to do so, the operational work of relationship building and embedding Indigenous cultures, histories, and contemporary social realities can begin with gusto.

A salient feature of Indigenous cultural competence, often forgotten, is that curriculum is only one part. At its core, Indigenous cultural competence is about: involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision-making; Indigenous employment strategies; and, ensuring "walumurra," meaning cultural safety in Wiradyuri language, within the higher education sector (Universities Australia, 2011a). We have learnt that curriculum is one part of this challenge and while important, it cannot be handled in isolation from the other core elements of Indigenous cultural competence. Without an even understanding and embracing of all core elements, the embedding project will likely be inauthentic.

The Charles Sturt University law program began in 2016 with the aim of embedding Indigenous cultural competence (Gainsford, 2018; Gerard & Gainsford, 2018; Gerard, Gainsford, & Bailey, 2017). Notably, we began without the framework, resources and guiding principles now developed and captured in the Final Report and related scholarship by the impressive Indigenous Cultural Competence for Legal Academics Program, led by Marcelle Burns (Burns, 2018; Burns et al., 2019a). While without this significant resource, we benefited greatly from the leadership of Associate Professor Wendy Nolan and Associate Professor Barbara Hill who led the establishment of an institutional framework at Charles Sturt University that ensured our new law program had structural support. Structural support includes already having in place: a graduate learning outcome of Indigenous cultural competence; an *Indigenous Education Strategy* that mandated training for all staff including sessional staff) and mandated Indigenous content; a pedagogical framework for embedding Indigenous cultural competence; and an *Indigenous Board of Studies* to oversee and approve the embedding of Indigenous content in courses, an innovation that provides a form of internal certification of courses and content in fulfillment of Article 3 of the *Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* regarding self-determination.

As an academic and Director of the Centre for Law and Justice, I didn't fully appreciate the structural parameters for embedding Indigenous cultural competence that exist at Charles Sturt University. According to the ICCLAP report (Burns et al., 2019a), we are one of only two universities surveyed that offer law to have Indigenous cultural competence as a graduate learning outcome.[1] For us, embedding Indigenous cultural competence in curriculum is compulsory, not simply an add-on or an elective. Increasingly, we have learned how these structural certainties make the incorporation of Indigenous cultural competence "core business" of the University, and the advantage that this approach brings (Burns et al., 2019a). This is not to say Indigenous cultural competence is evenly or smoothly embraced in all instances, or prioritized, but it is the necessary foundation for structural and sustainable change within Charles Sturt University.

The literature on embedding Indigenous cultural competence firmly identifies barriers to its successful incorporation and factors critical to its success. According to

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[1]Twenty out of a possible 39 Law Schools completed the ICCLAP Survey.

Ranzijn et al. (2009) some of the main impediments to culturally engaged curriculum are: lack of institutional commitment; dependence on individuals' discretionary effort and goodwill; assumptions about Indigenous departments doing the work; lack of engagement and/or commitment by academic staff; and the lack of a well-articulated and designed curriculum. Gainsford and Evans (2017) assert from their experience in Indigenizing business curriculum at CSU, that two additional requirements are pivotal: Indigenous educators; and the development of resources designed by Indigenous educators at the course level.

The ICCLAP report (Burns et al., 2019a, pp. 18–19) added particular challenges and success factors for law schools. The challenges were identified as: "Stubborn adherence to established law curriculum and a reluctance to change; A perception that ICC is antithetical to core curriculum and not within the expertise of individual lecturers; Racism, ignorance and tokenism – perception that all law students share the same privileges; Positioning ICC as an Indigenous issue for Indigenous people to solve; Change fatigue and concerns about workloads; Need to change the culture of law schools."

Critical success factors for law schools were seen as: "Course learning outcomes include ICC; Review of curriculum to identify inclusion of ICC; Support for non-Indigenous academics to build their capacity to teach Indigenous content including generic and role-specific training; Access to Indigenous expertise to support embedding of ICC; Resources including workload allocations that allow time to develop relationships with Indigenous communities; ICC evaluated both internally and externally by Indigenous experts." Based on our experience of embedding Indigenous cultural competence and as the head of the law program at Charles Sturt University, an additional critical success factor as I see it was the research-driven approach we took (Gainsford, 2018; Gerard & Gainsford, 2018; Gerard et al., 2017). This has enabled the staff involved, including myself, to inform our approaches by reading the scholarship of leading academics within Indigenous legal education in Australia, and internationally, and create a space for critical reflection. Having to continuously read, write, reflect, and present to others at law and legal education conferences accelerated my understanding of the key principles and concepts. This has also had the benefit of contributing to a national community of practice on embedding Indigenous cultural competence in law curriculum. Of note, a special issue on the topic featured in the *Legal Education Review* in 2018 containing two contributions from CSU (see Burns, 2018; Gainsford, 2018; Gerard & Gainsford, 2018).

When we began in 2016, already nestled within the strong institutional framework described above, we prioritized Indigenous employment. We initiated a targeted position that would enable the incorporation of Indigenous cultural competence to succeed. In employing Annette Gainsford, a Wiradyuri academic working on Country, we were able to work with an experienced Indigenous educator, already with decades of experience Indigenizing curriculum. This partnership enabled us to develop an approach based on principles of respect and reciprocity, grounded in self-determination. It also enabled a bridge to community, one of the central and important features of Indigenous cultural competence. Annette's critical reflection on the development of our law curriculum program follows below.

Developing the Space for a Yindyamaldhuray Yalibilinga Mawang[2] Approach—Annette

In being appointed as an Indigenous academic to the Centre for Law and Justice in this pivotal role I quickly realized that the establishment of a community partnership with the Bathurst Wiradyuri Elders was the key element that would underpin the authentic embedding of Indigenous cultural competence across the Charles Sturt University Bachelor of Laws. This partnership has enabled the Centre for Law and Justice to heed the tactical advice from institutional and national directives and form a collaborative partnership based on respect and reciprocity to ethically imbed Indigenous cultural competence (Harvey & Russell-Mundine, 2019). This relationship building process is made possible through the creation of a space where dialogue sharing is led by the Wiradyuri philosophy of Yindyamarra. The action of applying Yindyamarra enables us to work slowly and act responsibly, to engage with honor and respect; to embody a humble nature and to be polite in our relational approach. The observance of Yindyamarra values is a pivotal element that drives the ethical engagement with community. It also assists in building a strong foundation by placing the relationship with local Elders higher than any form of academic want or scholarly benefit. Building ethical relationships is key in a community partnership.

Indigenous people often have strong feelings of mistrust toward academic institutions (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). The misrepresentation and exploitation of Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges perpetuates the academy's ongoing cycle of discrimination in curriculum and research (Smith, 1999). For this reason it is important in the relationship building process to acknowledge and discuss how these injustices can be reconciled in the development of the partnership. By placing Wiradyuri values such as Yindyamarra at the center of the relationship we have been able to rebalance the power between the local Wiradyuri Elders and the academy (Ermine, 2007). This foundation means that any form of co-creation is imbued with a deep and abiding respect for community, and fosters "cultural patience" in adhering to cultural protocols.

We acknowledge that establishing and maintaining a community partnership takes readiness and genuine intention. The partnership also needs to foster a place where two-way learning is situated so that academics can explore Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Acton, Salter, Lenoy, & Stevenson, 2017). Many Indigenous concepts are often unfamiliar to academics as academics are fundamentally programmed to meet institutional expectations (Galloway, 2018). Providing a space to reconcile the differences between academic expectation and cultural appropriateness is a vital part in the process of embedding Indigenous cultural competence across any form of curriculum. Placing myself as an Indigenous academic to act as bridge between community and the Centre in relation to the partnership is a definite strength but also comes with a range of challenges. These challenges come from an accountability to oversee how Indigenous cultural competency is both ethically and

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[2]Meaning two-way learning approach in Wiradyuri language.

authentically represented in the curriculum. This has often been a place for tension in an already overcrowded curriculum, however maintenance of cultural integrity has come from being able to critically reflect on the process to facilitate learning and understanding about culturally appropriate ways (Gainsford & Evans, 2017). This has enabled us to tackle weaknesses such as tokenism and feeding into the deficit model (Burns, Young, & Nielsen, 2019b). These critical reflections have enabled us to produce a collaborative curriculum with community to privilege Indigenous knowledges and establish a culturally safe learning environment for staff and students alike (Schwartz, 2019). Through the embedding of Indigenous cultural competence and the privileging of Indigenous voice from community we are providing a space for a truth-telling process to occur, which is one of the most prominent cultural issues in Australia today.

All meetings were conducted under the Yindyamarra philosophy. Initial meetings were prioritized for relationship building through yarning, meaning the sharing of stories. All subsequent sessions use the same yarning style to explore how the partnership can meet the needs of the local Indigenous community and the requirements of the law curriculum. This form of collaboration, taking into consideration protocols in relation to cultural authority and the protection of intellectual and cultural property, is initiating processes of Indigenous self- determination (Davis, 2015). During the meetings the Elders were able to guide the academics to set up culturally responsive situations of thought and reflexivity, thus also guiding their cultural competency capability. Collaborative partnership meetings are seen as crucial to establish trust and build the foundations of a culturally safe place for ongoing dialogue (Styres, Zinga, Bennett, & Bomberry, 2010). From these early meetings the Centre established a calendar of significant events to build its capacity to acknowledge and recognize Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and other days of cultural significance. One of the events that has become an important date in the calendar has been August the 14th which is the anniversary of the date in 1824 when martial law was declared against the Wiradyuri people in Bathurst. This recognition has led to significant interest in how martial law has been documented and has led to a joint research project with the local Elders.

One of the most significant strengths of a community partnership is to engage with local knowledge holders to highlight the diversity of Indigenous peoples across Australia. This diversity acknowledges that Australia's Indigenous peoples come from many different nation groups all with their own language, traditions, and cultural nuances (Gainsford, 2018). These place-based knowledge systems are instrumental in providing diverse characteristics and culturally specific knowledges relating to place to make curriculum content authentic across core subject content (Gainsford, 2018). Working directly with local First Nations peoples is recognized as a best practice model by many international scholars (Battiste, 2017; Cajete, 2005; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Lambe, 2003; Smith, 1999; Thaman, 2003). However, it is also recognized that community partnerships need to be supported by respect and reciprocity (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). Reciprocity, accepted as a salient feature in Indigenous research, is widely recognized as the foundation of building respectful

relationships with Indigenous communities. It is a vital practice in any partnership that leads to the co-creation of knowledge.

In this context, upholding the values of respect and reciprocity hinges on the cultural competence of the Centre's academics to enable the two parties to work together on a common goal designated by community. For this purpose the Centre for Law and Justice has established community led research projects like the aforementioned martial law project. This two-way learning process challenges longstanding university collaborative constructs to build new pathways that are authentic and meaningful to Indigenous communities (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). We recognize in this two-way learning space that language is an important element in reconciling differences. For example, language and terms such as Indigenous, cultural competence and reconciliation are all terms of contention with community and these needed specific discussion and sensitivity (Burns, 2018; Galloway, 2018). Reciprocity enables us to bridge Indigenous and Western knowledge systems to address community need and grow the cultural competence capabilities of our academics.

One of the most valuable areas of growth for us as a Centre has been our ability to reflect on the community partnership and how we can bridge both worlds to provide authentic learning experiences for our law students (Gerard & Gainsford, 2018). The place-based way in which the Bachelor of Laws imbeds Indigenous cultural competency across the entirety of the curriculum is considered an innovative approach in Australia (Gerard et al., 2017). It is acknowledged that the embedding of Indigenous cultural competency is reliant on strong leadership around curriculum design, authentic co-development and meaningful delivery. In this distinctive framework it is conceded that place-based learning that is culturally situated through an established Indigenous community partnership can have multiple benefits to highlight the cultural diversity and specific needs of Indigenous peoples in Australia. The clear links between Indigenous cultural competence and professional practice are further analyzed in the following curriculum delivery section by Kim Bailey.

Delivering Indigenous Cultural Competence in Law Curriculum—Kim

The pedagogical connection that interrelates Indigenous cultural competence and professional practice poses, two questions that are helpful when considering how we teach Indigenous perspectives in a Bachelor of Laws curriculum. They are:

1. How do we make Indigenous content compliant with curriculum accreditation requirements?
2. How do we make an engaging authentic learning experience?

While embedding Indigenous content can appear haphazard, thoughtful mapping of content over the duration of the degree with staged assessment is necessary. Content

and assessment must mirror the progression of learning of the student—from knowledge, to critical analysis and skills, to professional practice, or application. Many law degrees remain at the transmitting knowledge stage because Indigenous perspectives and context are often confined to one foundational law subject. The risk of this approach is that it fails to equip students to think critically and behave reflectively, and fails to acknowledge the progression of student learning toward critical thinking or reflective analysis throughout the degree.

Cultural competency is a vital skill if we are to produce graduates who are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct, the rule of law and community service. Rule 4 of the Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules requires that practitioners "deliver legal services competently", and there is academic support that this necessarily entails cultural competence (Baron & Corbin, 2017). Engaging students in the journey toward cultural competency must be done by making relevant connections between the law, the profession and cultural competency. At CSU, the strength of the Bachelor of Laws program rests in curriculum design that blends what is often referred to as "black letter" law with Indigenous knowledges, perspectives, and professional practice. Law schools and the legal education they provide are subject to various layers of regulation. This includes not only what is taught in the degree (the mandated "Priestley 11" subject areas) but also how it is taught. All universities are governed by Higher Education Standards regulated by the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Authority. Law schools are then subject to accreditation requirements from professional bodies. In NSW, the Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) is responsible for accrediting law degrees and overseeing a framework that includes standards set by the Law Admissions Consultative Committee and (to a lesser extent) the Council of Australian Law Deans. This extensive, and some would say over-burdensome (Rundle & Griggs, 2019) compliance framework, provides the parameters of law curriculum and opportunities for innovation in embedding Indigenous cultural competence.

Making Curriculum Compliant

Nakata (2007) acknowledges in his work that law must be the foundational "hook" from which students are introduced to Indigenous perspectives. This makes sense on a number of levels. First, the volume of content required to be taught in a law degree over the average year is considerable. Presenting Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in an embedded manner throughout the "Priestley 11" is a logical framework. Second, if we simply "add on" Indigenous perspectives without making authentic and rigorous connections to law, there is a great risk that students will view the content as tokenistic and irrelevant. In our experience, delivering Indigenous perspectives that are not contextualized will result in push back from students.

Each challenge encountered provides a valuable learning experiences for us to reflect on in relation to practice (Falk, 2004). Students need to understand the law with Indigenous standpoints in an integrated way. This involves understanding how the

law often perpetuates inequality, narratives about "race" and colonialism. Finally, our regulating bodies and the profession agitate for graduates who have skills that make them "work ready." By teaching the knowledge, skills and application of cultural competency through mandated content we are producing graduates who are critical thinkers and effective practitioners that demonstrate a commitment to social justice and support the process of reconciliation in Australia.

Asking how Indigenous knowledges and perspective can be "worked into" mandated content is the wrong question. We should be seeking cultural competency as a threshold learning outcome. The necessary question is how can we privilege Indigenous cultures, histories, and contemporary social realities while teaching the "Priestley 11" and how can we privilege this perspective within "black letter" law? The starting point is consideration of the skills and knowledge required by Schedule 1 of the *Legal Profession Uniform Admission Rules 2015* (NSW) together with the Law Admissions Consultative Committee Accreditation Standards (Law Admissions Consultative Committee, 2018). There are numerous junctures in both the Priestley 11 and foundational subjects that open opportunities for Indigenous knowledges and perspectives. Equitable principles can be taught through application to stolen wages cases (*Pearson v the State of Queensland* 2017 FCA 1096), Indigenous corporations and the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth) can be contrasted as an alternative structure to the corporation that moves away from the deficit narrative. Negligence and false imprisonment can be taught through the Stolen Generations cases (Gerard et al., 2017). These are a few examples of how Indigenous perspectives can be taught through mandated content. Once these areas are identified, the progression of student learning can be mapped and consideration given to how Indigenous and professional perspectives may be taught and assessed at those relevant junctures.

Experience has taught us that a collaborative approach between legal professionals, local Indigenous Elders and academic staff is the most effective way to develop curriculum. Place based Indigenous consultation is sought on both content and assessment. Indigenous knowledges and perspective is provided both by Elders teaching into the program, by Indigenous academic colleagues and through Indigenous industry experts. The importance of place-based learning in the degree is, as Galloway (2018) argues, relationally responsive pedagogy (see also Gainsford, 2018). Indigenous knowledges and perspectives are not mutually exclusive or antithetic to mandated content. Incorporating Indigenous voice in law gives both teacher and student an opportunity to apply and critically evaluate foundational legal principles in a real world context.

Making Curriculum Engaging and Authentic

At CSU, we have fostered an active relationship with the legal profession to present exemplars of cultural competency. Legal practitioners who use the law to challenge institutions, policymakers and the social structures that perpetuate inequality are

invited to give their perspective in the classroom. That perspective forms the basis for a rich learning context, and assessment. Story telling is also a vital way of decolonizing the law curriculum (Burns, Cavanagh, & O'Donnell, 2017). Practitioners are invited to tell their stories of how they learned to work cross culturally and used legal practice to challenge access to justice.

A practical example of this is how I teach the law of torts. Negligence and false imprisonment are analyzed by using the judgment of *Trevorrow v the State of South Australia [No 5]* (2007) 98 SASR 136. After working through the legal elements of negligence, students are exposed to the testimony of a Stolen Generations survivor through the Stolen Generations testimonies website. This approach was adopted following advice from Indigenous stakeholders on implementing cultural safety. Professional perspective is introduced by introducing Claire O'Connor SC, who acted as junior counsel in *Trevorrow*. Claire explains how and why the principles of negligence and limitations of actions applied to the state's removal of Aboriginal children, but also explains why this matter was the only successful Stolen Generations action for negligence, when many others were not. Her presentation models the professional skills and challenges of working cross culturally. By combining practitioner and Indigenous perspectives, students are provided with a rich analysis of the law of negligence. In assessment, students are required to reflectively evaluate the effectiveness of the law of negligence as a tool for righting wrongs for the Stolen Generations and to contrast this to alternate statutory compensation schemes. Students are also required to consider the role of lawyers in this and what type of lawyer will use legal principles to challenge access to justice in this way. To undertake the assessment task, students require an understanding of not only what the law is, they need to evaluate how the operation of the law necessarily precludes most Stolen Generations survivors from gaining compensation. Indigenous perspectives in tort law builds on students' awareness of the policy of successive governments of the forced removal of children that is studied in our introductory law subjects. In the foundational subject, students are taught statutory interpretation through the *Aborigines Protection Acts*, the legal regime in NSW that formally established the Stolen Generations. This is the benefit and beauty of embedding material at relevant stages of the cultural competency learning journey.

Conclusion

It is acknowledged that the interrelated elements of the design, development, and delivery of Indigenous cultural competency across the CSU Bachelor of Laws is driven by a common goal to privilege Indigenous voice. While the argument for embedding Indigenous cultural competence is generally made according to improving Indigenous participation in, and completion of, university programs, our experience has shown that several other key benefits come with this approach. First, a clear purpose for staff who are engaged with meaningful work. Having a clear strategy as a new law school has helped garner momentum and direction to decolonize the legal education environment. There is a shared sense of purpose and a

strong commitment to the ideals and mission of a law school to foster the highest standards of ethical conduct and community service. Second, we see high levels of student satisfaction, enhanced employability and increased engagement with their learning. We know from interactions with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students that the embedding of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives is valued and often directly relevant to the work our distance education students are currently undertaking. We understand that prospective students are seeking out our LLB because of the prevalence of Indigenous cultural competence.

The final observation we offer is the benefit of becoming more immersed in the Aboriginal community in which you live and work and enjoying a greater connection to place through meaningful relationships. As we develop relationships with local Aboriginal community organizations and the Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal staff working in law or related-fields, we develop our professional network and become more involved in activities within the community. The requirement of a two-way reciprocal relationship with the Bathurst Wiradyuri Elders has meant we have become involved with—the Elders to work together on projects such as the protection of cultural heritage, the co-development of law resources, joint research projects and the embedding of a cultural immersion experience into the law program.. This has strengthened our relationships with the Bathurst Wiradyuri Elders to recognize that community relationships build strong foundations to provide professional development opportunities for academic staff and authentic learning experiences for law students.

As acknowledged by ICCLAP (Burns et al., 2019a), the successful implementation of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives ultimately rests on the cultural competency of the legal academic teaching. Based on our experience, unless there is an institutional commitment from universities and accrediting bodies to achieving cultural competency in graduate learning outcomes, progress will remain piecemeal—dependent on the awareness and goodwill of individual academics. Embedding and teaching Indigenous knowledges and perspectives require a collaborative approach between community Elders, academics, and the profession. Academics should be encouraged to continue a cycle of reflection and consultation—with the freedom to make mistakes but to be open to an ongoing journey of cultural development.

Delivering this content is sometimes fraught, and will necessarily result in some pushback from staff, practitioners, and students (Falk, 2004). The preparedness of academics to be reflective, adaptive, and culturally capable across the areas of curriculum design, development and delivery is vital. CSU's experience is that an embedded approach that seeks reflexivity, critical thinking, coupled with a strong community relationship such as the Centre's partnership with the Bathurst Wiradyuri Elders that promotes Yindyamarra, is the only way to move forward.

Wiradyuri ancestral knowledge that has been passed down to make this collaboration possible. We would also like to recognize the Wiradyuri ancestors for their continual presence and guidance in our collaborations. In addition, we would like to acknowledge Dindima, Aunty Gloria Rogers, Aunty Joylene Simpson, and Aunty Denise Scott for their contribution to the early stages of subject delivery.

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Chapter 7
Doing What is Right: Behavioural Change in Service Delivery at the Higher End of Cultural Competence

A Psycho-socio-Cultural Model for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Health Care Professionals

Dave Ritchie

Abstract Developing cultural awareness is an important knowledge required to shape practice at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in any health system where sustained health disadvantage exists between the first peoples, other minorities and the larger population. A further shift in thinking is required to achieve cultural appropriateness, then competence and then proficiency that requires knowledge, skills and experience based on positive behavioural change. Taking this approach, cultural competency is demonstrated when a measurable impact in service delivery and practice is realised, not just from a provider perspective but more importantly from a recipient and their community perspective. When identified communities use different understandings that impact on their health status, health practitioners who aspire to advanced practice should be capable of making a difference that is relevant and acknowledged by each community. This chapter uses a simple framework of define: measure: value: choose in order to address some of the differences in thinking and reasoning that can be used to better understand the roles played in improving the health status of individuals, families and communities. This should encourage a reconsideration of the significance of the bio-medical model and a greater engagement with the more complex psycho-socio-cultural model.

I am a non-Maori man who was brought up in New Zealand by strong women. I have a deep connection to both New Zealand where I was born and Australia where I now live.

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Conversation and Relationship Building with Elders

How do you know when you first start on a journey? Do you only start when you know the precise destination or are you able to accept the discomfort that the destination will be shaped by the manner in which you acquire and develop your knowledge as you take each step? Do you start with a question that you cannot answer, based on what you know and where you are? Do you start with what you would like to know, or like to know better? Do you start with what you know about yourself, or do you want to know more about others? Rather than stop and remain in a quandary, you should proceed and use your questions to guide the choices that you need to make with each and subsequent steps.

I have been asking these questions of myself, what I know, how I act and interact with others, probably ever since I was aware that I could think. When it comes to my current involvement in the education of health professionals, I have questioned what might I have done better and how could I share that to improve the learning of others. I have questioned the teaching of simple concepts, not because they shouldn't be taught or learnt, but the pace and sequencing of the progression from simple to complex. When our deliberate actions should align with an understanding of strategic direction, a basic understanding of performance, then we cannot separate individual actions from the accumulation of actions to a collective. To reverse the direction of deliberation, at what point do we start with a complex issue and begin to pull it apart to understand its components, and to accept the concept of a "holon" (Koestler's 1967 definition as cited by Checkland (1999), p. A54), a neologism, "where something was simultaneously a whole and a part". For example, the concept of health, as a definition, and health as in health care system, another concept, where the phrase misleads what actually is the focus of the system. Our health care system has a bio-medical focus on illness, disease, trauma and injury rather than a social determinants (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003) model's consideration of the multiple influences impacting wellness, or the gradients of health. If the health care system is intended to improve health status in regard to wellness, then a shift is required in regard to how health care services lead to wellness. Our current health care model is based on acute medical care and that might not be optimal for the evidence-based health care burdens we should be well aware of. So, if we need to change how our health care services are delivered, and that links to how they are currently structured, do we wait for someone else to redesign the system? Should we start by building on what we do well, or should we consider where we do not achieve the levels of performance that we aspire to and begin to change those?

On all measures there is a disadvantage, relative to the larger community, in regard to first peoples in countries that have been colonised in the past 200–300 years. While there may be some biological markers or reasons for parts of this disparity, there are also psychological, social, cultural and political factors that influence the inequalities that can be observed. The enduring cultural disadvantages that exist provide areas of practice that I believe any student or practitioner in health care should aspire to do something about. However, it is not possible to develop a true

understanding or appreciation of Aboriginal culture just by reading about it. It is much more important, valuable, and likely to lead to real change in practice when you can engage with Aboriginal Elders and community directly. But, having raised your level of consciousness to one of willingness, what can you take to an Elder to give as part of any exchange? How much are you willing to give before you might begin to better understand yourself, to then begin to better understand something of Aboriginal culture?

A first step should be taken with someone who is familiar to you and hopefully, if you are convincing enough with your initial request, you will be invited to take several more in company. I was fortunate to be introduced to a number of Elders on my journey, and the numbers increase as I progress. I don't always know who is an Elder on first, or even subsequent meetings, but in time enough will be shared, when you are ready, to begin to learn more about Aboriginal culture.

This process, in itself, is a gift from the Ancestors. In Aboriginal culture, there is a long tradition of story-telling, starting with something simple that can be readily remembered, and then built on with increasing numbers of perspectives or dimensions, as you are able to grasp the complexity of more advanced concepts. In western culture arguably a reverse development occurs in explaining complexity, such as what (von Bertalanffy, 1968) first called general systems theory. von Bertalanffy's explanation of general systems theory was technical and for the advanced learner. Others then unpacked systems concepts into various forms more suitable for teaching and learning applications such as (Checkland, 1999) soft systems methodology, and arguably Schön's reflective practitioner (1995). The significance of the timelines, of traditional learning in Aboriginal culture compared with the relatively recent explanations in western academic literature, should not be discounted. There is a vast amount of wisdom in traditional knowledge.

Trying to understand the complexity of health care systems that exist, requires an appreciation of the process by which they evolved rather than were designed. Hospitals, the mainstay of most health care systems, were intended to address early eras in health care, initially quarantine and isolation for infectious and communicable diseases aided by the development of public health procedures. In the period between the World Wars in the twentieth century, the industrialisation of medical care was enabled, with the development of surgical techniques and procedures, aided by the development of antibiotics and other pharmaceuticals. After World War II, as we then entered the era of the New Public Health, hospitals were less suited to address the earlier intervention required to reduce preventable admissions linked to lifestyle and behavioural risks. Our health care systems are no longer sustainable in their current forms. Returning to the story, adopting the approach of Aboriginal knowledge sharing, we should start by asking the "simple" question what should the health care system aim to achieve? We could then ask what needs to change to restore the imbalances that exist? More questions and insight into our personal, as well as collective, contributions to community wellbeing will be required. Starting with "improved clarity" about what health care is intended to achieve is about **defining** the purpose that justifies what we should do.

Knowledge and Scholarship Around the Topic

Any student studying as a health professional contemplates their profession as an opportunity to make a difference in a way that is meaningful to them. There is something about the intended nature of the clinical interaction that is both compelling and rewarding. However, there are a number of assumptions that underpin being able to make a difference.

The first is the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and experiences that develop the individual to the point where they can begin to interact as a health professional, initially under supervision but once some competence has been demonstrated, more independently. There is a strong chance that learning has moved from simple interactions into some degree of complexity. But the question remains what is the level of complexity when pre-service education concludes and the shift to post-employment professional development begins?

What might not be questioned to any substantial degree are personal values, attitudes and beliefs that have shaped the individual prior to the decision to strive for, and be enrolled as a student, and how that also shapes what is learned, how it is learned and how it is applied. The experiences that you had when you were hungry, cold, hurt or unwell provide a context for what you identify with. They are a basis for what you expect regarding the difference that you can make. They also make a difference in regard to who you identify as a role model in developing your understanding about what happens when you are unwell, when you might suffer an injury or trauma, through play, sport or other interactions. Depending on where you were born, and what interactions you had during schooling with people who were different to you, you might have a narrower appreciation of the social determinants of health. The social determinants of health are of greater importance if inequities in health status are to be recognised and addressed.

Developing a professional identity should be based not only on acquiring the knowledge, skills and experience that supports the development within a profession, but should also be accompanied with the development of reflective practice engaging with what performance means within that profession. Making explicit the assumptions that underpin personal values, attitudes and beliefs require interaction and guidance from advanced practitioners, either those that are involved with teaching at pre- or post-service, undergraduate or postgraduate level, or, expert practitioners willing to mentor the aspiring practitioner. Dewey (1933, 1938) was critical of the manner in which curriculum stifled what was taught as opposed to what should have been learnt. (Schön, 1995) then developed and applied that work to professional practice. He spoke of reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action and professional artistry as being the levels of reflective practice that are common in professions. Schön argued that there was a tension between theory and practice that reflection could address. Practitioner reflection was based on looking back, reflection-on-action, and trying to better understand the interactions that occurred and to consider what changes might have been required to achieve better outcomes. Reflection-in-action was a higher level of reflective practice, with quicker reactions to make adjustments in a situation,

to ensure that any real time deviations from intended performance were adjusted so that the intended results were achieved. Professional artistry was demonstrated when an expert practitioner could consistently engage with complex issues of performance and consistently achieve better outcomes than other practitioners.

Ritchie (2010) argued that reflection-on-experience could occur when health professionals were challenged to shift a dominant perspective, their clinical profession, to consider a different values framework associated with management. A managerial perspective typically considers the resources used when clinical choices were made, to shape choices based on overall performance at levels above the individual. It is a more complex construct, and tensions arise from clashes in and between the ethics framework adopted: Deontological versus consequentialist or utilitarian ethics frameworks. An incomplete engagement with a deontological framework creates conflict between elements. The code of conduct espoused by the dominant health professions focus on "do no harm" (non-maleficence) or "do only good" (beneficence), but seem to place lesser value on equal concepts such as autonomy (the right of the individual to make choices affecting them) and justice (where individuals are treated equally based on clinical need alone, without bias or discrimination). I argue that reflection-on-experience arising from interactions with individuals from backgrounds other than the student of, or practitioner of, a health profession is an important part of the development required to address any unconscious or implicit personal bias. That reflection could lead to changes in personal behaviour that enable an improvement in the access and experience of health services by Aboriginal peoples. The evidence that supports our practice, the activities or tasks we engage in, the resources consumed, and the results (outcomes not outputs) achieved become what should be measured. These can then be assigned a **value** accordingly. We should only get to **choose** when we can distinguish their potential impact and value.

Reflections as Scholar, Teacher, Researcher and Professional

My own journey as someone who was interested in making a difference, in finding out what was required to become a better practitioner, involved work, study, reflection and research, in several countries. My initial interest was trying to understand what knowledge, skills and experience were required to become not only a manager, but a good manager. At the time I was beginning this quest, several countries were grappling with how to get better performance out of their health care systems. Those countries were New Zealand, Australia and Great Britain. I worked for differing periods in these three countries, in that order, comparing and contrasting how they delivered health services. Later, when I became an academic, that interest extended to Canada as well. The consequences of the legislative reforms that occurred, involving the grouping of autonomous hospitals into a geographic networked model, shifted the emphasis in management from the business administrators to the clinician-managers that emerged. In Australia the major clinician-manager winners were nurses, and that reflected their proportionate numbers. Degeling, Maxwell, Kennedy, and Coyle

(2003) were arguably the first researchers to evidence clear differences in thinking between clinicians and clinician-managers and this prompted a shift in my own thinking, scholarship and research. I had studied health administration at postgraduate level in New Zealand and Australia, within different curriculum and cultural contexts. It also meant I began to reflect on how, as an academic teaching management to clinicians, I might change not only what I taught, but how I taught and supported learners in that transition. The differences between roles were real but how could the transition be supported and facilitated?

While I was grappling with how to become a better academic practitioner, I recognised the need to shift from teaching traditionally, as I was taught, and that meant generally looking back upon theory and developing intellectual arguments. I changed my focus and emphasis towards shaping the future, and encouraging my students to develop as advanced practitioners. Drawing on the deliberations of the (Institute of Medicine, 2001) there was a need to prepare students for the new health systems that were required. That meant recognising the impact of an increasing burden of chronic and continuing conditions. There is a need to shift from a bio-medical model dominated by medicine to one that is multidisciplinary and team focused on out of hospital models of health care. Integral, in my view, to that shift was to consider who had benefitted least from the biomedical and institutional focus of care, and who might benefit more from different models of care.

That shift in focus enabled me to think carefully about my own upbringing and interactions with Māori, and the challenges I had in understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia when I first arrived in 1983. The complexity of the gaps in morbidity and mortality experiences of first peoples aligned with my shifting views on how best to develop the advanced practitioners required to lead. Advanced practitioners were required to lead the transition from a traditional approach to an understanding of the New Public Health approaches required to prevent chronic and continuing conditions. This is where Bisognano (2013) argued that the focus should be flipped, with clinicians being challenged to shift from asking "What is the matter **with you**?" to "What matters *to you*?" If we are to ask what matters to seekers of health care, then not only we should better understand what they think and believe influences their health status, but also what choices they can reasonably make to maintain or improve their health.

The opportunity to share my own experiences from participating in my employer's Indigenous Cultural Competence Program, and a number of Cultural Immersion Camps that involved travelling out to Menindee and spending time in the company of Aunty Beryl Philp- Carmichael and other Elders, linked to the learning resources and activities I provided.

Sharing reflections on my own experiences, and the exhortation to develop Advanced Practitioners who recognised the need and justification to change the way that they engaged with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in particular, meant that students also began to share more of their own stories. Different types of training in cultural awareness are increasingly required by employers who interact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. But often that training is single event and evaluated based on knowledge shifts immediately at the conclusion of

training. A serious weakness seems to be the lack of any consideration of changes in behaviour that might be perceived from a recipient perspective. Often the training, despite the quality of its content, is delivered without recognising the significance of relationship building with local community, particularly the Elders who are the knowledge holders and the only individuals authorised to speak on behalf of their community. Increasing local input into delivering training and evaluating its impact is very much a process of building capacity and capability from the ground up. The Prime Minister, in a foreword to the *Closing the gap report 2019* (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2019), asserted that a top-down approach to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians had not worked, and changes to policy and delivery of services needed stronger accountability through co-designed action plans. Challenging students to consider what differences they might make, what changes in their behaviours they might consider given that academically they are better prepared than most, has resulted in ripples of small but perceptible changes in the services they provide.

Methods of Teaching/Sharing/Providing Evidence/Student Voices

Students who enter the postgraduate programme have a typical sequence of three progressive subjects that I teach which introduces them to different ways of defining, measuring, valuing and choosing between alternatives to the therapeutic interventions that they have influence over. The introductory subject is conceptual, getting them to think about health in different contexts, and from different perspectives. The second subject, evidence-based practice, reinforces the desirability of shifting to New Public Health approaches to reduce exposure to risk behaviours that increase the probability of developing chronic and continuing conditions. The third subject introduces a clinical governance framework to address complex factors affecting the quality of clinical service delivery. Student understanding is evaluated by the extent that they can appropriately identify and engage with a performance issue relevant to the theory introduced in the subject. In recent years, an increasing number of students have used this assessment to write business cases that have led to authentic workplace change.

Given that these students are studying management, the business case reinforces their learning. But, influencing interactions at the individual patient level can, and does, precede the opportunity to develop a collective response.

I recently asked a group of students working under my guidance on a project concerning an Aboriginal community's experience of access to, and the manner they receive health services, to consider when their own thinking changed. With permission I will share an entry into a reflective portfolio by SRP, a postgraduate student.

"I have often been reflecting how my appreciation for [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander] health issues and general understanding of peoples has changed over the

course of both this subject and my entire [Masters] degree. As mentioned previously I have tried to pin point when this [mind] shift first started, in a hope of using this information to inform others and potentially shift their minds"!

Thinking back on my studies there is one particular assessment which has stood out in my mind. I was required to complete a project on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health topic, working in paediatrics it was fairly straight forward to select the issue of Ear Health and Hearing Loss as a topic I was interested in. The cycle below outlines at a very basic level what I began to see during this subject and how this started the changes within myself. If a child can be so greatly [impacted] by a health condition (through no fault of their own) and the cycle would then continue with their own children. Not to say that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have issues with their ear health, however it is well established that the incidence in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is significantly higher than non-indigenous populations.

In hindsight, this is very much associated with the social determinants of health, which I have known about for a long time, but it took something more relatable to a personal area of interest to actually visualise the cycle social determinants can have on health. Reflecting on this and my previous learning I found that I had probably focused significantly on the impact of social determinants on adult health, and not considered the whole picture/life cycle. The fact that social determinants were effecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child health was no fault of the child, and this really "hit home" for me.

On further reflection, as I write this entry, I think I have been unconsciously laying blame on people for their poor health, due to determinants which may have been outside their control. Acknowledging the cycle of poverty and the impact it has on health for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-indigenous people has greatly shaped my view of individuals and how their health outcomes may be impaired. Reflecting further, I think my view has been shaped by my upbringing in a white, upper-class family. I have always had access to healthy food, shelter, high-quality education and any other every day necessity and then some. Being able to consider how life would be different for another person is an eye-opening exercise. If my understanding and for want of a better word, prejudice, can be changed, then I have no doubt others can be too. Is changing the mind set really as basic as the cycle below? To be honest, looking at the cycle now I feel somewhat stupid for not acknowledging this earlier in not only my studies, but life in general. I guess sometimes it takes something that you can clearly relate to and reflect upon, to bring about the "light bulb" moments!" (Fig. 7.1).

To conclude, I now have a dilemma about how much cultural knowledge is required before a health professional can change their thinking and interactions with all their patients. While a significant number of my students have participated in my employer's Indigenous Cultural Competence Program, more of my students now seem to grasp the challenge earlier, because their thinking about what was important to them when they commenced their study was based on their desire to do more good than harm. By suggesting that they strengthen what they do the least well, not
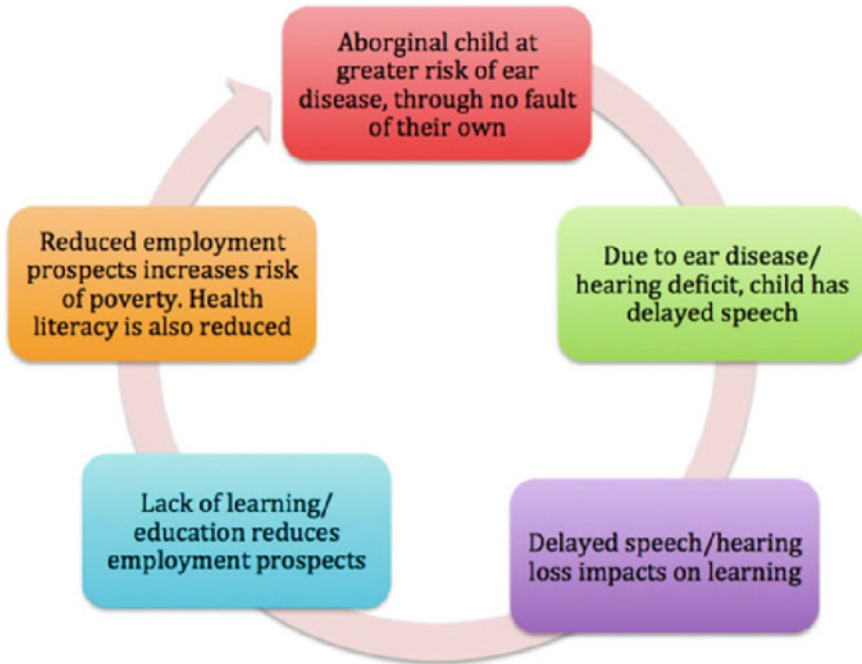
Fig. 7.1 Diagram by SRP © (2019)

necessarily personally but collectively, then perhaps we can make more progress in Closing the Gap.

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Chapter 8
A Conversation About Indigenous Pedagogy, Neuroscience and Material Thinking

Natalia Bilton, John Rae, and Tyson Yunkaporta

Abstract This chapter demonstrates how Indigenous pedagogy can be used in anatomy and physiology education in the tertiary sector. It is proposed that bringing Indigenous pedagogy into tertiary education may increase the engagement of Indigenous students in the first year of university study. Current literature focuses on Indigenous pedagogy applied to primary and secondary education and only one study to date has been published in the tertiary sector. In this chapter, we describe how the 8 Ways of Indigenous Knowing can inform the design of learning activities to support student engagement with anatomy and physiology across a broad range of educational settings. This chapter aims to provide a framework and starting point where academics can foster creativity in their teaching practice and help build on the discourse of Indigenous andragogy in the tertiary education sector.

Natalia: I have been using the 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning (8 ways) (Yunkaporta, 2009) to teach my students anatomy and physiology for the last 4 years. The students are first year undergraduates and the institution is a regional university. The student cohort that I teach is unique. Many students are mature age, come from low socio-economic backgrounds, study online as distance students and vary significantly in their education prior to engaging in university studies. Unfortunately, these characteristics are associated with high attrition rates. Such cohorts require scaffolding, practise, feedback, engaging learning activities and interactivity to overcome the possibility of attrition and to ensure educational success (Australian Government, 2017). Using the 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning (Yunkaporta, 2009) in my teaching

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practice has allowed me to override the predisposition to attrition that is inherent in my cohort.

My colleague John who is a fellow researcher also interested in creativity in teaching, suggested I make contact with Tyson and this collaboration is the result of our interactions. We present, here, the next level in Indigenous pedagogy and discuss how it aligns with the neuroscience of learning. This work is designed to foster complex meaning-making that is grounded in neuroscience and materiality, through a process of cultural inclusivity.

John: I suggested to Natalia that we contact Tyson because it seemed much better to engage with him in meaningful dialogue than it would be to refer to his work indirectly, as if removing him from the conversation. I think that this yarn is evidence of the value of sharing in conversation.

Somewhat familiar with Tyson's 8 ways (Yunkaporta, 2009) and having engaged with some of his other related manuscripts, I look forward to sharing how that aligns with some of the work that I have been doing lately concerning materiality, whereby non-human things are accounted for as active elements in social practices (Maller, 2015) and have agency (Rae, 2016).

On my desk is a copy of Tyson's paper *Winangay Bagay Gaay: Knowing the river's story* I have highlighted in vivid pink some important points about yarning protocol, including the importance of 'building upon what previous speakers have said' … to create 'a single shared message' (Lowe, Backhaus, Yunkaporta, Brown & Loynes, 2014), which is something I now look forward to.

Tyson: Over a decade ago, as a *Pama* from Queensland (Apalech clan) with southern ancestry and affiliations but mostly working off-country in *Koori* and *Mardi* communities, I undertook doctoral research that gave rise to an Aboriginal pedagogy framework known as 8ways (Yunkaporta, 2009). It was not about theoretical learning styles, but lived pedagogies—traditions of Indigenous knowledge transmission that endure, usually unnoticed, in our communities today.

Although 8ways was specifically designed for the First Peoples of Western NSW, it has been taken up by many institutions and educators across Australia and even overseas. As it really should only be used in its communities of origin as a simple introduction for novices, I am now offering this more general framework—(unnamed)—that carry more common orientations I have found in First Peoples' cultures all over the continent (Yunkaporta, 2019). It is also something of a masterclass, responding to a groundswell of people who have worked deeply with 8ways, created some amazing innovations with communities and are now looking for extension. It is a 'next level' understanding of Aboriginal pedagogy.

For those who are unfamiliar with the 8ways model, here is a brief overview of the framework before we look at the new, general framework:

1. The first way is Story Sharing. This is about teaching and learning through narrative.
2. The second way is Learning Maps. This is about making learning pathways and processes explicit visually.

Fig. 8.1 The 8 ways model

3. The third way is Non-verbal Learning. This is about hands-on learning, critical reflection and least-intrusive management strategies. Ancestral/spiritual knowledge also comes through this way of learning.
4. The fourth way is Symbols and Images. This is about exploring content through imagery and using visual cues and signals.
5. The fifth way is Land Links. This is about place-based pedagogy, linking content to local land and environment.
6. The sixth way is Non-linear. This is about indirect management strategies, lateral thinking, comparing and synthesising diverse cultural viewpoints, innovating, adapting, working with cycles and working with holistic knowledge.
7. The seventh way is Deconstruct/Reconstruct. This is about modelling and scaffolding, balancing teacher instruction with independent learning and working from wholes to parts.
8. The eighth way is Community Links. This is about grounding learning content and values in community knowledge, working on community projects and using or displaying knowledge products publicly for local benefit.

It should be noted that the '8ways' framework is not a collection of arbitrary learning styles to be assigned to students like astrology signs. The diagram in Fig. 8.1 is based on a kinship system, to emphasise the interrelatedness of the pedagogies. For example, Story Sharing is the husband of Non-linear, the son of Learning Maps and Land Links, the in-law of Deconstruct/Reconstruct, and the maternal grandfather of Community Links. The four elements to the far left and right in the diagram are

Fig. 8.2 Kinship mind

female, while the four at the top and bottom are male. The outer lines show mother–child pairs, while the internal diagonals show husband–wife pairs. The synergies within these pairs give the pedagogies power and life—so when the connections between them are explored, a person can find deep Aboriginal knowledge that can only be accessed through reflective or practical processes rather than the exchange of verbal information. For example, making a *learning map* of a Dreaming story helps a person to understand the cultural significance of *land links* in the act of *story sharing*.

While many have used this framework in the last decade, few have explored the connections between the elements, the kinship pairs that carry the deeper meanings and knowledge. In particular, the diagonal lines at the centre representing Protocols, Processes, Systems and Values are usually ignored, although they are made quite explicit in the framework materials. Altogether, these interconnected elements and the meaningful spaces between them carry a greater message, a core concept that many have found difficult to grasp and even more difficult to apply.

The core concept, the game changer of all my research into Aboriginal pedagogies, is the idea of learning *through* culture rather than *about* culture. This has been expressed in many memes, including a basic reversal of *using Aboriginal perspectives to view mainstream content, rather than mainstream perspectives to view Aboriginal content*. I've popularised some very quotable utterances that describe this big idea, such as: *Culture is not what your hands touch; it's what moves your hands. Or: Perspectives are not in the content, but the process.* But many still struggle with the idea.

The earliest expression of these five pedagogies came about after a decade of teaching in primary and secondary schools, during a period of long service leave in preparation for doctoral studies. They were refined in that research, although the local 8ways model that emerged from it was the focus of the thesis. In work with many communities all over Australia in the decade following that project, understanding of each pedagogy was refined and enhanced as local models were developed specific to unique cultural groups (Frazer & Yunkaporta, 2019) Although this work was not part of a formal research project, these pedagogies were eventually reported in the book 'Sand Talk' (Yunkaporta, 2019) as Indigenous ways of thinking that may contribute to the creation of transitional cultures and economies of sustainability.

Below are some basic descriptions and symbols representing a more general Aboriginal pedagogical framework common across many cultures on mainland Australia. These are five ways, rather than 8ways (Yunkaporta, 2019).

Figure 8.2 is the image for **kinship mind**, which is about relationships and connectedness. In Aboriginal worldviews, nothing exists outside of a relationship to something else. There are no isolated variables—every element must be considered
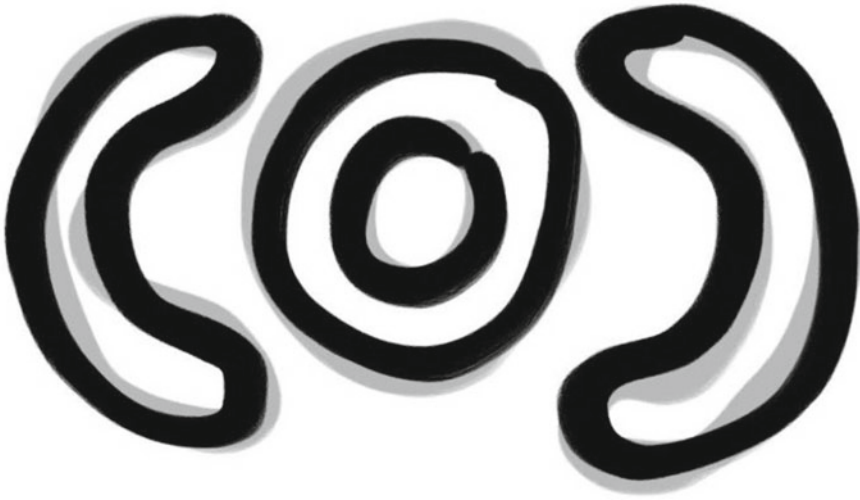
Fig. 8.3 Story mind

in relation to the other elements in the context. Areas of knowledge are integrated, not separated. The relationship between the learner and other learners, places and knowledge keepers is paramount to quality knowledge transmission.

Figure 8.3 is the image for **story mind**, which is about the role of narrative in memory and knowledge transmission. It is the most powerful tool for memorisation, particularly when connected meaningfully to place. This is how song lines have worked in Australia for millennia to store terabytes of knowledge in stories mapped in the land and reflected in the night sky. It includes yarning as a method of knowledge production and transmission. Today it is also about challenging grand narratives and histories.

Figure 8.4 is the image for **dreaming mind**, which is all about using metaphors to work with knowledge. The circle on the left represents abstract knowledge, and the circle on the right represents tangible knowledge. The lines above and below represent communication between these physical and non-physical worlds, which occurs through metaphors. These are images, dance, song, language, culture, objects, ritual, gestures and more. Feedback loops between worlds must be completed with practical action.

The image in Fig. 8.5 is for **ancestor mind**, which is all about deep engagement, connecting with a timeless state of mind or 'alpha wave state', which is an optimal neural state for learning. We can reach this state through most Aboriginal cultural activities. It is characterised by complete concentration, engagement and losing track of time. Ancestor mind can involve immersive visualisation and extra-cognitive learning such as revealed knowledge in dreams and inherited knowledge in cellular memory.
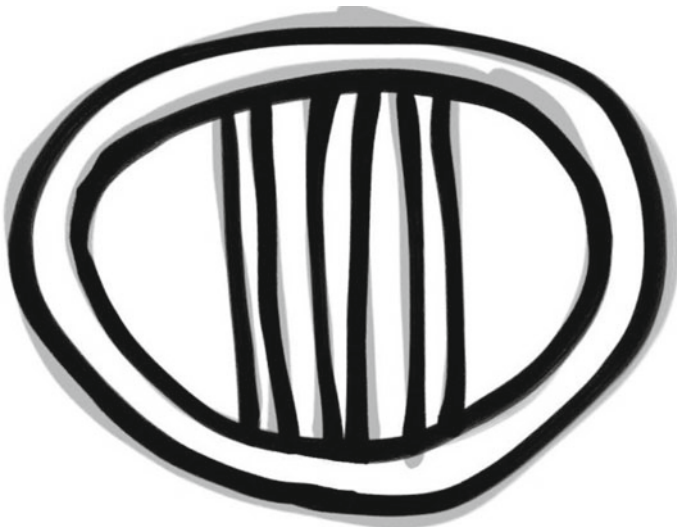
Fig. 8.4 Dreaming mind

Fig. 8.5 Ancestor mind

Figure 8.6 is the symbol for **pattern mind**, which is about seeing entire systems and the trends and patterns within them, and using these to make accurate predictions and find solutions to problems within those systems. There are three lines with three sections. Each section represents the line from the kinship mind symbol, which is
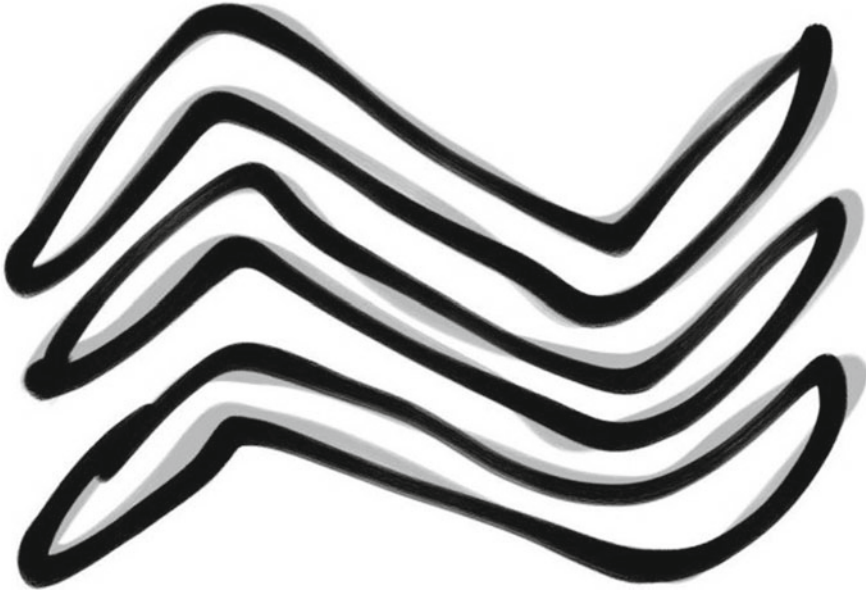
Fig. 8.6 Pattern mind

two elements linked by a relationship. You can see at each point a new pair begins, linked by a new relationship. This way is about truly holistic, contextual reasoning.

Pattern mind links back to the beginning, to the first symbol of kinship mind, to the assertion that all elements, people and variables are interconnected. Mastery of Indigenous epistemology (ways of knowing) demands being able to see beyond the object of study and even the learner and teacher, to seek a viewpoint incorporating the complex, dynamic systems that make up all creation and all knowledge. With this in mind, a reader might now try drawing all of these symbols carefully, either on the ground or on paper or a screen if you cannot access dirt or sand to draw on. Then, in order to visualise all of these pedagogies as part of one system of knowledge, all of the symbols may be drawn together as one symbol.

This is shown in Fig. 8.7.

The act of drawing these kinds of symbols representing knowledge and ideas is an activity that can help produce the ancestor mind state mentioned previously. Viewing this large symbol combining smaller ones in this state of mind can produce insights about the knowledge system, and drawing it while naming each of the pedagogies will help with remembering the structure of the framework, setting schema in place with these visual metaphors to hook new knowledge onto.

Natalia: When I read about Tyson's (unnamed) pedagogies, I was instantly reminded of the neuroscience-based learning theory "The Leaning Cycle". I looked forward to investigating whether there were any similarities or differences between these two very different approaches to learning. More specifically, I asked, does the
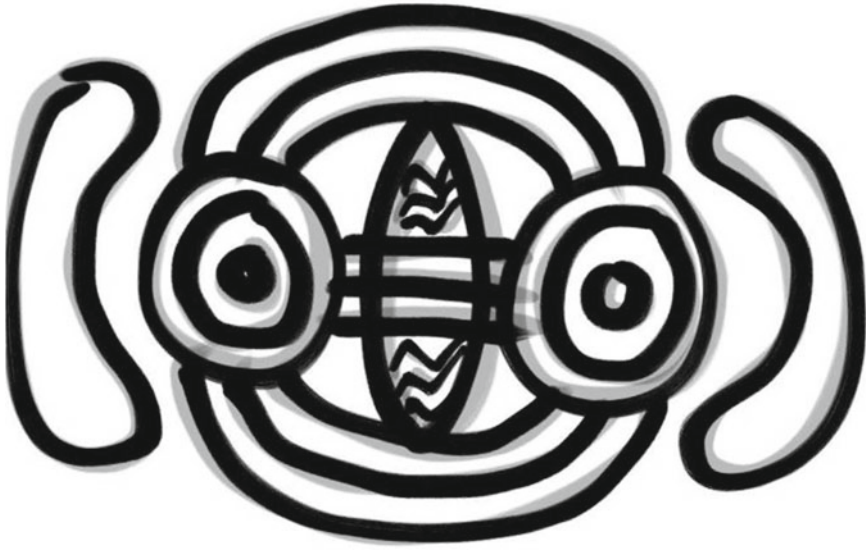
Fig. 8.7 Combined pedagogies

learning cycle have anything in common with the (unnamed)? What I discovered was surprising, to say the least.

The learning cycle proposed by Zull (2002) builds on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. The cycle proposes that learning originates in concrete experience but the experience is not the whole thing. It is the start of the cycle. Learning depends on experience but also requires reflection, the development of abstractions and the active testing of those abstractions.

Figure 8.8 illustrates that concrete experiences come through the sensory cortex, reflective observation involves the integrative cortex, the creation of new abstract concepts occurs in the frontal integrative cortex and the active testing of those new abstract concepts involves the motor part of the brain. Zull (2002) proposed that the learning cycle arose naturally from the structure of the brain and is based on what we currently know about the neuroscience of learning.

The learning cycle begins with finding out what students already know with the view to then build on those existing neural networks. Even if a student knows nothing about the subject, the educator must continue to work backwards until a common concrete example is found (Zull, 2002). The educator then must make sure that what the student does during that learning experience, serves to elicit the activity (or firing of action potentials) in the correct neurons and synapses. This repeated firing of neurons allows new branches to stem from the existing network to another network (Gros, Veyrac, & Laroche, 2015). Learning, in its purest biological form, is the development of synaptic connections between cells. This notion of connectedness is reflected in the kindship mind. When thinking about how the brain 'learns', you must understand that no neural network exists outside of its connections with another.
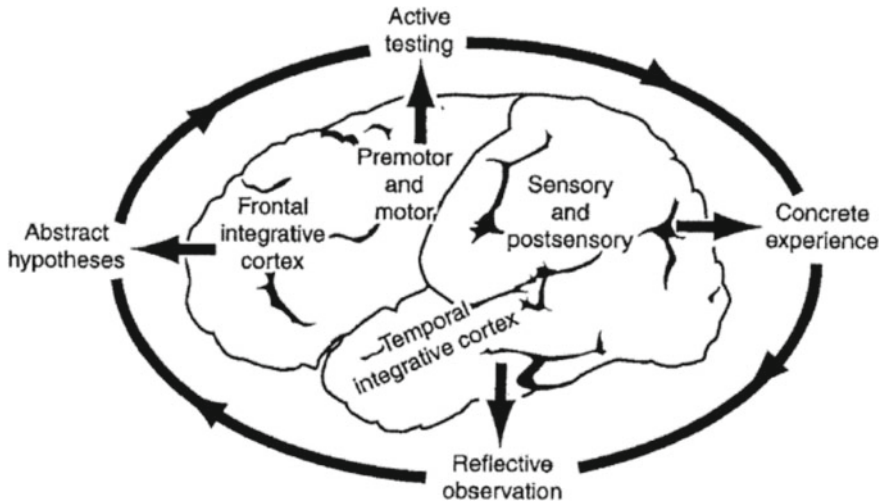
Fig. 8.8   The learning cycle (Zull, 2002, p. 18)

Neurons need to be considered in relation to other neurons as this is how long-term memory is established.

Students need time to reflect on the stimuli that their brain has been exposed to. Reflection is the process where images of what you experience go around and around in the integrative cortex. As educators, we can foster reflective observation by encouraging our students to create visual representations of content, as deep learning emerges when students are required to convey to others the images that are going around and around in their brain (Biggs, 2011). This process is similar to that of the ancestor mind, as reflection requires concentration, losing track of time and immersive visualisation.

After the period of reflection has finished, the student then engages their frontal integrative cortex to develop ideas and make predictions about the content (Zull, 2002). In this part of the cycle, the brain organises and manipulates items which, according to Zull, is the process of thinking. Thinking, or the manipulation of information, is what creates new relationships in the learner's mind. The way that learners manipulate information is dependent on their past experiences and that is driven by their existing neural networks (Purves et al., 2017). As educators, we need to give students time to do this, as thinking is a natural process that cannot be rushed. The process of thinking is analogous to the pattern mind. As students manipulate information in their frontal integrative cortex they begin to see glimpses of patterns within the content. Given enough time, the patterns will emerge as a consequence of the manipulation of information in the learner's brain. After patterns are perceived, the student is then able to make predictions that are based on those patterns.

According to the learning cycle, for transformative learning to occur, we need to make sure that the student's entire brain is engaged in the teaching and learning process. This means that as educators we need to divide our lessons into two parts. In

one part, the students spend time receiving knowledge and in the other part, students should spend time using and applying that knowledge (Zull, 2002). The interplay just described is reflected perfectly in the dreaming mind. For effective learning to occur, you need communication between the world of receiving knowledge and the world of using that knowledge, just as Tyson has described previously.

Active learning involving motor actions and choice is pleasurable for the learner because it results in the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine (Sharot, Shiner, Brown, Fan, & Dolan, 2009). Actions and choice have also been found to aid in the development of concepts and applications in anatomy and physiology (Bilton et al., 2018). Furthermore, testing our thoughts through actions closes one cycle and provides the stimuli for the next cycle. This is represented again by the dreaming mind, where according to Tyson, practical action is required to close the loop between the world of abstract and the world of tangible knowledge.

According to Zull (2002) life is the story of us and there is a story about everything in our lives. This is most pertinent in the study of anatomy and physiology where students actually learn about their own bodies and thus their own life processes. The learning cycle proposes that stories engage all parts of the brain because it packages events and knowledge across multiple neural networks all at once. This is beneficial for learning because any part of this neural network can be triggered by any of the others (Zull, 2002). The importance of stories in knowledge transmission is also a cornerstone of the (unnamed) pedagogies. According to Tyson, narrative is the most powerful tool in knowledge transmission, particularly when it is connected meaningfully to place. This further aligns with Zull's observation that the brain recalls stories more easily if the story is important, has a moral message or if it has meaning.

The outcome of the above analysis is displayed in Fig. 8.9. In this diagram, direct alignment can be seen between Tyson's (unnamed) pedagogies and the neuroscience-based learning cycle by Zull.

John: The (unnamed) pedagogies can be connected with the work of Zull (2002) and also Kolb (Zull, 2002), as Natalia has noted. Another connection, and another aspect of the learning process to be illuminated, relates to the actual *materials* present in and elemental to the learning process. I refer here to what Carter (2004) calls 'material thinking' and related to this, the 'new materialism' to discuss the agential qualities of these learning materials. I do not want to privilege any one learning process perspective but rather seek to build a full and rich portrayal of learning by drawing in both the (unnamed) pedagogies (Yunkaporta, 2019) and the neurological elements of learning. To illustrate this, I refer to Fig. 8.9 that combines Indigenous and neurological knowledges. Rather than read it in a linear and purely textual way, I will read it as, say, an artist might, as an assemblage of various material elements. Like Natalia, I want to explore similarities, differences and synergies between the different approaches to learning.

Drawing on ancestor mind, I imagine, as Tyson suggested, the creation of symbols in sand particles under fingertips responding and applying resistance to the fingertips. I imagine an artist thinking deeply—not *with* but *through* those materials at (and
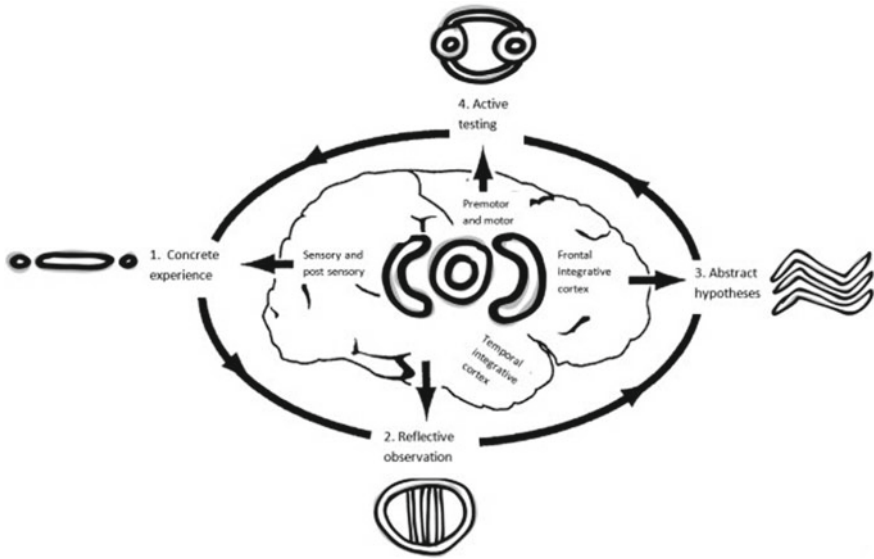
Fig. 8.9 Combined pedagogies integrated into the learning cycle

in) hand—responding bodily, moving here, there, ever so slightly, mostly automatically. The marks in the sand are connected with the artist and all that the artist is connected with—sand, ground, what lies within eyesight, and all that is felt, such as pleasure. As McGregor puts it, 'things and spaces can be imagined as having their own affective capacities that generate certain regimes of attraction operating beyond human intentionality' (McGregor, 2014). Amidst this complex of intentionality and unintentionality, material elements and affect, I imagine the artist standing back and examining the composition of the model her eye cannot help but to be drawn to the spaces—the interrelationships between elements—which demand the artist's attention as much as the shapes themselves, which is similar to Tyson's comment about the interrelatedness of the pedagogies. Each mark cannot be understood without seeing and thinking about these spaces and other marks and all that they are connected to.

This imagery offers an experience, which is a link back to Zull (2002), which is how Dewey (1934) described art. That is, the experience extends beyond linear knowledge and text to where thinking and knowing is felt (Dewey, 1934). The thinker—the artist—knowledge holder—learner—inhabit this space and place and wait for new knowledges to emerge and she understands when this knowing is 'right', and intelligible. This is when she exhales, slowly, ready to hand over her work, as we have done here.

We have highlighted, among other things, the importance of relationship between learners, teachers and place—the kinship mind one might say—and how all elements, people, variables and materials are interconnected. Just as neurons need to be considered in relation to other neurons, so too should educators consider a broad range of epistemologies and learning processes and profit from their interconnectedness.

Figure 8.9 represents the similarities between the (unnamed) pedagogies (Yunkaporta, 2019) and the learning cycle (Zull, 2002). In this adaptation, the brain was flipped around so the model can be read from left to right. Each mind symbol is aligned with its corresponding phase of the learning cycle.

Tyson: In the science community we understand that every theory or model is wrong, but useful in appropriate contexts (Box, 1976). We know this in Indigenous communities as well, as our bodies of knowledge are localised, subjective and particular to specific and changing landscapes and circumstances. These knowledge systems are shared across groups, while within groups all stories and points of view are included and honoured, with useful models of reality being produced in the aggregate rather than in singular viewpoints. As such, it is undesirable in both western and Indigenous knowledge systems to promote a single unified theory or framework to encompass all knowledge production, transmission and storage.

As such, the five-part framework presented in this chapter is intended as opensource knowledge that may be used to innovate unique pedagogies specific to particular educational and cultural contexts. The hybridised model produced here is a good example of a dialogical approach seeking common ground between a brainbased theoretical model and an Indigenous knowledge model, developed for a particular academic context and group of students. It is hoped that this may continue to spark diverse applications and innovations across many disciplines and communities, creating uniquely local solutions and cognitive technologies that may be shared widely to illuminate complex understandings in the aggregate.

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Chapter 9
Practicing What We Preach: Reflecting on Culturally Competent Practice in the Teaching of Indigenous Australian Content

Linda Ghys and Simone Gray

Abstract Over the last few decades, teaching the skills required for providing culturally competent practice has become the mainstay across many disciplines. This means that for those responsible for teaching these skills, critical reflection on our own competencies is paramount. Critical reflection asks us to think about our teaching practice and the ideas we have about it. It then challenges us to take a step back and consider our thinking through a series of questions related to the reflective act. This means not only looking at the past and the present, but considering the future and acting accordingly. The complexities of this are increased when teaching outside of a culture that is not our own. In this chapter, we critically reflect on our own positions as non-Indigenous women teaching Indigenous content to students from a variety of disciplines. We also consider what this means from our own perspectives of becoming culturally competent and maintaining culturally competent practice.

Introduction—Who We Are and What We Do

Linda's Story

I am a non-Indigenous woman. I am a first-generation migrant whose cultural background is European. I am a graduate of the former David Unaipon College of Education and Research (DUCIER), a college that was positioned with the University of South Australia (UNISA). In 2005, I was invited to mark and then tutor in some of the subjects that formed the BA (Indigenous Studies). During my time teaching at UNISA, I was fortunate to be working with Indigenous Australian lecturers to deliver subjects that focused on Australia's shared history since colonisation. I was

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conscious that much of the content being delivered was not based on my own experiences of colonisation, but those of my colleagues. It became clear to me that I was in a position that afforded me many privileges due to my whiteness and I became aware that I needed to reflect on how this might impact on how and what I was teaching. Some of the questions that came to mind following my reflections include, in what ways am I representing Indigenous Australians and whose knowledge am I using to do so? Indeed, should I be doing so? Am I, as Moreton-Robinson (2004) suggests, complicit in embodying the 'Indigenous Other' as a function, in this case as the 'object' within a subject that I teach from a position of white privilege, and the inherent power that accompanies this position?

And importantly, had I even acknowledged my own whiteness? In 2012, I relocated to Dubbo to take up a continuing position with Charles Sturt University at the former Centre for Indigenous Studies (now the School of Indigenous Australian Studies). Today, while I continue to reflect on these questions, it is now within the context of Yindyamarra Winhanganha.[1]

Simone's Story

I am a non-Indigenous woman whose heritage is European. There are gaps in my family history as is the case with many people. I have two adult children who both identify with their father's Aboriginal family and share his last name. My family experiences and interest in education led to me working in a school with a high percentage of Aboriginal children many of whom were living disrupted lives. I used my academic skills to tutor and then became employed by the (then) Centre for Indigenous Studies (CIS) at the Dubbo campus of CSU. I have taught from the perspective of localised knowledge and personal experience, conscious of the fact that I am teaching around my own family's culture. I feel honoured that I am supported in my role by extended family and respected Uncles and Aunts. I am highly conscious of issues of identity and as such am forever conscious of my whiteness. I seek to position myself as 'human' in my interactions with people and as such have become increasingly focused on the perpetuity of the concept of 'race' being used to divide people and societies. I am also aware working within a white institution and its structures and processes that require student learning about Indigenous Australia, that students will have to be prepared to build on their learning over time, rather than in one 'fix' and this approach has been endorsed by the concept of Yindyamarra Winhanganha.

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[1] Yindyamarra Winhanganha was taken from the Wiradyuri language. Yindyamarra is the Wiradyuri way of living. It means to honour and respect, to go slowly, and to be gentle and polite. Yindyamarra Winhanganha gifted to Charles Sturt University from Wiradyuri Traditional Owners and has been translated as "The wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live in a world worth living in". It has become an ethos of the University.

What We Do

As non-Indigenous academics teaching in the School of Indigenous Australian Studies, we work with large numbers of students from a variety of disciplines and cultural backgrounds. Our teaching is predominantly undertaken online. The overall commonality in the content of the subjects that we write and teach is culturally competent practice. Cultural competency can be a difficult concept to define. It is an ongoing process of reflection, action and practice rather than a one-off skill. While the educational space is, as Ayers (2009, in Kawai, Serriere & Mitra, 2014, p. 489) notes, 'a contested space, a natural site of conflict—sometimes restrained, other times full of eruption—over questions of justice', our teaching of Indigenous content and shared histories is more conflicted than most. What this means for us as non-Indigenous academics is that we must continually think about our work as lecturers in this space. We must also identify any areas of concern—for example, as non-Indigenous women teaching Indigenous studies, we might reflect on how what we are teaching and how we are teaching it impacts on both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (reflection), we may follow this reflection with discussions with Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues or find some information about teaching from this perspective (action), and then put that research into action through our teaching practice or by reworking the subjects we teach (practice). This is a process that can be applied across all professions, not just teaching.

It is also important to note that Indigenous Australian cultural competency is about more than the individual: it is also systemic or institutional. For example, the fact that Charles Sturt University requires all students to undertake an Indigenous Australian studies subject as part of their degree is an example of systemic cultural competency. Added to this, up until recently, all Indigenous Knowledges and Cultures (IKC) subjects were only available as online subjects. Teaching online means the students can seem 'faceless' and we cannot assume their cultural identity, experiences or knowledge of Indigenous Australians' histories and experiences. The fact that many people still say that they have never met an Aboriginal person or lived in communities with Aboriginal people is a usual starting point. How do we effectively point out that there are reasons for that invisibility? How can we use this to 'teach' cultural competency? And of further importance, how do we ensure that our own practice is culturally competent?

When we consider our own positions of white privilege and the inherent power we hold as academics in this space, we concur with Lampert (2003, p. 2), who suggests that '[our] academic qualifications are written on [our] white bod[ies]—plain in the colour of [our] skin, which grants [us] authority before[we] open [our] mouth[s]'. What this means to us is that when teaching and writing about the experiences of cultures from outside of our own, there is an inherent responsibility to 'get it right'. One way to do this is to ensure that we continually reflect on what we do and how we are doing it. In fact, as we will reiterate in this chapter, continual reflection is paramount in maintaining our own cultural competence and therefore, culturally competent teaching practice. As an example of a way of thinking about this, we now

turn to one of the subjects that we co-taught in 2017, Indigenous Cultures, Histories and Contemporary Realities (IKC101).

Teaching Indigenous Studies

IKC101 is an analysis of Australia's shared history which provides students with an understanding of the impacts of colonisation. It was first taught in 2010 by the then Centre for Indigenous Studies (CIS). The first iteration of the subject was written by three Indigenous academics in consultation with community members. Originally designed for education students, academics from CIS consulted with community members on the topics deemed necessary for an understanding of the historical and political impacts of colonisation and how these have implications for Indigenous Australians today. The purpose of the subject was to give future teachers both an understanding of potential issues that might arise in the classroom and an empathy towards students who may be impacted on because of this. Such an understanding is a crucial component in the development of individual cultural competency. Many students, while having some understanding, attain a more in-depth knowledge of this shared history while undertaking IKC101 and this can be confronting at times. The subject uses many historical documents and some of them can be quite harsh in their representations of Indigenous Australian people. Further, it can be very difficult to have long held beliefs challenged. Students are required to reflect on what they have learned, personally act on the information and take it into their future professional practice. A new version of the subject was introduced in 2018 and is now delivered to multiple disciplines with a focus on positioning the self within society and culture and requires students to consider their own world view in terms of competency. This means that the subject should be the beginning of a lifetime of professional and personal competencies based on an understanding of the concepts of race, privilege and knowledge. Here we might begin to consider that to achieve this, we must move from simply reflecting critically, to applying our practice reflexively as we seek ways to maintain our professional and individual cultural competency. The role of reflexivity is an idea to which we will return later in the chapter.

In terms of teaching these concepts, an understanding of our own white privilege is paramount when as non-Indigenous academics, we are teaching the cultures, histories and realities of Indigenous Australian people from our own perspectives and positions of whiteness. Similarly, as noted above, an acknowledgement or understanding by students that their own positions in society contribute to the uneven powers that exist in Australia is required to promote cultural competency. However, while most students can grasp the idea of institutional privilege or racism, many students do not have sufficient understanding of the concept of white privilege as it applies to themselves, and so reject the notion that they are 'privileged' at all (Schick, 2000; Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005). Hollinsworth (2014, p. 2) suggests that exposing 'students to the concept of white privilege can enable students to see themselves as "raced" and encourage anti-racism…'.

Once students understand the concept of whiteness, they may come to realise that '[t]he power relations inherent in the relationship between representations, whiteness and knowledge production are embedded in our identities. They influence research, communication and our everyday lives' (Moreton-Robinson, 2004, p. 87). Having these understandings is an important component of cultural competency, however, a question remains. If we are successful in imparting this knowledge, will the students who come to position themselves as 'white' be able to critique what they are learning through an understanding of how whiteness informs the space from which this learning comes? Another important consideration is understanding how Indigenous students might respond to concepts of whiteness. It is difficult for us to know whether students are Indigenous or not unless they choose to disclose their identity. However, an understanding of whiteness seems to elicit a sense of empowerment and safety. By this we mean that for those who do, the very disclosing of their Indigeneity to us would seem to indicate such feelings. Lickona (1999) believes that teachers should serve as role models who are respectful and caring of others; create a safe community atmosphere to foster respect; and hold high academic standards 'in order to teach the value of work as a way to develop oneself and contribute to a community' (Marsh, 2004, p. 333). To ensure that we model this, it is necessary therefore to continue to reflect on our own cultural competency and how this is further reflected in our teaching of it.

The Art of Reflection

So far in this chapter we have continually declared that reflection and reflecting are important for culturally competent practice, but what does this mean in reality and how do we approach it as academics who teach in this space? Reflection happens through writing, thinking and conversation. It is often cyclical, circling around experiences, reflections and conclusions, towards a plan of action and back again. Dewey (1996) suggests that reflection should aim to solve a problem, while Moon (2004) refers to reflection as thinking about the thoughts and processes that occur on a day-to-day basis. In other words, the art of reflection is based on the practice of thinking about our experiences and attitudes, our reactions and responses to those experiences and how we respond to this. For example, in our context this could relate to thinking about a particular teaching moment that was not successful and examining what could be done to improve it. Reflection allows us to examine these reactions and find ways to move forward. Moon (2004) further notes, it is also through this process of thinking and reflecting that we continue to learn. However, for this to be of any value, it must be evaluated against similar thoughts and processes that occurred in the past. When we are able to do this, our teaching becomes more than just reflective, it becomes critically reflexive.

As Glassick, Huber, Maerhoff and Boyer (1997) assert, critically reflective teaching is more than just thinking about the way in which one teaches, it is accepting that teaching is a scholarly action. The idea of critical reflection is premised on the

three intellectual traditions of critical pedagogy, reflective practice and adult learning and education. Brookfield (1995), who builds on Ernest Boyer's (1990) earlier work on the scholarship of teaching, suggests that the process of critical reflection 'happens when teachers discover and examine assumptions of teaching practice by viewing their own practice' (p. xiii). However, although individually reflecting on our own teaching practice contributes to maintaining cultural competency, Brookfield (1995) further insists that the worth of reflection becomes more apparent 'only when others are involved' (p. 140). Hargreaves and Page (2013) agree, suggesting that reflection should also be a collective practice. This is important, as different perspectives can offer different viewpoints about the same issue. In coming together and thinking and talking about our teaching experiences collectively, our perspectives and knowledge are broadened. And so, while it is clear that critically reflective practice is paramount to maintaining cultural competency in our teaching, what should we reflect on? What we might also consider here is whether we have moved from critical reflection to reflexive practice and if so, what might be the difference?

As a starting point, it is necessary to explain what we mean when we talk about critical reflection and reflexivity. As we discussed earlier in this chapter, for us, reflection begins with an act of writing, thinking or conversation, and it is when we think, share, and focus more deeply on these acts, that our reflection becomes critical. Once we identify critical insights and begin to act on them, our practice then becomes reflexive. Bolton (2010) defines reflexivity as the creation of:

> social or professional structures counter to our own values (destructive of diversity, and institutionalising power imbalance for example). It is becoming aware of the limits of our knowledge, of how our own behaviour plays into organisational practices and why such practices might marginalise groups or exclude individuals. And it is understanding how we relate with others, and between us shape organisational realities' shared practices and ways of talking. Thus, we recognise we are active in shaping our surroundings, and begin critically to take circumstances and relationships into consideration rather than merely reacting to them, and help review and revise ethical ways of being and relating (p. 14).

In her discussions on research methodologies, Ruth Nicholls (2009) identifies three layers of reflexivity that align with Bolton's (2010) ideas. The first of these layers is self-reflexivity. Self-reflexivity asks us to identify any hidden assumptions. As teachers, this may mean reflecting on how teaching from our position and perspectives of power and privilege sees us delivering a shared history. For example, whose voices and perspectives are prominent in our subject content? Nicholls' (2009) second layer of interpersonal reflexivity means reflecting on how we collaborate with others. In our case, this means discussions with colleagues and students, especially those who choose to identify as Indigenous Australian people. The third layer, collective reflexivity, relates to local and lived knowledge which we can apply as an extension of the first two layers. What this means for us is that we must continue to reflect on any impact that our teaching might have on the community. For example, we need to identify what we might not know, if indeed we have the right to know and if so, how does our position and perspectives further impact on what we teach and how we teach. Once we understand this, we can begin to become culturally competent professionals, and work towards maintaining culturally competent practice.

Cultural Competency—Reflection in Action

As a way of understanding the connections between reflection and its value in main-taining our cultural competency, we turn to Ranzijn, McConnochie, and Nolan (2009) who provide a pedagogical matrix that suggests how cultural competency might be developed and sustained. This is shown in Fig. 9.1. While the matrix was initially designed for psychology students, its usefulness for teachers of cultural competency cannot be overlooked. This is especially important in our position because as Ranzijn et al. (2009) explain, we have a responsibility to reflect on and understand our own culture and cultural position and perspectives before we can understand, and in our case, teach the cultural perspectives and experiences of others. It is critical to note that the matrix is not a static or linear progression towards cultural competency, as Fig. 9.1 might suggest, but rather is a dynamic framework, relying on continual reflection to repeatedly reposition ourselves within it.

As we have reiterated in this chapter, we are non-Indigenous women teaching the shared histories and experiences of Indigenous Australian peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. Therefore, our own starting point in the maintenance of culturally competent practice is to critically reflect on our own cultures, cultural positions and cultural identities, and understanding how this might impact on our work. This is not only important for our own teaching practice, but as we have also noted above, it is important because it is also what we ask of our students.

In our teaching of a shared history, it is necessary to impart to students that cultural competency is more than merely the learning and understanding of cultural practices, but also takes in to account the shared experiences of colonisation and its impacts and how this then impacts on the individual and professional lives of

Fig. 9.1 Development of Cultural Competence (Ranzijn, Egege, & McDermott, 2008, as cited in Ranzjin et al., 2009, p. 9)

the students themselves. In our own case, for example, this means that we must be aware that cultural knowledge such as 'ceremonial life, sacred symbolism; ritual; mystic language; sacred stories; languages; spirituality; information about sacred artefacts; men's business; women's business' should only be taught by Indigenous people (Craven, 1999, p. 240). However, this is often what the students are expecting to learn in these subjects. As a way to address this, Craven stresses the importance of facilitation to enable students to understand the purpose of their learning; to appreciate the process of that learning; and that their individual path is open-ended: there is more than one path to understand (p. 235). Inadvertently she pre-empts the cultural competence framework by stating that 'the relationship between student, content, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values is constantly changing' (p. 235).

Knowledge, Skills and Values—Knowing and Valuing Our Students

Knowledge includes knowing our student cohort as well as our content (Perso, 2012). Due to large cohorts and the subject being predominantly online, this can be difficult. Each session, a new student cohort brings a different set of challenges. Student cohorts include Indigenous, non-Indigenous and international students with different levels of knowledge about Australia's shared history. This means that what worked last time, might not work this time.

Depending on the student's own cultural background, there can be guilt, anger, shame, distress or disbelief about the content. This means that we need to apply certain skills to defuse this guilt while at the same time, maintaining safe spaces for discussion. Perso (2012) suggests that validation of student's cultures and experiences is an important part of culturally competent practice. By sharing our own cultural backgrounds and experiences with honesty and respect for students' experiences, we can encourage students to do the same, inviting respectful curiosity and working towards countering misinformation. This is important in our context because as Best (cf. Best & Fredericks, 2017) notes:

> [m]any misconceptions continue to inform widespread beliefs, values and attitudes about Indigenous Australians. These beliefs, values and attitudes are formed in early childhood and can be influenced by many different mechanisms, such as family, class, ethnicity, religion, schooling and social media (p. 50).

Our experiences of teaching the subject to not only such a diverse student cohort, but also across two different subject cohorts at the same time brought a different set of challenges. These challenges meant reflecting once again on who we are in our teaching of this subject and reconsidering how the student's own cultural identities and experiences might impact on their knowledge of a shared Australian history based on how we taught it.

Teaching our shared history from our worldviews as non-Indigenous women is at times a risky business. Having said this, Cooper, He, and Levin (2011) suggest

that taking risks is a necessary component when teaching diverse cohorts. We would add that teaching from a position of diversity adds to not only the risks but also the responsibility. While Cooper et al. (2011) further suggest 'stepping in' to the homes and communities of such students, this is not an option for us as online educators. However, there is a way in which we can invite the students into our lives instead. One example of this for IKC101 was based on a successful idea that Simone had trialled previously; the use of short YouTube video clips to deliver key points from the content, and additionally, to make an extra social connection with the students. We reflected on the success of this and thought about how we could apply it to two separate cohorts. Following our reflection and discussion, we decided to record short clips to provide information and advice about each assessment task. In keeping with the notion of inviting students into our lives, the clips were recorded from a variety of locations, including the Dubbo campus and Linda's home. Largely unscripted and using a blend of humour, honesty and sincerity to provide the information, the clips were recorded on an iPad and uploaded onto YouTube. One of the aims of these clips was to become more approachable to students and in return for inviting students into our lives, it was hoped that we would be invited into theirs and so validate them as Perso (2012) suggests. In sharing our lives with our students, and they sharing theirs with us, the balance between the learner and the teacher can become more level, promoting a respectful relationship and therefore, students feel more confident to ask questions (Chabeli, 2008). In the teaching of a shared history, this is important in helping to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions that have been perpetrated in the past and to some extent, the present.

Returning, Reflecting, Responding

At the beginning of this chapter, we asked the question 'how do we maintain cultural competency within our own teaching practice'? In response to this question we have discussed the need to critically reflect on our own cultures, cultural positions and cultural identities as we ask our students to do: role modelling for first-year students is essential. The feedback from students, peers and other colleagues creates a loop that is somewhat endless as new students enter the academy, are taught the same information and due to their cultural backgrounds and understandings, bring new interpretations of cultural competence. Thus, our teaching shifts to cater for new understandings. This then impacts on our teaching practice, further informs reflection and we move on to another cohort, modifying our content, approaches and teaching practice. The principle of Yindyamarra Winhanganha guides us as we aim to improve our teaching to allow us to create students who appreciate 'the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in'. If teaching is not to try to improve the world, what is it eventually to achieve? Keeping up to date with Indigenous Australian issues and communities is also a part of culturally competent practice to enable us to mediate student's understandings of differing Indigenous Australian contexts. Ideally, we as teachers can aid students to self-evaluate their

understandings of the dominant cultural matrix and how this informs their personal and professional practice. It is an ongoing process that we are responsible for igniting in our students. Just as the Dreaming is non-linear, so too is the process of Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

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Chapter 10
Using Developments in Sport in Australia to Promote Cultural Competence in Higher Education Courses at CSU

Chelsea Litchfield and Jaquelyn Osborne

Abstract Engaging higher education students in experiences related to cultural competence can be challenging for educators in the sports and exercise science-related disciplines. However, in the last decade, a number of sporting and accrediting bodies in Australia have recognised the importance of education in this space for athletes, coaches, sport journalists and exercise professionals. One example has been the implementation of Reconciliation Action Plans by sporting associations (such as the AFL, NRL and the 2018 Commonwealth Games). An examination of the importance of cultural competence in sporting spaces provides a pertinent context for student engagement at the tertiary level in the discipline of sport and exercise science. Both of us identify as non-Indigenous individuals. However, we have both been tasked with carrying out course-related work relating to 'cultural competence' in sports contexts. We have been active participants in cultural experiences and immersion programmes inside and outside the university environment, and have close connections to Indigenous Australians as colleagues, research partners and friends

Introduction

As non-Indigenous university educators, teaching content relating to Indigenous Australians to a cohort of undergraduate Exercise Science, Sports Management and Sports Media students presents a number of challenges. For the most part, students need some convincing that the content is relevant to their careers. In the opinion of some students, learning about Indigenous Australians and their struggles and triumphs is not deemed useful, practical and/or (as) important[1] as other facets of

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[1] This is outlined in the Student Experience Surveys completed after every teaching semester.

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their university degrees. As such, teaching in this space has been and remains a challenge. However, once case studies related to sport are incorporated into class content and discussions, most students begin to start engaging with the content and gradually understand the relevance for them as future professionals.

The need for continued cultural competence education is evident in and around many sports in Australia. Despite their best efforts to eliminate racism against Indigenous Australians from the sporting competition, the Australian Football League (AFL) has seen a number of cases of racist abuse and discrimination aimed at Indigenous players over the last decade (see Hallinan & Judd, 2009; Judd, 2010). In particular, former Sydney Swans premiership player and Australian of the Year in 2014, Adam Goodes, received racist abuse from fans, football personalities and one President of an AFL club (see Ashton, 2019). Similarly, in the National Rugby League (NRL) competition in Australia, several instances of racism have been reported in the last decade (see Byrnes, Newton, & Gould, 2018; St John, 2019).

Indigenous South Sydney Rabbitohs player, Greg Inglis, has recently spoken publicly about the racism that he encountered as a player in the NRL for many years (see St John, 2019). In sports commentary in Australia, Indigenous athletes are often described in different ways to non-Indigenous athletes. In the AFL in particular, Hallinan, Bruce, and Bennie (2004) explain that Indigenous players are often stereotyped as having '…breathtaking flair, inventiveness, exquisite touch and wizardry, magical football ability, instinct, natural talent and a different sense of time and space' (p. 5). As such, Indigenous athletes are stereotyped by sports commentators as having natural ability and they ignore or devalue the training and commitment required by athletes to play at the elite level.

Recently, a number of sporting organisations, clubs, committees and accrediting bodies have recognised the problem that racism still poses in sport in Australia and the importance of education in this space for athletes, coaches, sport journalists and exercise professionals. As such, this chapter investigates the work that is being carried out by three specific sporting organisations and committees to promote cultural competence and combat racism, including the Australian Football League, the National Rugby League and the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Recognition of the importance of cultural competence in sporting spaces provides pertinent context for teaching cultural competence at the tertiary level in the discipline of sport and exercise science.

Racism in Sport in Australia

In a speech to the United Nations in 2011, retired AFL footballer Andrew McLeod claimed that racism in the AFL was a 'thing of the past'. Despite such a bold claim, McLeod also explained that while racism on the field from opposing players or from spectators has been eliminated from the sport, the AFL has much work to do to achieve equity in the areas of coaching and governance roles (Daily Telegraph,

2011). Unfortunately, McLeod was mistaken about the culture of racism and the AFL, both on and off the field.

Since McLeod's speech, the AFL has been entangled in several racially motivated discriminatory incidents from a variety of individuals involved in the sport. As mentioned earlier, Adam Goodes was regularly racially abused between 2013 and 2015 (see Ashton, 2019). This abuse was perpetrated by spectators, an AFL club President (Eddie McGuire) and select media representatives (Ashton, 2019). Most famously, Goodes was also 'booed' by opposition fans at football matches for several weeks in 2015 after performing an Indigenous war dance during the Indigenous round match (Coram & Hallinan, 2017). Coram and Hallinan (2017) suggest that during the latter stages of his career.

Goodes was represented as a polarising figure in the tabloid press for calling out his racial vilification and for showing his pride in his aboriginality and Indigenous culture. The booing drew extensive commentary, ranging from support to abject hostility, in the public domain (p. 99).

This extensive commentary included a call from the Prime Minister of Australia to treat Goodes with 'civility and respect' (see Bourke, 2015). More recently, Adelaide Crows player Eddie Betts and Port Adelaide player Paddy Ryder have both been subjected to racist abuse by rival spectators (see Larkin, 2017).

Similarly, NRL players have repeatedly reported racism in the last decade. In 2018, Greg Inglis spoke about the racist abuse that he received by a spectator after a match in Penrith (Byrnes, Newton, & Gould, 2018). Fellow Indigenous NRL player Ben Barba was also racially abused on social media in 2014 (ABC News, 2014). These two examples provide a snapshot of this culture. Other sports that have been embroiled in purported racial discrimination over the last decade include athletics (Jon Steffensen), cricket (Andrew Symonds) and basketball (Patty Mills) (see ABC News, 2014; Dutton, 2018; Knight, 2012).

Tackling Discrimination Aimed at Indigenous Athletes: Three Case Studies

In response to racism against Indigenous athletes and people in Australia, most sports in Australia have developed strategies and policy to confront these issues. Reconciliation Australia recommends that all sporting clubs and associations develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to inform strategies and policies and to ensure sporting organisations are accountable for change that addresses and aims to eliminate racism in sport. RAP provides a '…framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement' (Reconciliation Australia, 2019) and is a strategic document that includes a set of actions that a business or organisation commit to carrying out. According to Reconciliation Australia (2019), RAP's provide a framework for organisations to contribute to reconciliation in Australia in the following ways:

- 'building and encouraging relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, organisations, and the broader Australian community
- fostering and embedding respect for the world's longest surviving cultures and communities
- developing opportunities within your organisation or services to improve socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities'

There are four different types of Reconciliation Action Plans. These four plans focus on 'reflecting', 'innovating', 'stretching' and 'elevating'. A 'Reflect RAP' sets out clear steps that are required to prepare an organisation for reconciliation initiatives. An 'Innovate RAP' details the actions that will be undertaken to achieve a vision of reconciliation. A 'Stretch RAP' is focused on the implementation of longer-term strategies and working towards set goals. Finally, an 'Elevate RAP' is developed by organisations with a 'track record of embedding effective RAP initiatives' and aims to advance national reconciliation efforts (Reconciliation Australia, 2019). All RAP's need to be developed in consultation with Reconciliation Australia, the national body in Australia. Reconciliation Australia provides consultation, insight, support and guidance from Indigenous representatives to organisations (including sporting organisations) to develop a RAP (Reconcilation Australian, 2019). Therefore, a RAP provides a useful framework for organisations around Australia and is being utilised by several sporting organisations to outline goals and strategies for Indigenous inclusion and growth in sport.

In the following sections, we discuss the work being carried out by two of the major sporting associations in Australia (the Australian Football League and the National Rugby League) along with the reconciliation work engaged in by the 2018 Commonwealth Games. These three examples are also used to show students (studying cultural competence), the importance of reconciliation to sport in Australia.

The Australian Football League (AFL)

The AFL is usually perceived to be at the forefront in relation to policy and action in the space of anti-racism and reconciliation in sport in Australia due to the high ratio of AFL players who identify as Indigenous. The AFL states that 11% of all players on AFL lists are Indigenous (AFL Community, 2019), compared to 2.8% of Indigenous people that make up the Australian population (ABS Census, 2017). On the field, the AFL hosts an Indigenous round (called the Sir Doug Nicholls round) where clubs wear specially designed Indigenous themed football uniforms (afl.com.au, 2019). One particular match during this round of the AFL season is labelled the 'Dreamtime at the G' match between Essendon and Richmond Football clubs. The 'Dreamtime at the G' also features an extensive pre-match Indigenous celebration, gifts exchanged

between teams and a celebration of Indigenous identities and cultures (afl.com.au, 2019).

Off the field, the AFL has a detailed 'National Vilification and Discrimination policy' (2013), along with a number of other initiatives to promote the Indigenous players involved in the sport. One example of these promotions is the AFL Players Association map that provides information about all Indigenous identified players in both the men's and women's national competitions (AFL Players, 2019). In particular, this map provides the details of which 'mob', social group and geographical location Indigenous players identify within Australia. Such a map provides an acknowledgement and promotes awareness of an Indigenous player's identity and history.

The AFL also launched its inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan in 2014. This plan aimed to improve participation in the sport, build partnerships, create employment opportunities and acknowledge and celebrate Indigenous culture (AFL Reconciliation Action Plan 2014–2016, 2014, p. 5).[2] As a result of this plan, the AFL's Indigenous Advisory Group was formed to 'provide advice to the AFL Executive and Commission on the implementation of the AFL's Indigenous strategy and policies' (afl.com.au, 2015). The Indigenous Employment Strategy was also developed by the AFL to offer traineeships and junior positions, and to demonstrate the potential for Indigenous leadership in all areas of Australian football business including coaching and senior management (Indigenous Employment Strategy, 2014). In 2018, *The Age* reported the first Indigenous woman voted onto the Collingwood Football Club Board—Jodie Sizer (see Niall, 2018); however, there is minimal information available that outlines the effectiveness and progress of these groups and strategies over the last five years.

The National Rugby League (NRL)

According to Judd, the NRL has had many more Indigenous coaches, board members and leaders compared to the AFL (Judd, 2010). In 2014, the percentage of NRL players who identify as Indigenous was 12% of all players and 24% of the national team, the Australian Kangaroos (NRL Indigenous Fact Sheet, 2014). Similar to the AFL, the NRL holds an Indigenous round during their home and away season. The Indigenous round aims to highlight 'significant social issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' (Indigenous Round, 2019). The NRL also hosts a 'Festival of Indigenous Rugby League' where an Indigenous All Stars team compete against another (every two years). In 2017, the Indigenous All Stars team competed against the 'World All Stars' (see Gabor, 2017).

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[2]It should be noted that the AFL do not have a current Reconciliation Action Plan registered with Reconciliation Australia. However, a number of football clubs do have one, including Melbourne, West Coast, North Melbourne, Port Adelaide, Gold Coast, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Richmond (Reconciliation Australia, 2019).

According to the NRL, the week-long festival 'highlights the significant contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make in rugby league, both on and off field' (NRL Indigenous Fact Sheet, 2014).

Australian Rugby League (incorporating the NRL) boast a current 'Elevate' Reconciliation Action Plan (2018–2022). In fact, the NRL released their first RAP in 2008, 'becoming the first national sporting body to commit to a Reconciliation Action Plan with Reconciliation Australia' (NRL.com, 2010). Emerging from the previous RAP (2014–2017), the current document highlights the key achievements of the NRL in this space. These include, but are not limited to:

- 'Employment of five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ambassadors to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities';
- 'Delivery of cultural awareness training to staff';
- 'Development and implementation of a cultural protocols policy';
- 'Development and implementation of an Indigenous Employment Strategy';
- 'Establishment of the Indigenous Employee Network'; and
- 'Increased the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to 5%'. (NRL Official Reconciliation Action Plan 2018–2022, 2018).

As such, the NRL continues to support an impressive list of strategies and initiatives that aim to provide an inclusive and empowering space for Indigenous people involved in the rugby league. However, Stronach, Adair, and Taylor (2014) explain that while Indigenous people are admired for their sporting skills and prowess, they 'struggle to preserve economic or social capital' once they retire (p. 43). In their research that focused on the retirement experiences of Indigenous NRL players, AFL players and boxers, Stronach et al. (2014) found that sporting organisations needed to provide additional support via coaches and managers to Indigenous players to complete education and training (in preparation for retirement) and to support access to a wider range of career pathways that 'complemented Indigenous values of "giving back" to community, such as teaching, health, police work and so on' (p. 54). As such, there is still work to be carried out by the NRL and other sporting organisations.

Commonwealth Games

The 2018 Commonwealth Games provides a pertinent case study and addition to teaching cultural competence relating to sport. The organising committee released the first 'Elevate' Reconciliation Action Plan for any major sporting event in Australia in history for the Commonwealth Games in 2018 (see Gold Coast, 2018a, b). This RAP was developed 'in consultation with members of the Yugambeh language group and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland (Gold Coast, 2018a, b). In fact, a variety of community members and Indigenous elders were invited to be part of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC) Indigenous working group to help develop the RAP (Gold Coast, 2018a, b).

The Commonwealth Games RAP had a number of key commitments, including:

- 'Increased procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses…';
- 'Increased employment and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people';
- 'Increased Indigenous participation in healthy active lifestyle initiatives';
- 'Increased awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language, culture and histories'; and
- 'Improved connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' (Gold Coast, 2018a, b).

The effectiveness of this RAP is yet to be established. Therefore, the success of this plan will no doubt be investigated and provide a point of interest for sport scholars in the future.

Methods of Teaching, Sharing and Providing Evidence

The developments in sport in twenty-first-century Australia provide pertinent histories and contemporary content for students to learn about how sport can embrace and promote cultural competence. Additionally, carefully considering and choosing how to deliver content to undergraduate students in the field of cultural competence is paramount to engaging students.

From our combined 42 years of teaching exercise science, sports management and sports media students in a tertiary environment, we found the choice of a case study approach provides a sound method of delivering this content.

Herreid (2011) suggests that the use of the case study approach in delivering educational content allows the lecturer to become a storyteller. Such an approach also allows for both a wider classroom discussion and smaller group discussion, whereby the input from students provides a 'collaborative and cooperative learning' space (Herreid, 2011, p. 32). A sample of the case studies delivered in our teaching include the following:

- Marngrook and the cricket tour of 1868 as case studies in the history of Indigenous sport in Australia;
- Jim Thorpe, the All Blacks Haka and Indigenous games worldwide as case studies in Indigenous sport internationally (North America and New Zealand);
- Cathy Freeman, Nova Peris and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games as case studies relating to the media representations of Indigenous athletes;
- Indigenous history of the Homebush bay area (Sydney Olympic Park), Olympic events and contested land and Indigenous athletes and links to country;
- Indigenous Sports Program, Considerations for coaching Indigenous athletes and young Indigenous footballers' pathways to elite sport;
- Rugby League Indigenous Knockout event media reports and promoting community;

- Racism experienced by Indigenous athletes and enlightened racism and Australian rules football; and
- The use of RAPs, promoting Indigenous involvement and reconciliation practices of sporting organisations in Australia.

This case study approach benefits both the educator and learner. The use of case studies allows the educator to use a variety of resources and learning materials. Traditional resources such as books and journal articles can be easily combined with less traditional learning materials, such as documentaries, current affairs programmes, news reports, mainstream media and social media platforms. Using a variety of resources allows the student to learn in a way that suits the individual and provides a flexible teaching space for the educator. Reflecting on the actions and decision-making in the case studies which affect the meaningful participation of Australian Indigenous individuals in sport is one way that students can engage theoretically with the content. Students are encouraged to consider and discuss alternate (culturally safe and sensitive) ways of approaching situations. By considering both the obstacles that Indigenous athletes face and the role that culture plays in sports participation, students can reflect more critically on their own cultural competence journey.

Case studies can facilitate directed learning towards specific outcomes and assessment. As such, the use of an individually chosen case study assessment item allows the student to tailor their research and learning to a specific topic. We utilise this for one of the larger assessment items that all students complete, entitled the 'Sport and Community' essay. This task asks students to choose one Indigenous Australian sporting event or team and explain how the event links to kinship and community. Students are able to choose a sport, team or competition that personally interests and engages them.

Finally, using the work of scholars to frame the storytelling (delivering content) further assists student learning and understanding. Colin Tatz's work on Indigenous Australian athletes through history (see Tatz, 2000), Edward's work on the traditional games of Indigenous people (see Edwards, 2009), Hallinan and Bruce's work on AFL Indigenous players (see Hallinan, Bruce, & Burke, 2005; Hallinan, Bruce, & Bennie, 2004) and Judd's work on race relations and enlightened racism in sport (see Judd, 2010; Hallinan & Judd, 2007, 2009) provide just a small sample of the work of scholars used in teaching. Utilising such important work in the space of Indigenous identity in sport has also been carefully and respectfully approved by the Indigenous Board of Studies at Charles Sturt University, which provides another layer or level of validation that this method of teaching (and the teaching resources used) is both relevant and justified.

Conclusion: Reflections as Researchers and Educators

As educators, we understand that there is no one perfect way to teach content relating to Indigenous cultural competence and, at times, the feedback received from students can be conflicting. During the teaching semester, it is obvious that at times, some

students remain resistant to learning about Indigenous identity, communities and culture relating to sport. We feel that this resistance is not unique to students studying sport-related content, or to students at Charles Sturt University as it is evident that such resistance is pervasive in society more broadly.

The use of sports examples (particularly related to the successes of sporting organisations in promoting reconciliation) gives us the opportunity for the subject to not only simply celebrate Indigenous athletes but to expose and explore the spaces around those successes which often reveal the obstacles they faced, and the racism they have endured, along the way. It is fortuitous that the nature of twenty-first-century sport in Australia celebrates Indigenous athletes and regularly highlights examples of racism in sport in the media and social media. This approach also allows the educator to encourage students to highlight their own experiences of racism and cultural understanding. This approach is non-confrontational by design and provides a basis for further self-reflection for students as they continue their education and begin to enter workplaces and sporting contexts. Also, as non-Indigenous educators, we are able to engage students using our own experiences and journeys towards cultural competence and demonstrate, through our own language and behaviour, appropriate cultural sensitivities.

Sport is moving towards a situation where sporting organisations and event committees (want to and are expected to) embrace systematic and informed RAPs. This means that as educators in this space we can more easily engage students with material that is current and emerging, and which teeters between positive and negative. Sporting organisations and events such as the AFL, the NRL and the 2018 Commonwealth Games reveal themselves as spaces where there is a clear indication of movement towards genuinely inclusive policies for Indigenous athletes. From this positive position (which readily engages students), we can more easily lead exploration and understanding of the resistance and the stereotyping that athletes encounter, not only in the past but also in the present. The merits of such policy can then be debated in relation to real outcomes and inclusion of Indigenous people in Australian sport.

We understand that it is difficult to engage every student, however our aim is to engage as many students as possible. This, of course, can be difficult as each student begins from a different point as a result of influences from outside the university space, with family, friendship groups, choice of media and social media and religion all playing a part. As educators, we can never 'ensure' that students fully embrace all aspects of what we hope to impart in any subject. We can however, create favourable circumstances and safe spaces for students to explore such higher level self-reflection. Nevertheless, we are fortunate that we have the time and space to try to achieve this goal. Our content is not divided (or lost) in a number of other subjects, it is delivered in a stand-alone full semester subject that follows on from an introductory and non-sport specific subject that explores Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities. Finally, we are also fortunate that our students are sports fans. For the most part, they respect and admire sporting competitions and athletes. Additionally, the use of sporting case studies can show how sport policy has moved from being *reactive* to *proactive* in addressing racism and promoting inclusion. This

approach highlights how sport can lead the way in inclusion for Indigenous people, and can provide an effective and thought provoking method in teaching towards the goal of cultural competence.

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Chapter 11
Curriculum to Scaffold the Students' Journey of Cultural Competence: Whole-of-Program Approach in Allied Health

Caroline Robinson

Abstract The purpose of this chapter is to explore a holistic approach to facilitating allied health students' journeys of cultural competence, in order to support academics to take a whole-of-program perspective. Through critical reflection, facilitated by working in partnership with Indigenous Australian and non-Indigenous colleagues, this writing illustrates a white academic's continuing journey of cultural competence.

As an allied health academic, I am drawn to work in this space of cultural competence because I care about social justice and have a responsibility to enable this learning for my students … but it's also because I have so much to learn myself. I am curious and questioning—impatient to understand and to know more—rushing too quickly to seek an answer or a solution. It is these individualistic cultural attributes, however, which have led me into challenging conversations with Aboriginal friends and colleagues. This learning about myself has become easier over time, as I deepen my capacity for critical reflection on being a non-Indigenous academic. I try to subdue my natural tendency for working independently in order to enable the time and space for building relationships and developing collaboration. My academic position brings power and privilege but I also grapple with the concept of 'white fragility'—or as Robin DiAngelo says 'a lack of racial stamina' (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 56). More importantly, through reflection I have come to understand the strength, resilience and patience that an Aboriginal person must draw on every time they have a difficult conversation with a non-Indigenous colleague. It is through this lens and with the greatest respect, that I present this chapter.

The concept of cultural competence is most accurately conceived as a journey because it suggests a continuum of learning. The education of culturally capable allied health practitioners is a core responsibility for all health educators. In allied health curricula, while the *totality of experiences* for a student extends far beyond

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formal assessment tasks, development of cultural competence knowledge and under-standing, attitudes and skills is facilitated typically through discrete subjects. The constructive alignment of assessment tasks with subject outcomes ensures that each student can demonstrate their learning but there is a risk that subjects are viewed by the student in isolation; Indigenous Australian content may appear to students as being disconnected to their disciplinary study. In order for students to conceive a contin-uing journey towards cultural competence, it is necessary to take a holistic approach to scaffolding cultural capabilities horizontally and vertically throughout a course. Taking a whole-of-program approach offers the opportunity to design a curriculum which frames the students' experience of their developing cultural competence, inte-grated with disciplinary knowledge and practice, and opens up exciting opportuni-ties for learning. Moving students *towards competency* is what we should aim to achieve as health educators. This work requires a commitment from non-Indigenous academics to step outside of their discipline comfort zone and accept their respon-sibility to help students navigate their respective journeys. It is only possible to do this authentically with students, if the teacher is themselves on the journey.

The importance of educating culturally capable health practitioners must not be underestimated and should be perceived as a core responsibility for all health educa-tors, whether in academic institutions or in clinical practice. Educating health practi-tioners to ensure culturally safe and respectful practice is fundamental to the National Scheme's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020–2025 (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, 2020).

> Culturally safe practice is the ongoing critical reflection of health practitioner knowledge, skills, attitudes, practising behaviours and power differentials in delivering safe, accessible and responsive healthcare free of racism (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, 2020, p. 9).

Academics and practitioners need to understand therefore, how to scaffold the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours for allied health students to enable culturally safe practice. This challenge to authentically integrate Indigenous cultural competence with disciplinary content is complex and requires a whole-of-program perspective.

There is a broad range of imperatives for a curriculum designed to improve the cultural competence of graduates and thereby healthcare for Aboriginal Australian people (Bullen, Roberts, & Hoffman, 2017; Isaacs et al., 2016; Sherwood & Edwards, 2006). For example, an understanding of the social, political and historical context of Aboriginal health is important in order to illuminate the intergenerational impact of colonisation, discrimination and marginalisation on Aboriginal peoples' engagement with health services and the 'gap' in health and life expectancy (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019). It is also essential to facilitate student awareness of their own world view and Eurocentric knowledge so that they become open to alternative perspectives on wellness and healing. Students should be guided to explore their own assumptions and beliefs through reflection, in order to be open to other ways of knowing, being and doing. An Indigenous health curriculum must also enable a student's understanding of critical consciousness in order to foster 'compassionate,

humanistic, socially conscious health professionals who act as agents of change' (Halman, Baker & Stella, 2017, p. 12), prioritising the decolonising of Aboriginal health and addressing interpersonal and institutional racism. Critical reflection is a crucial capability for allied health students to develop so that they have the insight to examine health systems and challenge the dominance of the biomedical model of health and systemic cultural bias in the healthcare system (Rix, Barclay, & Wilson, 2014). Students must also be enabled to understand their role as advocates—highlighting the need for health funding which relates to people rather than disease, and advocating for change informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The overarching purpose of an Indigenous health curriculum is to equip the next generation of allied health practitioners with the knowledge, skills and values to provide culturally safe and acceptable health services with a focus on quality of care; improve preventive healthcare in order to address chronic disease; and enhance health and wellbeing outcomes for Indigenous Australians (Bailie et al., 2017).

As a non-Indigenous academic employed within a School of Community Health, my focus on Indigenous cultural competence arises from my desire to understand other ways of knowing, doing and being. Applying a lens of individualism and collectivism has assisted my understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependence of people and communities with the environment (McIntyre-Mills & Wirawan 2018). From this standpoint therefore, I consider that my purpose is also to facilitate a community of practice to build capacity for other academics who teach allied health students. In this way we can collaborate to develop our own capabilities in order to help our students navigate their cultural competence journeys. A guiding principle for this work is the initiative in the Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020 'to increase the engagement of non-Indigenous people with Indigenous knowledge, culture and educational approaches' (Universities Australia, 2017).

It has been over a decade since Ellen Grote (2008) published a review of the literature 'Principles and Practices of Cultural Competency' and eight years since the publication of the 'National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities' (2011). Despite the presence of national guidelines and institutional policy requirements for over a decade which mandate inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, culture and educational approaches (Grote, 2008; Universities Australia, 2011; Universities Australia, 2017), cultural capabilities are still not integrated in all undergraduate courses. The Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy First Annual Report (2019) states that there are 'some positive examples of embedding Indigenous curriculum into mainstream subjects' (p. 51).

A frequently cited barrier is competition for space within curricula. While it is a relatively simple task to embed a discrete Indigenous Australian Studies subject early in a programme, it is much more challenging to take a holistic approach to scaffolding cultural capabilities throughout a course to ensure purposeful integration with disciplinary knowledge and practice. It requires a commitment from non-Indigenous academics to step outside of their discipline comfort zone and to have open and honest conversations with students about their own journey of cultural competence. It also means admitting their own limitations in knowledge and skills. Despite the level of discomfort that this entails, once an academic understands that this is a shared path

and their responsibility is to help students navigate their respective journeys, it opens up exciting opportunities for learning. This chapter explores a whole-of-program approach to developing cultural capabilities for allied health students.

Conversations with Wiradyuri Elders

Before rushing on to the *how*, it is necessary for non-Indigenous allied health academics to first understand the need to be open to 'un-learning' and questioning the 'taken for granted'. This is more than just reflective practice. It requires reflecting on who we are and how we learn, teach and practice. This can be very challenging for practitioners who typically are perceived as disciplinary experts who know exactly how to *do* and to *be* as an allied health professional.

> While such profound challenge is uncomfortable, the message is clear: transformative change that reorients power and privilege is not possible without shaking up the way we teach, learn and act (Porter, 2015, p. 413).

I have experienced the privilege of conversations withWiradyuri Elders who embody the principles of Yindyamarra,[1] graciously and very patiently sharing their wisdom with me to enable another perspective. Being open to this questioning of self is at the heart of understanding who I am and what I am working to achieve with allied health students. It is not until you articulate your thoughts to another person that you realise whether they contribute to a meaningful dialogue or are merely a self-satisfying monologue. Realising that my white standpoint enables one perspective but obscures others, is a persistent challenge to my thinking and one which is so important not to gloss over … ever. It is too easy to construct a safe space in which to share conversation with like-minded people and to co-create a truth. But if this is just a white person's conversation, the story is told in an echo chamber. Until I shared my thoughts for this chapter with Auntie Leanna and Uncle Brian, I thought I was on track. I was on *a* track but was already far down the path. The Elders beckoned me back to the beginning of the story. In accepting the institutional narrative around cultural competence—albeit as a journey rather than an end-point—I was missing the *backstory* (Uncle Brian). This backstory is largely invisible to me as a non-Indigenous academic and therein lies the problem. Regardless of how much I learn about Aboriginal culture and history, I can only know this as a white person; I also know that I must first go backwards in order to progress on my own journey of cultural competence.

> I don't believe in the phrase *cultural competence*. No-one is good at everything. *Cultural competence* suggests that you are very good but even the Elders are still learning (Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant).

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[1]The five principles of Yindyamarra are: respect; honour; go slow; be polite; be kind.

If the phrase *cultural competence* is posed as problematic from the outset, how then does this inform a conversation about the journey towards cultural competence for students? What type of journey is this without a clear destination, a charted route, or an established method of travel? The concept of a journey does imply travelling from here to there but in this case, the *here* and the *there* are not fixed points in space or time. This learning journey begins and ends in different places. It is not a regular journey for students or for academics either. We are required to map curricula and signpost points along the route at which students must demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills and attributes to continue on their journey but there is 'no yardstick for cultural competence' (Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant, personal communication, August 1, 2019)—no end-point to measure success. If the construct of *cultural competence* is reframed as *cultural orientation*, this perhaps is more liberating. An *orientation* to culture respects multiple truths. Everyone has thoughts and opinions—there is no correct or incorrect—it's just a matter of perspective. From this standpoint then, the task is not to herd students along a marked path but rather to navigate an unpredictable journey *with* students in order to co-create understanding.

When the Elders are working with a group of novice undergraduate students, the starting point is to explore common ground—a sharing of culture. Students are often very naïve about cultures other than their own and those belonging to the dominant cultural group may have never explored their own culture. The value of challenging this ethnocentric view has been highlighted through the evaluation of nursing students' experience of cultural immersion (Charles et. al., 2014). Informed by their life experiences, students hold a wide range of beliefs about Indigenous Australian peoples and differing views about cultural competency. Then term *Indigenous* can itself be problematic and misunderstood, in contrast to understanding a person's rich cultural identity as an Aboriginal Australian or a Torres Strait Islander.

> This sovereignty *is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty.* It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown (Uluru Statement from the Heart, 2017).

The Elders begin with 'straight talk' and 'truth telling' as a basis for developing cultural safety. 'Learning is a process of understanding and accepting … but sometimes students cannot move beyond the cultural safety stage' (Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant, personal communication, August 1, 2019). An understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live within two worlds, guides the students' learning and precipitates a shift in their thinking.

An Indigenous curriculum therefore, needs to function as a map for reference but one that illustrates multiple routes through the landscape. Students begin their cultural competency journey at different points and progress at different rates. Consequently, assessment of a student's cultural capabilities should not be conceived as border crossings to check progress along a route but rather as creative opportunities for students to explore new places and illustrate new ways of knowing, doing and being.

Evidence Base

The Indigenous curriculum in higher education is founded on concepts of cultural awareness, cultural safety and cultural security with a focus on the assessment of students' knowledge, values and skills underpinned by a critically reflexive practice (Coffin, 2007; Grote, 2008).

Critical reflexivity is central to understanding one's worldview; it requires a person to think more critically about the impact of their assumptions, values and actions on others (Castell et.al, 2018). It is also relevant to focus on the affective construct of *cultural desire* as a pre-requisite foundation for students' learning.

> … the desire to "want to" enter into the process of becoming culturally competent by genuinely seeking cultural encounters, obtaining cultural knowledge, possessing the skill to conduct culturally sensitive assessments and being humble to the process of cultural awareness (Campinha-Bacote, 2008, p. 142).

Cultural desire is also an essential attribute for allied health academics and practitioners to model for undergraduate students, through creating time and space in the curriculum for consideration of concepts such as 'caring and love'; 'sacrifice' (of one's prejudice and bias); 'social justice'; 'humility'; and 'compassion' (Campinha-Bacote, 2008). While a student's learning can be scaffolded to develop their cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity, it is only the recipient of their knowledge, skills and attributes i.e. a client, who can decide whether the interaction is culturally safe (Isaacs et al., 2016). The desire to practice in a culturally competent manner, however, is a dynamic phenomenon. Isaacs et al. noted that within a group of undergraduate nursing students, it was apparent that their cultural desire waned after they completed a unit in Aboriginal health and wellbeing (2016). Study which requires students to focus on their beliefs and attitudes, particularly in regard to post-colonial history, is politically charged and emotionally challenging. This lack of desire is also of concern in regard to non-Indigenous academics who work with students to develop cultural capabilities. Based on a relatively small sample of 34 academic staff in a faculty of health sciences, 51% indicated that they were awkward or unsure about teaching Indigenous content and 9% of staff avoided this teaching responsibility (Wolfe, Sheppard, Le Rossignol & Somerset, 2018). These authors state that a clear plan is required at the discipline level, for 'where' and 'what' Indigenous content to teach (p. 660).

Guidance to inform the 'where' and the 'what' in health curricula, is presented in detail within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework (Department of Health, 2014). This framework 'has the potential to provide higher education providers with a benchmark towards national consistency for the minimum level of capability required by graduates to effectively deliver culturally safe healthcare to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service users' (p. 1–9). The Graduate Cultural Capability Model illustrates a set of five interconnected cultural capabilities—respect; communication; safety and quality; reflection; and advocacy. Development of these cultural capabilities for an undergraduate student is intended to enable the application of knowledge, skills and attributes in new and changing

circumstances, reflecting a continuing and lifelong journey towards cultural competence (Department of Health, 2014). The concept of a *lifelong journey* is intrinsic to this conversation because students enter higher education with a cultural mindset which has formed over the course of their life time. If a student has developed a negative attitude towards Indigenous Australian peoples based on personal experiences, this attitude could take a long time to change (Isaacs et al., 2016). Additionally, this learning journey must not be conceived as linear; the categorisation, compartmentalisation and sequencing of knowledge is a Western construct (Sherwood & Edwards, 2006). Rather it is preferable to take a holistic perspective as this aligns with Indigenous knowledge systems. Although Juanita Sherwood (in Sherwood & Edwards, 2006, p. 181) highlights this holistic perspective of knowledge production and transfer in regard to models of health, it is equally relevant to the development of cultural capabilities for allied health professionals. Despite publication of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework in 2014, a recent survey of entry-level Physiotherapy programmes in Australia revealed that 71% did not use a cultural capability framework to scaffold student learning and only 25% of the courses included a dedicated stand-alone unit/subject focused on developing cultural competence (Brady, 2018).

Further attention should be focused on the implementation of an Indigenous health curriculum in allied health courses and how well graduates are prepared for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reduce disparities and improve outcomes for health and wellbeing. Enabling the opportunity for students to *apply* their knowledge and skills is necessary to extend learning beyond cultural awareness towards cultural competency (Francis-Cracknell et al., 2019). Embedding cultural capabilities into subjects and scaffolding the students' learning through a course often relies, however, on a small number of committed academics within a discipline. It is evident that systemic barriers within higher education institutions limit the developmental capacity of Indigenous health curricula through sustaining hidden curricula and insufficient investment in human and educational resources (Pitama, Palmer, Huria, Lacey, & Wilkinson, 2018). It is incumbent on health academics to explore these 'political and network intermediaries acting on cultural competence curricula' (Pitama et al., 2018, p. 898) and act to overcome institutional barriers, enabling students to achieve cultural competency learning outcomes.

Reflections on Practice

As a teacher and allied health professional, I reflect on some major learning experiences in informing my journey of cultural competence. Through this reflexive practice I have gained increasing clarity about what we are aiming to achieve in helping students to navigate their journeys, in order to produce allied health graduates who have the capabilities to deliver culturally secure healthcare.

Considering that I moved to Australia in 2005, it is with shame that I admit to first considering my position of privilege as a white academic and health professional not until 2015, during my study of the online CSU Indigenous Cultural Competence programme. This was a potent learning experience for me and certainly informed by knowledge of cultural competence and my conception of 'being'. In 2017 I studied a University of Sydney MOOC—'Aboriginal Sydney'—and this excellent learning resource challenged my thinking further. It explored a broad range of issues but importantly, it required me to explore contemporary Indigenous Australian issues and to reflect on my attitudes and beliefs. The culmination of my learning has been enabled through two cultural immersion experiences, the most powerful of which was at Menindee in the far west of New South Wales. It is difficult to express in words the power of this cultural immersion and the impact that it has had on my understanding of self, Aboriginal people, community and connection to Country. This time spent in isolation from technology, in a space which enabled true connection with people, opened me to deep reflection on my being and my role as an educator.

On a walk across the parched bed of Lake Mungo in 2017, I took heed of Auntie Leanna's request that we ask permission of the ancestors to visit and to walk on their lands. It seemed such an alien thing for me to do as a white person but I reiterate the importance of being open to new ways of knowing, doing and being. My request for permission to walk on the ancient lake bed was answered by the sudden appearance of the shadow of a hawk[2] with outstretched wings, immediately in front of my right foot. Needless to say, this was an incredibly spiritual experience and directed my attention to reflecting on my purpose in this cultural competency space. I came to understand through the Aboriginal Elders that knowledge is held by different people in Aboriginal communities because it is dangerous for one person to hold all of the knowledge. It is also the reason that knowledge holders must collaborate to benefit the community. As one non-Indigenous allied health practitioner in a large university, I hold only a few pieces which are revealed in this vast mosaic of knowledge. On our own we can achieve a little but together we can achieve great things. The taken for granted is so hard to see and generally it takes someone with a different cultural perspective to highlight the obvious. As a white academic, the biggest challenge has been to let go and to be honest about the depth of my ignorance. Only then could I begin to understand where we are trying to journey with our allied health students and for what purpose.

> White people need to move between spaces … this is moving towards competency (Wirribee Auntie Leanna Carr).

Moving students *towards competency* is what we should aim to achieve as health educators. It is only possible to do this authentically with students, if the teacher is themselves on the journey. Honest conversations are fundamental to enable students to understand that this journey begins and ends at different places; does not follow a straight path; requires space and time for reflection; and has no standard endpoint. My metaphor for this journey towards competency is the macramé shown in

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[2]A hawk is said to symbolise being observant; seeing things from a higher perspective; the ability to focus your vision and go for what you want https://nativesymbols.info/hawk/.

Fig. 11.1. This textile metaphor should be 'read' from the bottom up. The knots are placed on the diagonal to create different starting levels for the threads, representing the different levels of knowledge and skills with which we (students and teachers) commence the journey. At any point in time, students in a cohort will vary in their level of knowledge, skills and cultural capability. Similarly, at the end of a course of study, individual students will be able to demonstrate different levels of advancement along the journey towards competency. The threads separate and come back together at certain points, representing separate journeys with common elements. The knots represent a 'coming together' for growth and creativity through carefully designed learning experiences.

Fig. 11.1 Macramé as a metaphor for the journey towards cultural competency

Everything in this weaving is interrelated to represent the mutual interdependence of the students and the teacher. Pulling on one thread will shift the pattern; a small change made by one person can influence *knowing, doing* and *being* for others. The flexibility of the open weave represents the need for teachers to create space for change—for themselves and their students. Weaving is a mindful practice which takes time and creates a space for reflection; a reminder that adequate time and resources must be allocated to the Indigenous curriculum in order to effect meaningful change in health students' ways of *knowing, doing* and *being*.

Methods of Teaching/Sharing/Providing Evidence/Student Voices

While a metaphor assists in understanding a concept, a more tangible process is required for a higher education context in order to illustrate the way in which Indigenous Australian content and cultural capabilities may be scaffolded in an undergraduate allied health course. It is relevant to note the whole-of-program approach applied to this curriculum mapping, as a mechanism to integrate cultural capabilities meaningfully with disciplinary knowledge, skills and attributes. This is important to ensure that staff have a clear plan for 'where' and 'what' Indigenous content to teach (Wolfe et al., 2018, p. 660). For students, an authentic integration of cultural capabilities with discipline content facilitates their understanding of the relevance of cultural awareness, cultural safety and cultural security as the foundational principles of cultural competence which inform their disciplinary practice. Through providing students with the opportunity to gain knowledge, deepen their understandings, develop attributes and skills, we are enabling their journey through the course *towards competency* (Fig. 11.2).

	Cultural incompetence	Cultural knowledge	Cultural awareness	Cultural sensitivity	Cultural competence	Cultural proficiency
Professionally specific skills						
Cross-cultural skills						
Critically examining the profession						
Reflexivity of values and attitudes						
Understanding Indigenous cultures, histories and cont. issues						
Generic understanding of culture						

Fig. 11.2 Indigenous Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework (ICCPF) (Ranzijn, Egege, & McDermott, 2008, as cited in Ranzijn, McConnochie, & Nolan, 2009, p. 9)

Cultural competence describes the awareness of one's own culture, plus knowledge, understanding of, and sensitivity towards, other cultural beliefs and practices, combined with the ability to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds in ways that are considered appropriate by those people (IHEAC, 2011).

The pedagogical matrix illustrated in Fig. 11.2 incorporates the essential components of cultural competence into a framework to guide the development of foundational knowledge, understandings, skills and attributes required for culturally responsive practice.

In order to navigate students *towards competency*, the journey is made easier if they have some idea of where they are heading. A common flaw in course design is that students experience the curriculum as a series of units of study or discrete subjects. It is not uncommon for novice students to have little idea as to why they need to learn particular knowledge and skills. The attributes that we wish students to develop may be similarly opaque. With regard to cultural capabilities and Indigenous Australian content, this lack of clarity for students is problematic because it can be a source of resistance to studying topics which can appear to novice students as unrelated to their disciplinary knowledge and skill set.

> Why bother to learn about culture at all? It's a waste of time. I just want to learn how to be an [allied health professional] (1st year student).

A process that we have implemented in the School of Community Health at Charles Sturt University (CSU) to illustrate the integration of cultural capabilities into a range of allied health courses, is to map subjects against a combination of the six domains in the Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework (ICCPF) and the five graduate cultural capabilities articulated in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework (HCF). Table 11.1 illustrates the mapping of subjects in the Bachelor of Podiatric Medicine[3] against these two frameworks.

Table 11.1 Mapping subjects in the Bachelor of Podiatric Medicine to cultural capabilities from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework (HCF) and the CSU Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework (ICCPF)

HCF cultural capabilities and key descriptors / CSU ICCPF	Respect · Historical context · Cultural knowledge · Diversity · Humility and lifelong learning	Communication · Culturally safe communication · Partnerships	Safety and quality · Clinical presentation · Population health	Reflection · Cultural self and health care · Racism · White privilege	Advocacy · Equity and human rights · Leadership
Professionally specific skills		POD404 POD409	POD308 POD404 POD409		
Cross-cultural skills	POD109 POD204			POD109 POD204	POD413
Critically examining the profession		POD308 HIP202		HIP202	POD413
Reflexivity of values and attitudes	POD109 POD204			POD109 IKC100 POD204	POD204
Understanding Indigenous cultures, histories and contemporary issues	HIP100 IKC100	IKC100	HIP100	HIP100	IKC100
Generic understanding of culture	IKC100	POD109			

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[3]The B Podiatric Medicine is a four year undergraduate course offered in the School of Community Health at Charles Sturt University, NSW, Australia.

Subjects in the B Podiatric Medicine which scaffold Indigenous Australian content
and
cultural capabilities: IKC100 Indigenous Health
HIP100 Introduction to Health and
Rehabilitation POD109 Introduction to
Podiatric Medicine POD204 Podiatry and
Community Health Practice
HIP202 Evidence-Based Health Practice and
Research POD308 The Diabetic Foot and Chronic
Wound Management
POD404 Complex Cases in Podiatric Practice / POD409 Clinical Podiatric
Residency
& Complex Cases in Podiatric Practice for Honours
POD413 Professional Podiatric Practice

A 'course map' is important to provide the basis for a conversation about how
student learning is scaffolded through a course. The position of each subject within
the grid in Table 11.1 is determined by relevant learning outcomes. In order to clarify
the process of subject allocation within the grid, Table 11.2 illustrates mapping for
a professional practice subject—POD204 Podiatry and Community Health Practice,
which is delivered at the beginning of second year.

In any subject, determining the relevant themes for curriculum content as well
as for graduate capabilities and domains of learning, may be considered subjective.

Table 11.2 Mapping of learning outcomes in POD204 to curriculum content themes and graduate
cultural capabilities in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework
(HCF) and domains in the CSU Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework (ICCPF)

POD204—Podiatry and Community Health Practice

Subject learning outcomes relevant to developing graduate cultural capabilities	Curriculum content themes (HCF)	Graduate Cultural Capabilities (HCF)	Domains in the CSU ICCPF
be able to contextualise the concept of cultural privilege and how this affects health care and health outcome for Indigenous Australian peoples	14. White privilege	Reflection	Reflexivity of values and attitudes
be able to explain how ethics, values, power, language and socially constructed views inform practice within the health care professions	11. Self-reflexivity 15. Equity and Human Rights in health care	Reflection Advocacy	Cross-cultural skills

Even so, it is important that the process of subject mapping is not completed without reference to the whole course. A collection of subjects comprises a course. Therefore, the overarching course aims and outcomes provide the framework in which subject learning outcomes are crafted. The purpose of mapping at a subject level is to identify points in the course at which students are expected to demonstrate cultural knowledge, skills and attributes.

Viewed at a superficial level, it may appear to be a fairly simple process of crafting some relevant learning outcomes within a few subjects in an allied health course. An Indigenous health curriculum to scaffold the students' journey of cultural competence, however, is far more complex to create.

> 'The curriculum is the totality of experiences a student has as a result of the provision made' (Kelly, 2009, p. 13).

The *totality of experiences* extends far beyond subjects and assessment tasks which viewed alone, is a very limited concept of the curriculum.

My learning journey towards cultural competence continues but it often feels like I'm travelling backwards. Reflecting on this process of scaffolding the students' journey, it is important to acknowledge that my standpoint as a white academic limits my conception of an Indigenous health curriculum. In order to *make provision* for a comprehensive curriculum, it is essential for white academics to collaborate with Indigenous academics and Indigenous people living and working outside of the institution. As part of this collaboration, however, it is important for white academics to accept responsibility and address challenging topics with allied health students: unconscious bias; discrimination and prejudice; social justice; and racism—interpersonal, systemic and institutional. The National Anti-Racism Strategy (2012) 'calls on all members of the Australian community to work towards eradicating the barriers to equality that result from racism' (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2012, p. 7).

Avoiding this responsibility and/or assuming that it is the responsibility of Indigenous academics to plan and deliver the curriculum, is an expression of cultural privilege. The Indigenous health curriculum is challenging and daunting for many non-Indigenous academics but white fragility is no excuse to avoid engagement with issues that sustain inequities in the Australian population and negatively impact the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The value of a whole-of-program approach—integrating Indigenous cultural competence with disciplinary content—is to produce allied health graduates with a critical consciousness to create change in their profession and transform institutions, who understand that the journey towards cultural competence is lifelong.

This chapter has illustrated a holistic approach to facilitating allied health students' journeys of cultural competence, through a whole-of-program perspective. The constructs and processes presented in this chapter have been developed over several years and are a synthesis of cumulative collaboration with my Indigenous Australian and non-Indigenous friends and colleagues. Nonetheless, it is important to remind the reader that my presentation of this work is from a non-Indigenous standpoint. It is therefore, a limited perspective but one which can be considered in the context of

multiple perspectives offered on the Indigenous health curriculum. The reflections are personal to my journey of cultural competence as a white academic working in a Western institution. I hope that this insight to my experience offers an opportunity for other health educators to reflect on how they work in this space and what we can all do to work authentically with our students, in order to develop and sustain a culturally competent allied health workforce.

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Chapter 12
Reflections on a Nursing Curriculum: Lessons Learnt

Jessica Biles

Abstract The skills, behaviours and attitudes of registered nurses can impact health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. How best to support learning opportunities in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence is underdeveloped in the discipline of nursing. This chapter will focus on a qualitative doctoral project aimed at unearthing the voices of undergraduate nurses learning Indigenous Australian cultural competence. Listening to the experience of nursing students has revealed a model of student learning which provides a better understanding of the lived experience of cultural competence. This model assists nursing academic staff to tailor and improve Indigenous Australian cultural competency within undergraduate nurse education. The chapter will then describe the experiences of embedding preliminary research findings into a Bachelor of Nursing curriculum review. It will provide details on the process of curriculum design, academic reflections and community consultation that will be useful to curriculum designers, academics and nursing teachers who are seeking ways of embedding cultural competence as pedagogy in nursing curriculums.

My name is Jessica Biles and I am a white woman with links to many wonderful cultures inclusive of Catalan, Scottish, Irish and Australia. I am married to academic Brett, a Murrawarri man and we have two children Stella and Audrey. I have held an academic position within the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health at Charles Sturt University since 2008. After being involved in the teaching of subjects focused on Indigenous Australian health care, I noticed that often the pedagogical focus of teaching and learning was geared towards the deficit model. To me, this didn't align with my personal or professional values and lived experiences. This model isn't sustainable or successful (Sherwood, 2013). Instead the onus of responsibility should not be on the patient but instead geared towards the clinician. *How can the clinician adapt to suit the needs of the client/community rather than how can the client adapt to suit the needs of the health professional*? Coupled with my personal experiences

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raising two girls it was clear that we need to learn from history, consult, collaborate, respect and reorientate our focus to a strengths-based approach. This has stimulated my interested in effective teaching strategies in cultural competence and more broadly cultural competence development in health care.

Knowledge and Scholarship Isn Indigenous Australian Competence Cultural and Nursing

Importantly, to consider nursing curriculum experiences focus needs to be firstly positioned on Indigenous Australian health. Health outcomes for Indigenous Australian people are consistently and significantly worse than for non-Indigenous Australian people (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2016). In 2008 and subsequent years, the Australian government recognised the importance of the change required to reduce health disparities by aligning strategic funding to the Close the Gap campaign. Despite initiatives health outcomes remain disparate. Coronary heart disease, diabetes mellitus and respiratory disease are reported as the highest causes of deaths within Indigenous Australian communities (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015) raising concern about ongoing inequality in health care within Australia. This highlights the need to provide equality in health care for Indigenous Australian people. Registered nurses comprise at least 57% of the healthcare workforce (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2016). Any change made by nursing practise can evoke lasting change and positive outcomes for the clients of nurses and midwives.

As preparation for practise-ready graduates, cultural competency is increasingly being embraced within undergraduate nursing education (ANMAC, 2016). While nursing standards are responsive to regulating practise and health curriculum frameworks support design, our understanding on how students best learn about Indigenous Australian cultural competence in nursing is still evolving (Biles & Biles, 2019).

Methods of Unearthing the Voice of Bachelor of Nursing Learners in Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence

As a way of unearthing student voices in a Bachelor of Nursing programme, my doctoral study aimed to explore the learning experiences of undergraduate nursing students studying Indigenous Australian cultural competence. The participants of the study were fifteen undergraduate students enrolled in an Indigenous Australian cultural competency subject within the Bachelor of Nursing Course. The study followed the subsequent journey of students through their first and final year of university. At the time of this research, the curriculum that students were studying hosted a standalone first-year subject focused on Indigenous Australian history, culture and

health. The subject was a theoretical opportunity to study history, health and culture. It was offered online only and did not involve any form of experiential experience. Discrete learning objectives focused on discipline-specific knowledge around Indigenous Australian health were scattered through other nursing subjects in the first and final year of study.

Hermeneutic phenomenology was used to explore students' experiences, perceptions and learning about cultural competency to address the following research questions (Biles, 2017):

- What are the lived experiences and perceptions of student nurses studying a subject designed to address Indigenous Australian cultural competence?
- What are the lived experiences of the journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence for nursing students across the duration of their course?
- What influences the lived experiences of Indigenous Australian cultural competence for nursing students? (Biles, 2017; Biles, Coyle, Bernoth, Hill, 2016).

Hermeneutic phenomenology aligns within a constructivist framework and lends itself to the ontological stance of multiple realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001). In this research the phenomena of Indigenous Australian cultural competence in nursing was interpreted and reconstructed to show or reveal multiple realities. The research approach creates a process of interpretation by the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) and the participant. Homogenous purposive sampling was used and focused towards undergraduate nursing students in their first and final years within an undergraduate nursing degree. Data collection involved a single in-depth semi-structured interview with each participant at the end of their first and final years of study.

Data analysis involved four distinct phases resulting in the development of four constructs, using a process that is detailed. These phases were not linear and occurred concurrently and importantly were facilitated by hermeneutic circle strategies. Each phase incorporated the movement through the hermeneutic circle, viewing data as whole and part in both year levels of data (Finlay, 2011; vanManen, 1997) consistent with hermeneutic research. This process occurred in all facets of both first year and final year data and when data was combined to make one whole.

Findings that Informed Curriculum Design and Modification

Findings revealed the importance of four major themes to undergraduate nursing students: Moving to a Different World Viewpoint, Making Connections, Seeking the Truth, and The Core of Truth Seeking. Participants in both first year and third year shared their perspectives in relation to their knowledge and development in Indigenous Australian health and understanding of cultural competence. The findings revealed an interrelationship between all major themes. Interestingly, the first-year findings showed a period of rapid growth and transformation (reported elsewhere) (Biles et al., 2016).
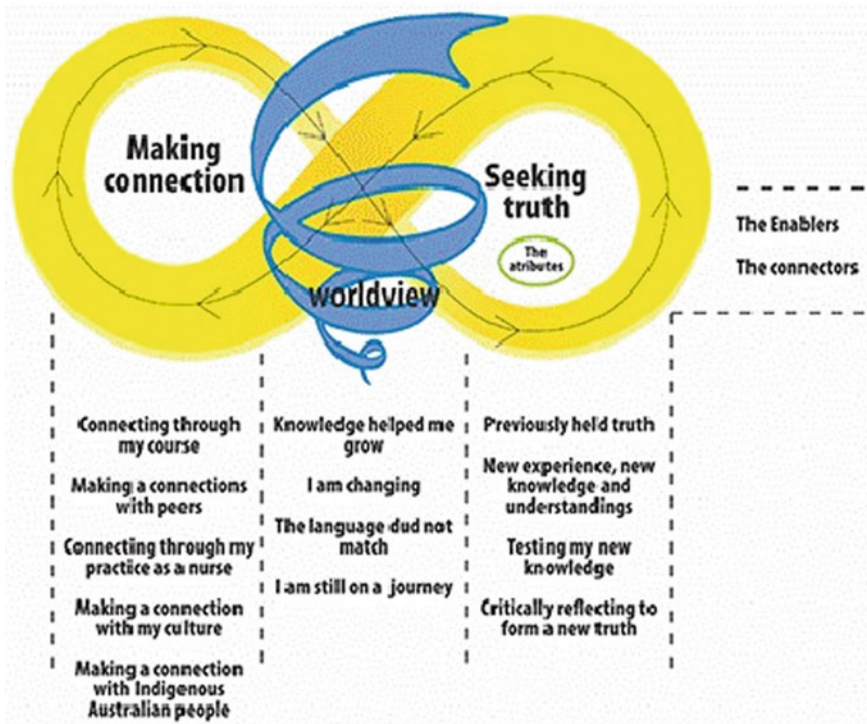
Fig. 12.1 Student experiences in learning Indigenous Australian cultural competence (From Biles, 2017, p. 259.)

The model in Fig. 12.1 represents participants' perspectives and is categorised into three overarching themes: *Influences of the curriculum on student learning, Influences of student experiences* and *The Unique Personal Journey*. The following section will interpret experience into ways that students learnt Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

Influences of the Curriculum on Student Learning

Participants reported that the curriculum was an influence to their learning experiences in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence. What was different in this research, compared to other models of learning in Indigenous Australian cultural competence was that participants evidenced learning as not being linear, moving beyond the classroom (and curriculum) and deeply personal to participants. This new knowledge suggests that the curriculum to be responsive to a range of ways that learners could connect in a personal and deep way. To participants the curriculum had the potential to influence the ability of the learner to connect with the learning experience. The curriculum was central to participants experiences. It

played an important role in determining whether a participant had the opportunity to make a connection and search for their truth, and created a shift in their viewpoint.

Participants suggested that the content within a curriculum was not enough to facilitate their journey. Enacting the curriculum needs authenticity and integrity in its delivery. That is, learning needs to be meaningful and real to learners. Participants in this research were confused by a single subject approach. They were confused by how it aligned with their study (Biles et al., 2016). In addition, they questioned staff members' journey in Indigenous Australian cultural competence. This research revealed that it is important that teaching staff within a school engage with the philosophical stance of the curriculum to ensure that it is enacted. Not doing so does impact the experience and learning of undergraduate nursing students.

Enabling Learning in the Area of Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence

Participants explained that the curriculum enabled the opportunity to connect. This connection stimulated a transformative experience which has been described as the experience of a moment in time when we have a new emotional response to a situation (Mezirow, 1997). It can be thought of as the light bulb moment (as experienced by 1st year participants) or having an emotive response in experiential learning (revealed by the connections described by all participants) and linked to a way of thinking critically (Mezirow, 1997). Participants wanted to connect to people, to experiences, to each other. This occurred through books, experiences online postings and relationships, to name just a few strategies. The classroom in this curriculum moved beyond traditional settings and involved online spaces, clinical placement and the personal learning that took place outside of the formal education setting.

Learning wasn't necessarily noted in the discrete subject but constructed through the participants' real life experiences. Life experiences were very important and were brought to light through the participants seeking a connection beyond the context of the curriculum when opportunities were not presented within it and also when they chose to compare their previous truth.

Mindfulness of the Hidden Curriculum

What was interesting in this research was the reliance of participants on the hidden curriculum. This is the learning that occurs beyond the university subject, such as learning from attending a movie, reading a book or through a conversation. It is usually deeply personal to the learner (Biles, 2017). Scholars in the educational space agree that learning outside of the classroom and curriculum is beneficial in

both testing metacognitive applications and overall personal development (Bentley, 2012).

This research has highlighted that it is important for curricula to provide opportunities for this to occur in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence. This style of learning takes courage from both educator and learner as we cannot anticipate all of the opportunities that arise challenging the application in an accredited course. However, this should not deter educators from embarking on ways to reach higher levels of metacognition enabling the journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

Influences of Student Experiences

A number of factors influence the overall experience of participants. These are important to consider when considering curriculum development in Indigenous Australian cultural competence in nursing. This section will explore a number of influences that impacted students' growth, learning and development in Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

Online Safety is Important to Student Experiences in Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence

Learning experiences within the course impacted the participants' learning in Indigenous Australian cultural competence. The impact that a discrete online subject can have on a curriculum was raised as questionable by participants. They expressed concern about the safety in an online environment. Online learning experiences are becoming increasingly popular in the Australian tertiary sector with around 81% of learners working remotely off campus in the online space in 2010 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). The impact this has on learning development in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence is not known.

Safety in the online space, particularly during the first year, was a concern for some participants in this research and aligns with our understanding of online learning student challenges (Clark, Ahten, & Werth, 2012). Safety concerns for participants involved the posting of their thoughts using an online platform. Would they be judged? Did they have the skills to articulate their thoughts through text? Would they offend? Would there be trolls?

As we move to a world where online learning is regularly preferred by both educational institutions and learners the need to consider safety when exploring Indigenous Australian cultural competence is increasingly important. In current Indigenous Australian cultural competence education, it is vital that participants feel safe in their

discussion, leading to the desire to create meaningful and safe clinical interactions that encourage connections (Durey, 2010).

Making Connections Embodies the Experiences in Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence

In nursing educational research, it has been widely accepted that nurses need to embody the experience of becoming a nurse (Benner, Stephen, Leonard, & Day, 2010). In psychology literature, this involves theories such as the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This theory explains how we see ourselves in the world. Through the lens of the Social Identity Theory it is suggested we link ourselves with like-minded people, cultural groups, and belief systems and divide our world into how we align ourselves in comparison to others (Trepte, 2006).

In contrast the Social Division Theory, highlights differences, divides and create social rules that groups of people follow (Payne & Payne, 2004). Generally, division is accepted by the majority (dominant) group of people and social inequalities soon follow. This theory resonates with the experience of undergraduate nursing students while attending clinical placement. It was evidenced that students largely chose not to speak up when incidents occurred on clinical placement, such as an instance of racial bias (Biles, 2017). What was clear was that the experience generated learning. Students felt that they needed to follow the dominant group, did not "call out racisms" and this was cited mainly due to the power imbalance between student and professional. However, the experience was valuable to their learning and was translated as an example of "how not to be" when a qualified professional. These incidents indicate that cultural support is paramount to students attending clinical placement. While the learning was deeply powerful where participants had a clear view of the type of practitioner they aspired to be they also are culturally unsafe. Incidents of racial bias are the "ugly" truth of mainstream health services. They shouldn't be hidden from students view as they generate important experiential learning that has the ability to transform worldviews. However, it is imperative that students have appropriate support during experiences that facilitates cultural support.

Critical Thinking in Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence

Critical thinking was facilitated by specific attributes that assisted participants' ability to connect, search and critically think. This supports the concept that the absence of critical thinking would lead to a stagnant model of Indigenous Australian cultural competence where progress and change are not evident.

Research in critical thinking suggests our understanding has evolved. Early perspectives of critical thinking saw the skill as a philosophical perspective, today scholars in education view critical thinking as a process (Facione, 1990) that require attributes. This implies that the teaching and the application of critical thinking needs to be a multidimensional process with regard to complex situations. In this research, ways for learners to critically reflect were reliant on the connections that they made and connections were dependent on curriculum opportunities, personal learning and the attributes used by each participant. The attributes, such as openness, empathy and respect facilitated connection which was essential in their learning in Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

Learning Was Uncomfortable

Participants expressed that learning during their journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence was uncomfortable. They were challenged by the very notion of how the learning about Indigenous Australian peoples aligned with the broader Bachelor of Nursing curriculum, challenged by racist clinical experiences, emotions that arose during learning experiences, their previous knowledge and the inner reflections that were stimulated by the journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence. However, it was within this discomfort that world views were challenged and movement occurred. Making a space to maintain discomfort in nursing curriculum has not been well explored.

Boler (2011) discusses the notion that there needs to be space in curriculum where learners have the opportunity to both feel and reconsider world views. Boler believes that it is the space in which we become uncomfortable that drives us to the exploration of our inner values and requires us to be reflective thinkers and this aligns with research findings in my study.

Participants in the study openly disclosed their discomfort in clinical situations, within the online learning spaces, and as they had new experiences that challenged their world views.

Like Boler, Durey (2010) recognises the need for nurses studying Indigenous Australian health to be able to reflect on their own beliefs and culture and when doing this they need to be challenged openly about their cultural prejudices and misconceptions regardless of how uncomfortable it may be. Hall and Fields (2012) have furthered this discussion by acknowledging that the nursing profession is historically built on Western, white structures therefore influencing practise (Yoon, Hacker, Hewitt, Abrams, & Cleary, 2012). Personal experiences are therefore paramount in the exploration of Indigenous Australian cultural competence in ensuring social connections in clinical relationships (Yoon et al., 2012) as disclosed by participants' in my study. The importance of being open to discomfort is an important finding in this study and should be taken into account by curriculum designers.

The Paradox of Experiences Did not Inhibit the Journey

Participants revealed that they were apt to finding themselves in a situation, mainly clinical situations, where learning in Indigenous Australian cultural competence was challenging and uncomfortable. Aligning with both Kolb (1984) and Mezirow (1997), it is generally accepted that experiences, both negative and/or positive, are important if the learner is able to reflect and make sense of the situation. Boler (2011) advocates that experiences in the area of cultural situations can be uncomfortable but remain useful. The challenge for participants was the negative practice experiences (discovered within clinical placement situations) that participants reflected on and how these experiences aligned with their current worldviews (Biles, 2017).

In this research participants indicated that clinical placement was important. They actively sought opportunities to engage meaningfully. Exploration of support provided to nursing students attending an Indigenous Australian health placement has not been well researched. However, we can conclude that mentoring and supportive clinical environments would increase the sense of belonging for learners in their ability to connect, thus providing support in experiences they deem negative, which may lead to greater opportunities for learning in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

The Unique Personal Journey

The Personal Learning

Personal learning moved beyond the curriculum and beyond the profession, and influenced the participants and their worldviews. All participants openly discussed feelings, emotions and situations that influenced their learning journey in Indigenous Australian cultural competence: clinical placement, books, conversations and personal relationships all had an impact. Although little has been written about the influence of personal learning in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence we have seen the influence of personal self- reflection and its contribution to professional identity as a nurse. Interestingly, my research revealed that personal learning can stimulate development in Indigenous Australian cultural competence (Biles, 2017).

The curriculum moved beyond the university learning and teaching and became reliant on the personal journey. Many have theorised that professional identity encompasses but is not limited to reflective practice, professional reasoning, critical thinking, values and the recognition of the hidden curriculum (Peel, 2005). Interestingly, theories that support professional identity transformation have been linked to Kolb and Mezirow (Trede, Macklin, & Bridges, 2012) and deemed as required authentic and meaningful learning experiences that shift between personal and professional learning opportunities inclusive of situations that may provoke

discomfort (Trede, et al., 2012). Learning for participants occurred, was self-driven (relying on personal attributes) and continued for participants in their attempts to become a nurse with skills, behaviours and attitudes in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

Participants embraced the personal learning and cited a change to their world-views.

Personal Attributes Are Central to the Journey of Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence

Participants cited a number of attributes that helped their learning journey. Little is known about how to support attribute development in undergraduate programmes in the area of Indigenous Australian cultural competence learning. Previous studies on personal attributes in the wider context of nursing within Australia found insignificant relationships between personal attributes at the foundational years of a course in comparison to the point of graduation (Pitt, Powis, Levett-Jones, & Hunter, 2014). Learning in the area of attribute development in Indigenous Australian cultural competence is said to require constant reflection on self and exploration of personal biases, attributes and behaviours that can exclude minority groups from care (Ranzijn, McConnochie, Day, & Nolan, 2006). In the wider space of cultural competence attribute development it has been flagged that teaching staff are key in ensuring that positive learning spaces within both classroom and curricula are made available. This raises the importance of staff exhibiting attributes in Indigenous Australian cultural competence (Goerke & Kickett, 2013). Participants in this research felt disconnected when this was not evident. Participants cited that teaching staff did not facilitate their journey, and thus generated a greater sense of personal responsibility for each learner (Biles, 2017).

Language as the Marker that the Journey Was Incomplete

The participants in this study expressed concern about having the appropriate language skills. They openly expressed worry about the language they used, knowing how to articulate concepts such as race and culture, and how to best phrase their thoughts in the online space. Participants sometimes rationalised their reluctance to engage online as due to their inability to rectify language errors, based on their questions about the safety of the online space. This highlights the interrelationship that student learning has with the unique and personal journey of individuals. Language was deeply personal and related to the social connections the participants had in their world.

Relevance of the Research

Participants' experiences when synthesised with educational literature have generated a model of learning Indigenous Australian cultural competence in nursing. Figure 12.2 displays how the model of experiences aligns with a model of learning and will be useful for educators, curriculum designers or learners on a journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence. This model of learning is different from other models and relies on the ability of the learner to experience connection, truth seeking and a change in worldview (Biles, 2017). The model if non-linear, relies on connection, seeking the truth through the use of attributes and provokes a change in the participant's worldviews. This model is the first model that reveals how nursing students learning Indigenous Australian cultural competence. Contextual ways to enable learning have been revealed within the discussion of this chapter. Importantly, this research is bound by the context and requires further analysis in its transferability.
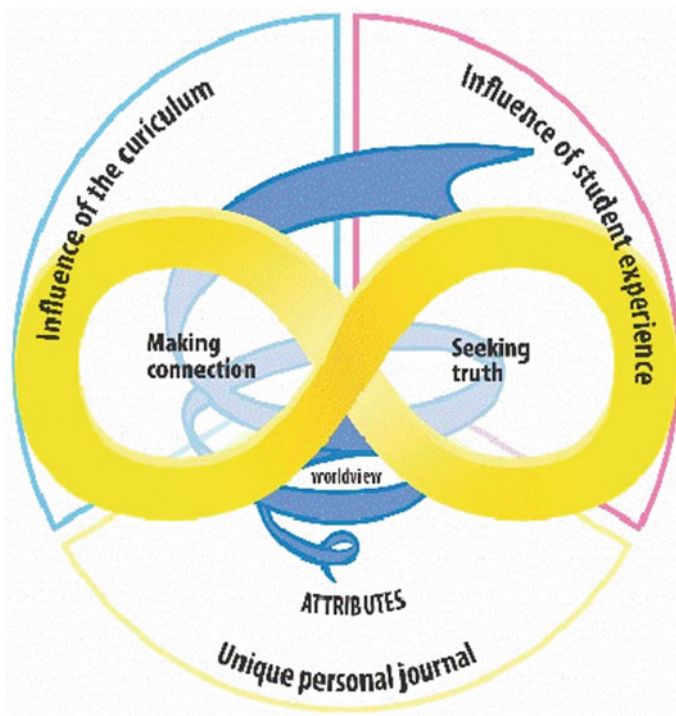

Fig. 12.2 Learning Indigenous Australian cultural competence in nursing (From Biles, 2017, p. 261.)

Conversations and Building Relationships

While this research was underway, preliminary analysis was informing a curriculum redesign within a Bachelor of Nursing program. Historically Indigenous Australian content within this undergraduate programme experienced high attrition and poor student experience evaluations with students citing the disconnection between Indigenous Australian content and general nursing subjects in a Bachelor of Nursing programme. Learning objectives were splattered in the first and final year of study with a heavy reliance on the discrete subject. Generally, students were unable to draw links on the content and see its applicability to nursing practise (Biles & Anderson, 2018). The piecemeal approach to delivery, relying on a stand-alone single subject in the Bachelor of Nursing programme, added to the complexity of experience for learners and required a new way of embedding Indigenous Australian cultural competence content. In 2014, during a curriculum review period, a review team, after considering students' experiences, decided to take a different approach and embed Indigenous Australian cultural competence across the three years of the programme.

This approach relied on a wider team of academics with skills and expertise in teaching Indigenous Australian knowledge and history. Conversations on content were carefully crafted with the curriculum review team, the wider learning and teaching support staff and importantly a number of community members. Congruent with literature in this space, conversation and community consultation was considered key to embedding Indigenous Australian content in a curriculum (Sherwood & Russell-Mundine, 2017). The team shared papers, experiences and participated in conversations both with each other and with community working parties. It was considered important that local communities were consulted in the design phase so that their rich feedback could inform the teaching and learning of nurses. These experiences shaped the way content was embedded in the curriculum and where it was placed.

Indigenous Australian cultural competence was embedded across all three years of the Bachelor of Nursing programme through the method of constructive alignments. Embracing the university's Indigenous Education Strategy and the National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities (2011) enabled content and skills to be evidenced in all three years of the programme. It was thought that this would enable students to have the best opportunity to acquire the skills necessary for the journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence. For example, critical thinking was considered important in the journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence, so was clearly embedded in first-year nursing subjects as a learning objective.

Development involved consultation with a number of key stakeholders, internal university approval/endorsement through the Indigenous Board of Studies and a formal accreditation process and approval through the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council. The course was successfully accredited in 2015. Evaluation of the effectiveness of this approach is yet to be determined.

Conclusion

The journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence in nursing is imperative. The research provides much needed insight into students learning Indigenous Australian cultural competence. We now have foundational knowledge that nurses require a connection, need to actively seek their truth and have the opportunity to change their worldview. Staff need to be on this journey and therefore universities need to facilitate ongoing scaffold professional development for staff involved in curriculum design. Students are aware when staff are not authentic and this impacts their learning. Importantly, we now know that the journey for nurses is not linear, it is ongoing even during clinical placements not associated with the Indigenous Australian subjects. Therefore, we have a responsibility to elicit cultural mentorship and support for learners across a curriculum.

As nurses, we have the capacity to consider others and provide options for care. It is important that we consider and modify (where appropriate) our thoughts, behaviours, beliefs and attitudes to accommodate the client. This research and subsequent journey of curriculum design is not to be viewed as a recipe. Rather it is one way to consider how to provide learning opportunities for students studying a Bachelor of Nursing programme. Importantly, learning is optimal if staff and students alike are on a journey of Indigenous Australian cultural competence.

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Chapter 13
Course and Subject Design Facilitating Indigenous Cultural Competence

Denise M. Wood and Greg Auhl

Abstract The processes of reviewing, (re)designing and developing courses and subjects within tertiary settings provide a unique opportunity to embed both knowledge and skills within courses, hence contributing to graduate's development of Indigenous cultural competence. This chapter will explore how this embedding can occur as a part of a disciplined, consistent approach to course design ensuring that graduate attributes and the graduate learning outcomes of a university form a part of the guiding framework. The chapter will describe a transparent process undertaken by collaborative course teams, supported by a bespoke software system that empowers course teams to actively contribute to course design and development. It will further explore how the requirement to connect subject and assessment-based materials to the overarching course requirements, through the course learning outcomes, ensures that Indigenous perspectives can be integrated at all levels.

We start this chapter by introducing ourselves

Denise: I am a non-Aboriginal woman and live and work in Wiradyuri country. I have been working as a course design lead since 2013. In this role I support course teams to apply a systematic process to course reviews. This involves analysing course data, interrogating the requirements of accreditation bodies, reflecting on current course design and future needs of the profession to create course curriculum that is cohesive and that scaffolds student learning from novice to graduate.

Greg: I am a non-Aboriginal man who was born and has lived and worked on Wiradyuri country for the whole of my life. Driven by principles of social justice, I

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have almost 40 years of experience in education at both secondary and tertiary levels. In that time, I have been involved with Indigenous communities and parents in the design and delivery of programs for Indigenous students. More recently, I have been working as a course design lead. In this role I supported course teams to apply a systematic process to course reviews.

Introduction

Higher education is currently facing a number of challenges (Daniel, 2017; Lawson, 2015; Thomson, Auhl, Uys, Wood & Woolley, 2019; Tierney, 2014; Wood, Auhl & McCarthy, 2019) with the core work of teaching and learning, and community expectations that graduating students will be 'work ready' as key issues. Being 'work ready' implies that graduates will be literate, numerate individuals who can think critically, solve problems and work collaboratively as a team; entering the workforce with skills and competencies that allow them to perform the available roles. Graduates would be able to communicate with diverse audiences, manage projects and people, utilise the benefits of digital technology and demonstrate emotional intelligence. To ensure that they meet these industry expectations, higher education (HE) institutions are required to demonstrate how they meet accreditation standards that describe the design of, and content in, their course/programme curricula. Thus, HE is under greater scrutiny than at any time in the past, placing pressure on academics and course leaders to approach the creation of course curricula in new ways.

In this chapter, we argue that curriculum in HE needs to be more than a platform to measure skills and competencies for the workplace; beyond a standardised approach, the HE learning experience needs to be transformative, disrupting student perspectives and challenging their beliefs and values. In particular, we argue that careful attention to curriculum design, including attention to Indigenous cultural perspectives, can contribute significantly to the development of Indigenous cultural competence in graduates. We contend that this can be achieved through a disciplined, consistent process that is transparent, through the engagement of stakeholders in feedback throughout the process, and through an intentional mapping of course learning outcomes to assessments and teaching and learning strategies.

Within the chapter, we will first consider the current influences in higher education (HE) to provide context for the process we discuss. This will be followed by an examination of the importance of Indigenous cultural competence in contemporary Australian society (and hence within educational institutions), and how various education standards can assist with designing for such competence. The chapter then unfolds a design process to build learning experiences from the first stages of course design throughout a programme to help graduates develop their Indigenous cultural competence.

Current Influences on Higher Education

The Australian Context

The Bradley Review (2008) into HE in Australia identified issues of quality and consistency and led to the formation of the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), an agency charged with reviewing and assuring quality in Australian HE at an institutional level. The Higher Education Standards Framework (Australian Government TEQSA, 2015) describe an overarching set of standards to support the processes of course design, implementation and governance in HE institutions. The various standards focus on quality and consistency in the design of course offerings across the sector, without demanding specific inclusion of content or skills. A second framework, the Australian Qualifications Framework (2013), focusses on programme rigour, along with broad expectations of knowledge, skills and the application that need to be evidenced across a curriculum and in graduates on completion of the course. Professional accrediting bodies further refine these expectations by focussing on the specific disciplinary knowledge, skills and applications that need to be evidenced in the curriculum content, as well as defining a range of programme requirements (entry requirements, workplace learning requirements, credit arrangements and institutional details). As well, HE institutions describe graduate learning attributes that need to be mapped across course curricula to demonstrate where graduates will learn generic skills and values, preparing students for the workplace (Matthews & Mercer-Mapstone, 2018). While graduate attributes are broadly similar from institution to institution, they describe attributes that reflect the values of the institution, indicating the skills and attitudes all graduates will demonstrate on graduation, regardless of course/programme (Matthews & Mercer-Mapstone, 2018; Oliver & Jorre de St Jorre, 2018).

These various frameworks overlap in some areas, and require interrogation to deeply understand how they can be addressed in content, learning experiences and assessment. Authentically meeting the standard requirements troubles those in positions of leadership at curriculum level, and places demands on teaching academics to ensure their teaching materials and approaches support the achievement of arbitrary requirements, as well as personal perspectives on the significant learning for students in the discipline.

Higher education is challenged by the phenomena of widening participation, and increased competition to attract and retain greater number of students from diverse backgrounds and experiences in their courses (Norton, Cherastidtham & Mackey, 2018). Twenty-first century students have different expectations for their HE learning experience than may have been the case for students in earlier times (Owen & Davis, 2011). These authors indicate that quality learning experiences for contemporary students include more flexible learning opportunities and increased support for learning, whether in an online or face-to-face environment. Contemporary students want value for money, and opportunities that may result in employment, even as they balance their ongoing employment with study. Universities compete with each

other to offer better value, including personalised learning, rewards for enrolling, access to work places and fast-paced offerings for quicker completion (Norton et al., 2018), while these authors indicate that this is what students want, at the same time employers and society more widely have indicated that they want to see learning and skills beyond the discipline. Bowden (2000) describes the evolution of sets of standards that allow graduates to act within society to promote the wider social good. These generic skills, which are argued by Bowden (2000) as capacities that should be exhibited by all graduates as a result of their higher educational experiences, are frequently designated as graduate attributes, graduate skills or graduate learning outcomes. For the majority of Australian institutions, the development of Indigenous Australian cultural competence is considered among these skills and is seen as making a distinctive contribution to the social good within Australian society.

A Need for Cultural Competence

In the last two decades, Australian society has become increasingly aware of the distinct differences in opportunity between European Australians and Indigenous Australians and the impact this has on options and aspirations (Universities Australia, 2017). Statistically, Indigenous Australians were under-represented in all facets of HE: as students, academics and leaders, but also in the content of course curricula and learning experiences. The Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020 (Universities Australia, 2017, p.10) acknowledges that universities have responsibilities to Australia's Indigenous people, operating on principles that highlight the rich possibilities for the Australian community when Indigenous Australians and communities contribute as partners in education and research. At the same time, the strategy makes explicit an initiative that, we believe, informs the approach required in curriculum/course design, namely "[to] increase the engagement of non-Indigenous people with Indigenous knowledge, culture and educational approaches" (p.11).

In this chapter we present a process of course review and design that we believe supports those designing curriculum to meet this initiative and by doing so, provide the opportunity for all students to gain a deeper insight into Australian history, and an improvement in cultural competence across all professions. We will outline how such an 'intentional, collaborative and iterative' (Auhl, Wood & McCarthy, 2019) design process support an outcome of greater cultural competence, and a deeper understanding of Australia's history, in future graduates. Further, we identify that, despite the existence of a number of frameworks that inform the design of courses in terms of quality and structure, the gap between those who succeed (and graduate) and those who do not, is widening. First Nation students struggle to be successful in HE (Smith, Pollard, Robertson & Shalley, 2018) and we argue that an intentional approach to the design of curriculum can be part of a complex solution, providing better support for successful HE experiences. A major aspect of this design process is the gathering of feedback from multiple stakeholders. Within the context of the

authors, this feedback includes engagement with institutional Indigenous pedagogical advisors and, for many programmes, feedback from Indigenous Elders. Such feedback helps to ensure that programme design meets the needs of a multitude of stakeholders in an authentic manner that build both generic graduate skills as well as skills and knowledge within the discipline. This feedback process is revisited later in the chapter.

The Impact of Standards on Curriculum Design

Numerous professional fields have traditionally exercised some control over the content and structure of HE courses in the field through the development of set standards (Wood, et al., 2019). Most simply, standards provide a benchmark for any task or activity, clarifying the required outcomes and outputs of any experience. Over the last decade, a range of views and information about standards, their construction and their purpose have been discussed in the literature (Coates 2010; Wood et al., 2019). There are benefits for all stakeholders in being able to access concise descriptions of the evidence students will produce to show their learning. Students know more clearly what they will be learning and how they will be judged, academics will be able to support their responses to student work and employers and universities will have mutual understanding of what graduates will need to achieve or have achieved (Coates, 2010; Wood et al., 2019). There is an underlying premise of accountability that reflects recent trends in the sector evident in the expectations of agencies such as TEQSA that may be described as counter to the traditional philosophy of HE (Norton et al., 2018).

Culturally, the HE sector is under greater scrutiny in terms of equity, evidence and transparency of practice, and standards are a mechanism for supporting this (Coates, 2010).

Over the last several decades, however, HE, both nationally and internationally, has seen the development of sets of standards beyond the discipline areas. Curriculum design must focus on providing opportunities for students to evidence the development of skills and knowledge, not only of the specific field of study but also of the broader world. Based on the supposition that having been immersed in a number of years of university study graduates would have achieved outcomes other than those narrowly confined to their chosen profession, such graduate attributes, or outcomes, represent skills that allow graduates to act within society contributing to the wider social good (Bowden, Hart, King, Trigwell & Watts, 2000). These are generic and apply to diverse discipline or professional domains. Table 12.1 highlights the key elements of each set of standards and indicates that there is overlap between the various sets of standards that drive curriculum development.

In the table the following sets of/types of/common standards have been identified as key to course design. The Higher Education Standards Framework was introduced in 2015, to provide a regulatory framework for the design of courses in all Australian higher education settings. The Australian Qualifications Framework

(2013) describes a national framework that underpins the design of all educational qualifications, providing a consistency of expectation for volume of work, content and outcomes for all courses of study. Graduate learning outcomes frame the attributes each university aspires for its graduates as they complete a course of study. Focussed on generic attributes that align with societal norms, the graduate learning outcomes in the table reflect the consistent thematic approaches for graduate attributes across higher education in Australia. Professional degrees are bound by accreditation standards designed to meet the needs of a profession, usually by a peak body of the profession. They provide descriptors of core discipline knowledge, skills and values that the profession believes are essential for success in the careers of the profession. In the table the listed elements are common across a range of professional accreditation standards (Table 13.1).

1. Graduate learning outcomes focus on what some describe as 'soft skills' or transferable skills, that is, skills that are generic across disciplines and while uniquely developed within each institution tend to cover common ground. This list, as an example, summarises the Charles Sturt University list of graduate learning outcomes (2015).
2. Industry accreditation standards are unique to each field, but have a number of common elements that, while specific in detail, are generic in focus, for example, descriptors for content and skills, and requirements for student entry, credit options, institutional requirements such as staffing, resources and workplace learning.

Table 13.1 Elements of curriculum design that need to be evidenced to meet standards agencies

HESF Generic to any discipline	AQF Generic to any discipline	Graduate learning outcomes[1]	Industry[2]
Learning outcomes and assessment	Knowledge	Academic literacy and numeracy	Knowledge of/for field or discipline
Course design	Skills	Professional practice	Skills relevant to field or discipline
Learning resources and educational support	Application	Ethics	Professional practice
course approval and accreditation		Research and information literacies	Communication
		Digital skills	Background to the profession/field
		Sustainability	
		Life-long learning	
		Indigenous cultural competence	
		Globalisation	

Table 13.2 Enablers of cultural competence (from Smith et al., 2018, pp. 50–61)

Specific enablers that relate to curriculum design
Growing Indigenous leadership
Leading innovative policy development, implementation and reform
Investing in cultural transformation, change and quality improvement
Addressing white privilege and power
Improving Indigenous student outcomes
Valuing Indigenous knowledges and practising Indigenous epistemologies
Incentivising cultural competence
Reframing curricula to explicitly incorporate Indigenous knowledges and practices

Smith et al. (2018) suggested specific enablers (p.50) that support improved participation and achievement in HE for Indigenous Australians. We have appropriated these enablers as a frame for curriculum design that would support an intentional consideration of Indigenous curriculum and content. Adding this list to the sets of standards driving curriculum design provides a way of measuring inclusion of explicit Indigenous content, knowledges and approaches as well as broader foci on leadership, incentives and motivation in curriculum. Table 13.2 lists specific enablers.

A dilemma for curriculum designers, however, is the plethora of standards for which evidence of achievement must be demonstrated, many with a focus on measurable skills rather than attitudes or deepening understanding (see Table 13.1). When standards are guidelines for effective curriculum design there is a risk that the curriculum design will focus on the measurement of evident skills or knowledge, rather than the impact the learning experience may have on student cultural competencies. Wood et al. (2019) argued the risk to the quality of the curriculum when stating:

> …. if accreditation standards force compliance then the tail is wagging the dog. A compliant program meets the baseline expectations of stakeholders, assuring them that graduates meet their needs, but it does not guarantee a program of quality learning experiences. …. if the curriculum designers utilise their expertise, knowledge, skills and integrity to design an intentional program that provides students with the capacity to not only consume knowledge for their future, but to produce new knowledge that brings about change in their future then the dog is wagging the tail.

Such a program aspires to change students beyond providing them with base information and skills, resulting in an assurance that they will make a difference in their world, which is an indicator of quality learning (p. 8).

It can be concluded that while external standards can provide a framework to inform course learning outcomes, the need to consider many standards creates a situation where the abstract standards are mapped through assumption, and the evidence of their achievement is blurred. Indigenous cultural competence is a vital attribute for

graduates moving into the contemporary Australian workforce. Intentional design, based on deep understanding of the expectations within a set of standards, can provide a scaffolded, transparent learning experience.

Curriculum Design

A Process for Both Course and Subject

While the previous sections of this chapter have described why building Indigenous Australian cultural competence is an imperative for graduates of Australian universities, this section describes one approach to answering 'how' this goal may be attained. It describes a process deeply embedded in a number of theoretical underpinnings developed to ensure that, while the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (2015) with respect to curriculum design are met, theory-based approaches to quality design frameworks are also foundational argues that theory is rarely used to support curriculum design in HE, but describes how doing so results in outcomes that better serve the needs of all stakeholders.

The process described here is deeply rooted in the application of self-organising systems theory, as applied to education (Bain, 2007). It draws on a number of well-recognised theories and concepts in structuring teaching processes in HE such as constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996; Biggs & Tang, 2011), iterative design (Verstegen, Barnard & Pilot, 2006), backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998) and intentional design, with a high level of both internal and external alignment, as described by Auhl et al. (2019).

Figure 13.1 is a diagrammatic representation of the design process used in curriculum development at Charles Sturt University.

The first stage—that of developing integrated standards—is vital in ensuring that the requirements of numerous stakeholders are realised. Auhl et al. (2019) describe how secondary standards, such as those arising from institutional requirements (e.g., those described in an institution's graduate attributes policy) or government requirements (e.g., AQF standards) can be integrated into a primary set of standards (e.g., those designated by a profession) using a process of matching, merging or adding to arrive at a set of integrated standards providing the framework for a given course to progress. These integrated standards inform course/programme-level learning outcomes, thus providing the framework for a given course/programme to progress. The authors describe how 'for a match, the standards to be integrated sit together and complement each other. By meeting one of the standards, it is evident that the others integrated with it will also be met. There is a close similarity in the intent of the standards' that 'for a merge, the wording of the primary standard will change to include elements of the original and elements of the secondary standard. This is done in a manner such that the original meaning is enhanced and the common thread reinforced. A thoughtful blend of the texts from each is done, so that the intent of
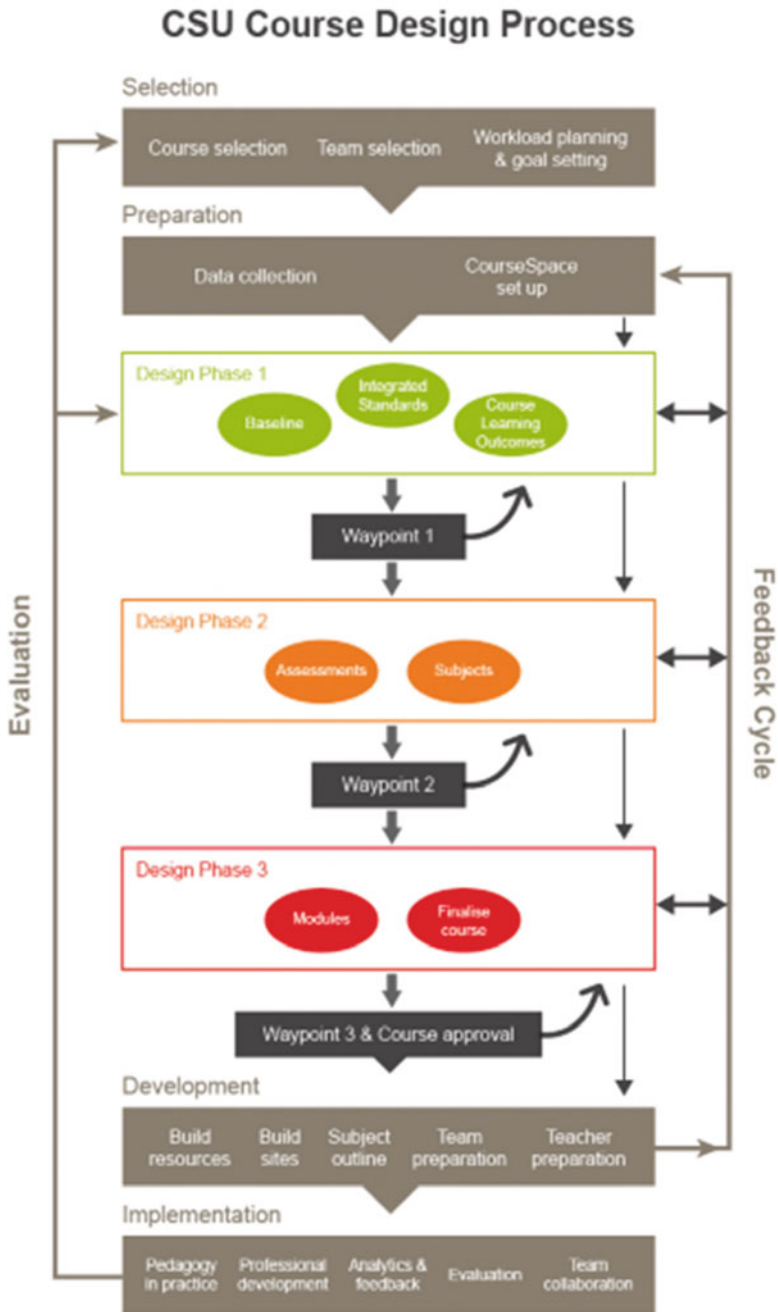
Fig. 13.1 The Charles Sturt University design process (2019)

each merged standard is maintained' and how 'on occasion, and for good reason, course teams may want to use a standard, or a criteria from a standard that may not be represented anywhere in the primary, nor effectively and easily matched or merged. In such a situation, the add step can be used so that standards and their criteria are included in the integrated standards set' (Auhl et al., 2019, p. 9). Building all the required standards into a set of integrated standards guides the development of a curriculum in a big picture perspective, helping to ensure that all requirements are represented as the curriculum evolves. It should also be noted that the institution's graduate learning outcomes specifically include Indigenous cultural competence, supported by policy requiring evidence of these in the curriculum. There is a specific governance process to oversee the development of individual units of work containing Indigenous content, and all staff are required to complete a programme in Indigenous cultural competence.

An example of this process, where a primary standard from the threshold learning outcomes for agriculture is merged with an institution graduate learning outcome for Indigenous Australian cultural competence is described below.

Primary standard: Threshold learning outcomes for agriculture:

Criterion 1.2—Demonstrate an integrative understanding of agriculture by understanding the major biophysical, economic, social and policy drivers that underpin agricultural practice and how they contribute to practice.

Merged with graduate learning outcome (GLO) for Indigenous cultural competence criteria 1.1 and 1.2

GLO Criterion 1.1 (Ind)—Understand specific cultural and historical patterns that have structured Indigenous lives in the past and the ways in which these patterns continue to be expressed in contemporary Australia.

GLO Criterion 1.2 (Ind)—Be aware of personal values, biases and beliefs about people from Indigenous cultural backgrounds.

'Merged' standard.

Understand that the Australian agricultural sector shares land stewardship with Indigenous Australians, with whom productive working relationships depend on the acknowledgement of historical events that have affected Indigenous culture and established an imbalance of power and privileges.

Continuing this procedure for the whole set of course standards then provides a frame of reference allowing the development of course/programme learning outcomes (and indications of the necessary evidence for attainment of these), to guide the whole of a course design review process.

Because it takes place early in the review, there is a collaborative opportunity for a close interrogation of the meaning of each standard, independently and as part of the framework of the course. Such close interrogation serves to deepen the understanding of the standard and to draw connections between the various sets of standards being reviewed. The team working on the review is able to explicate the intent of the standard, and to explore what would constitute evidence of achievement. Thus, they are able to consider how the curriculum can be aligned to support students to learn both simple and abstract concepts across the course.

Constructive Alignment

In backward design approaches (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998), assessments are designed to ensure that each of the course learning outcomes (hence standards) has evidence of having been achieved. Subjects/units emerge as assessments are grouped. In existing courses being reviewed, depending on the approach of the review, subject outcomes are developed to reflect the assessments required to meet the set of integrated standards developed for the programme.

Within the development of individual units of work, alignment is driven by the need to clearly connect unit learning outcomes to assessment criteria, to teaching and learning strategies and back to programme-level learning outcomes. This ensures that not only is there internal alignment, such that what is taught is what is assessed, but also that the role of an individual unit of work within the wider programme is clear. This student learning is scaffolded through multiple connected opportunities to meet and re-meet difficult concepts throughout the course.

Feedback

For this process to be successful, transparency and inclusion of multiple points of feedback is essential. Verstegen et al. (2006) describe an iterative approach to design, such that an end product has been through numerous 'cycles' of development. In the process described here, each stage is opened for rounds of feedback from stakeholders representing the discipline, as well as others representing divisional stakeholders. This feedback informs the next iteration of the design and helps to ensure that a high-quality end product is achieved. Feedback and collaboration have been identified by a number of authors as essential in education, including HE (e.g., Hattie, 2009), as it moves to catering for students who are choosing programmes with greater flexibility to fit their lives. Chao, Saj and Hamilton (2010, p. 107) propose that the main argument for adopting a collaborative development model is that designing a high-quality online course requires various sources of expertise not usually possessed by one person.

Engaging in rounds of both formal and informal feedback allows for a breadth and depth of interrogation by representatives from stakeholder groups. In the case of Indigenous cultural competence, stakeholders representing the institutional requirements in this area have an opportunity to provide transparent feedback starting with the integrated standards and following through to the individual unit/assessment levels. In this way, the requirements for graduates to meet Indigenous cultural competence requirements are designed into the programme from its beginning.

Designing for Indigenous Cultural Competence

As well as providing a consistent approach to engaging with diverse stakeholders, and to gathering feedback to inform design thinking, there are a number of check-points during the CSU process that focus on the inclusion of Indigenous content to transform student understanding and perceptions. Gulaay, the Indigenous Australian Curriculum and Resources Team engages with course teams during Phase One, providing input and feedback on the baseline decisions, and then supporting the team to consider how cultural competency will be developed across the time of the course. Subjects are categorised as Indigenous Australian Content; Discipline Specific Indigenous Australian Content; Hybrid Indigenous Australian Content; and mapped to course learning outcomes (and standards). A process of consultation, review and approval is undertaken before curriculum materials are submitted to the Indigenous Board of Studies for advice, evaluation and approval of the Indigenous content at both subject and course level. This occurs during Phase One and Two of the process. In Phase Two, the course materials are mapped to the Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework, prior to gathering further feedback and submitting for final approval.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have described a process of intentional curriculum design (Auhl, Wood & McCarthy, 2019) that we believe supports the development of student Indigenous cultural competency. A number of key indicators would indicate that such a programme was having an impact, including (for example) evidence of increased uptake of HE by Indigenous students (Dunbar & Scrimgeour, 2009) and increased engagement with mainstream services (such as health services) by Indigenous people (Betancourt, Green & Carrillo, 2003). An intentional and consistent process provides steps for teams to work through, set points in time for feedback collection and collaborative discussion and planning that supports academics to understand the elements that are required. We have appropriated the enablers suggested by Smith et al. (2018) to provide an explicit framework to guide the development of a set of integrated standards, created by interrogating the meaning of each element, and informing the design of assessments, subjects and learning experiences.

Quality curriculum meets the needs of all stakeholders, offers diverse and integrated learning experiences, transforms students from novice to graduate through sequential, scaffolded opportunities and prepares them for their future career. Quality curriculum is the result of collaborative problem-solving, a deep understanding of broad standards that drive design and inform assessments (as evidence of achievement) and the collection of focussed feedback from diverse stakeholders. We argue that a process of systematic design, as described, results in quality curricula

that provide opportunity for the integration of Indigenous perspectives and the transformation of students towards cultural competence.

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Chapter 14
A Working Guide Towards Debiasing Higher Education Through the Affordances of Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence Curriculum

Melinda J. Lewis and Bruce William Stenlake

Abstract Can cultural competence curriculum mitigate forms of known bias in teaching, learning and university curriculum? We explore forms of bias at individual and institutional levels, informed by our experiences as academic developers in the Division of Learning and Teaching at Charles Sturt University. We share that our work is supported through sensitive relationships with Wiradjuri and Ngiyeempaa Elders who are traditional knowledge holders, university policies, education strategy, and enacted through curriculum consultation and professional development with teachers. We reflect on many forms of educational and personal biases inherent in our professional practices. Personal biases arise from a range of influences and experiences across the lifespan which may be unconscious, hidden, implied or deliberate. Institutional forms of bias, for example, structural racism, may arise from deep historical, cultural and societal legacies, where their origins and implications for contemporary higher education may not be well understood. If people and their places of employment are anchored within multiple forms of bias, how can we better enable each of us to pull up our anchor, and bring awareness to the types of biases that may inform decision-making? One of the ongoing practices towards cultural competency is to become more reflexive and critically aware of our own biases, and work towards advocating for changes within disciplines and professional practices through the organization of curriculum. The question of whether unconscious biases can be recalibrated, reduced or eliminated through teaching about bias is one form of debiasing, and may also be a pathway towards decolonising the academy. A preliminary working guide towards debiasing university education through practices known to support the embedding of an Indigenous Cultural Competence Graduate Learning Outcome at Charles Sturt University is offered below. It is our hope that an increased awareness of the tangible and intangible effects of bias within individuals

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and groups, and the structural biases in which we work, will improve contemporary education policies and practices, which in-turn will improve outcomes for First Nations communities.

We start this chapter by introducing ourselves.

Melinda: I reflect on thirty years of professional and academic practices supporting health science education and higher education curriculum. With a near-completed PhD on academic identities, a story of PhD as People, I am interested in story in all forms, and value the pleasure of deep-time learning with First Nations Elders and knowledge holders.

Bruce: I am an educator with thirty years of teaching in science, management and psychology. I am passionate about learning experiences that lead to deeper levels of human connection and being. My time on country has been profoundly rewarding.

The National and Local Context for Cultural Competence

Universities across Australia place Indigenous cultural competence as a core graduate capability as a national project and priority. Specifically, developing cultural competence sits within social justice ethos, and involves the practice of developing a certain critical consciousness about being aware of one's own biases. The aim is to prepare staff and students to successfully engage and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities, through a beginning awareness of Aboriginal cultural perspectives, and to use this foundation to work together with people whose culture and biography may differ from our own. According to a senior Aboriginal academic leader at an Australian university, a critical consciousness is: '… about being aware of one's own cultural values and world view and their implications for making respectful, reflective and reasoned choices, including the capacity to imagine and collaborate across cultural boundaries' (personal communication, August, 2016).

Widening participation in the context of Indigenous Australian higher education has been discussed as a policy priority for more than four decades (Behrendt, Larkin, Griew, & Kelly, 2012), as Indigenous students are one of six priority equity groups (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008). Grote suggested that this priority supports the national employability agenda, thereby working to better meet the needs of industry and communities, and continue to foreground the role of graduate attributes as preparation for a future workforce (2008). The aim to promote IACC is a major project of Universities Australia and discussed within the Guiding Principles for Developing Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities (2011), which states that 'Indigenous knowledges and perspectives be embedded in all university curricula and that ICC be included as a graduate attribute, with the need for staff training to achieve this goal' (Recommendations 1, 2 and 4). The urgency of

this strategy was upgraded within Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020 (Universities Australia, 2017) requiring all 39 Australian public universities to embed Indigenous content and experiences within courses. In response, universities aim to develop curriculum and pedagogical frameworks to educate students to begin their journey of becoming culturally competent, including the impact of forms of bias within education.

What is a Bias, and Why Focus on Unconscious Bias?

A bias refers to a disposition, implicit or explicit, to reach a particular kind of conclusion or outcome, or to remain in one (Kenyon & Beaulac, 2014). Sometimes, it is used to refer to the adoption of a particular perspective from which some things become salient and others merge into the background. Biases are generally rooted in and riddled with stereotypes and prejudices. A stereotype is a simplistic image or distorted truth about a person or group based on a prejudgment of habits, traits, abilities or expectations (Weinstein & Mellen, 1997). Drawing on cognitive psychology, there are many forms of bias, for example, confirmation bias, over-confident bias, availability bias and anchoring bias (Robbins, Judge, Millett & Boyle, 2013). Within the context of education, there may also be belief bias, instruction bias and judgement bias, the latter which plays out particularly in relation to educational assessment.

We choose to focus on unconscious bias as it has been declared to be an obstacle to cultural competence development and is akin to having blind spots, which poses implications for educators (Bellack, 2015). Furthermore, unconscious biases affect all of our relationships, and understanding our own biases is the first step towards improving the interactions we have with all people, and is essential if we hope to build deep community connections. A seminal definition offered by the Equality Challenge Unit (2013, p.1) states that: 'Unconscious bias is a term used to describe the associations that we hold which, despite being outside our conscious awareness, can have a significant influence on our attitudes and behaviour. Regardless of how fair-minded we believe ourselves to be, most people have some degree of unconscious bias. This means that we automatically respond to others (e.g. people from different racial or ethnic groups) in positive or negative ways. These associations are difficult to override, regardless of whether we recognise them to be wrong, because they are deeply ingrained into our thinking and emotions.'

Guide to Debiasing Teaching and Learning Through the Affordances of an Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence Curriculum

The aim of developing a working guide to teaching–learning strategies is to assist our students develop into sensitive, and culturally competent practitioners who are self-aware, who strive to avoid unintended social hurts or discriminatory actions, and who learn to consciously align their behaviours with their good intentions to mitigate the negative effects of unconscious bias (Bellack, 2015). According to Kenyon and Beaulac (2014), the literature on cognitive and social psychology approaches to understanding debiasing indicates that teaching people about biases does not reliably debias them. Therefore, the following guide describes observed biases in higher education contexts, and recommends a strategy used by the authors or colleagues.

Exploring Biases in a Bi-Cultural Divide

Predominant knowledge practices drawn from a Western notion of knowledge, which privileges the individual (Connell, 2007), alongside a deficit discourse (Lowitja Institute, 2018), collectively feeds bias and stereotypes that can result in the use of disempowering language and practices. Prime examples of deficit discourse are when Indigenous Australian health and education needs are described using terms like 'gaps', 'the Aboriginal problem', 'mainstreaming' and 'the intervention'. These labels and language further work to pathologise individuals, and lead to group stereotyping, known to be at odds with a socially just and strengths-based curriculum.

A recommended primary strategy is to expand knowledge work in higher education curriculum (see Ashwin, 2014). Embedding Indigenous knowledges as per the Indigenous Education Strategy (IES) offers learners the awareness that there are many forms of knowledge, for example through art, story, dance, song, dreaming etc. This can be achieved by inviting conversations and building relationships with Elders who support cultural competence curriculum. Offering their collectivist worldviews and cultural orientations allows learners to recognise known forms of power and privilege through curriculum. Examples at Charles Sturt University include:

- 'Working with Indigenous Australian Staff' guide
- Wiradjuri Elders co-facilitation on Indigenous Cultural Competence Program (ICCP) professional development workshops with the uImagine group, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences teachers (2017–2018)
- Elder facilitation and mentoring during on-country cultural immersion experiences, with the DVC (Student Services) team, Three Rivers University Health Department (TRUHD) group of interdisciplinary health professionals (2019)
- Elder invitation to membership of faculty-based Indigenous Curriculum working groups (e.g., Faculty of Science, 2019)

- Elder invitation to perform Welcome (Smoking and tree planting) ceremony within Orientation annually, and other events, ad-hoc (e.g., Engineering, 2016)
- Elder engagement with collaborative scholarship projects and expert panels, led by School of Community Health & Gulaay (2018-).

In examples such as these, the deficit discourse can be flipped by asking: Why was Australian school curriculum devoid of a realistic historical education in Australia in the 1970s and onwards? Why were students led to believe racial untruths about most Aboriginal people?

> Melinda's Journey: I have had the pleasure of co-facilitating workshops and on-country cultural immersions with the Elders. The manner in which all strengths are at the table, or on the land, means no question or comment from any participant can go unnoticed, or unanswered. I myself have experienced anger, frustration and deep shame of being a white person educated within a system that perpetuated historical lies, biases and untruths. When hearing the authentic stories and versions of history from the Elders, whilst uncomfortable and challenging, deep learning and change can only proceed when we sit together and support each other. The notion of sitting down places was gifted to me through mentoring offered by Uncle Brian (Personal communication, December 2019). Within this worldview, sitting down places are a welcoming place for everyone to sit down, reflect on life, make decisions, act, breathe and share. Sitting down places offer deeply relational ways to enable equitable practices based on cultural appreciation and personal sensitivity (Universities Australia, 2019).

Organisational Culture and Education Policy

Observing organisational cultures help us to understand the places in which we work, and relationships with leadership and forms of power as formal and political processes. According to Fulop, Linstead, Lilley and Clarke (2009), the culture of an organisation is a unique configuring of norms, values, beliefs, and ways of behaving to get things done. There are the basic assumptions of the organisation, the artefacts and creations, and the way in which the organisation handles dilemmas and challenges. However, there is no one single culture that defines an organisation. Cultures are heterogeneous, built on many sub-cultures that may diverge deliberately from each other, and the increasingly corporatised core mission of a university.

Education policy can be used to make adjustments to organisational culture, and can thereby be used to promote or demote specific groups and sub-cultures within the organisation. As the sub-culture which better understands Indigenous communities and ideologies is better supported, they gain influence to affect a positive cultural change to the broader organisational culture, including the leaders and policy influencers. This can become an iterative process. For example, at Charles Sturt University the Gulaay team aims to offer many bridges within the university, across groups and teams, and between the university and communities. Recent feedback into a whole of university policy review process realised an increase in support for strengthening the Indigenous Australian Content in Courses Policy (IACCP), and Assessment Policy to support student experience of developing their cultural competence. Systematic

policy-driven processes ensure formal course reviews adhere to policy, and that best practices within disciplines are achieved.

A recommended strategy is to focus and strengthen the sub-culture which better understands Indigenous communities and ideologies within our organisation. Provide policy and moral support for members and encourage them to propagate their culture within the organisation. This might be exploring opportunities to run workshops and discussions with senior leaders, course designers, educators, students to discuss the importance and meaning of protocols, for example, when to offer an Acknowledgement of Country, are we in deficit discourse, where are our biases being revealed? Ultimately, we can work on making further changes to policy, and thereby further change culture.

Outcomes-Based Education for Attaining Graduate Attributes

Outcomes-based educational approaches (Harden, Crosby & Davis, 1999) or graduate attributes evolved over two decades in response to the graduate employability agenda in Australia (Barrie, 2007; Oliver, 2013; Oliver & Jorre de St Jorre, 2018). Depending on the main driver for graduate attribute statements, there may be an industry bias. An individualistic bias is inherent within Western-oriented learning theories and pedagogies, which privileges individual attainment of learning and achievement of said outcomes. Where learning is constructed socially, for example through social construction and discourse, there may be a bias against the sense of community learning, peer learning, or co-construction.

An analysis of graduate attribute statements from 39 Australian universities over the past 15 years revealed that social inclusion was frequently articulated (Bosanquet et al., 2012). Examples include:

- respect for and appreciation of diversity;
- possessing a global or international perspective;
- commitment to equity and social justice;
- having a sense of social responsibility, and participating in the community.

At Charles Sturt University, teachers are encouraged to focus on a graduate learning outcome within their subjects or modules. Banks of generic learning outcome statements for the intended curriculum can be contextualised for disciplines. For example: 'Examine own biases and prejudices that may consciously or unconsciously exist toward cultural differences and actively work towards transforming them.'

A recommended strategy is to use this key opportunity to drive development of cultural competence at the curriculum level. There is a risk that many disciplines will engage with learning outcomes in a tokenistic way to meet policy requirements, a form of superficial compliance that holds many risks. The real opportunity here is to influence cultural shifts at all levels, for example, represent our sub-cultures within the organisation, have authentic discussions with course designers from all

disciplines, model ways to bridge the bi-cultural divide, open communication to bring Elders into discussions and offer a form of academic status equivalent to their cultural standing.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

It is well known that curriculum is political, contested, and the site of and for transformation (Shay & Peseta, 2016). Curriculum has the potential to perpetuate and reinforce unconscious biases through forms of knowledge and cognitive labour within a university culture or cultural identity (Equality Challenge Unit, 2013). Forms of academic, cognitive and programme bias reside alongside biases within conceptual curriculum frameworks and teaching practices originating from a Eurocentric and Westernised notion of knowledge. Frustrations may be experienced by people who are unable to recognise that the development of cultural competence is not linear, and often fraught with complexities, as it challenges their assumptions of culture and self (Buehler, Gere, Dallavis & Haviland, 2009). Furthermore, Indigenous knowledges are representative of First Nation's people, which are diverse, offering a common misconception that there is one form of Indigenous knowledge within Australia. Also, the expression and sharing of Indigenous knowledges are grounded in country, language, story, song, dance and art, all with their unique features.

The aim of embedding the graduate outcomes in curriculum is not just to meet the employability skills agenda for industry, but to create a more harmonious society. Within teaching education, the goal of establishing an anti-bias curriculum is where many viewpoints are respected and multiple forms of knowledge are generated. An anti-bias pedagogy aligns with a social justice ethos, inclusive pedagogical approaches, and the creation of the safest spaces possible for learning and inquiry to flourish. Indigenous pedagogies supporting Indigenous curriculum appreciates all forms of knowing, sharing, learning and growing. According to Yunkaporta (2019), Indigenous thinking is different as it knows the world is complex, and ways to communicating this knowledge is done through pictures, carvings and stories.

A recommended strategy is to recognise that the best teaching approach for each situation might be different. Allowing a range of pedagogies to exist within each course, and to allow topics related to Indigenous culture to use more appropriate pedagogies, such as transformative learning approaches (described below). While we acknowledge that each pedagogy is loaded with bias to some degree, a mixture of pedagogies can serve to mitigate the effect of bias.

Transformative learning approaches by Jack Mezirow (2000) is an adult learning theory that originated in the late 1970s and is particularly suited to support cultural competence development. Central to the theory is the argument that adults experience a catalyst that causes them to question their worldview, the disorienting dilemma, which leads to a fundamental change in the way that they view the world. Additionally, the learner engages in critical self-reflection which entails examining the influences around oneself that contribute to a worldview change, or examining those

influences as they apply to oneself and one's worldview, respectively (Kitchenham, 2012). This is best illustrated with a sample learning activity below, offering reflective prompts into our inherent and habitual attitudes (Bullen & Roberts, 2018).

Academic Disciplines

Students are encultured to learn within the culture and conventions of the field of knowledge or professional practice domain where the learning process is inherently contextualised. The historical origin of the discipline and practices may be considered different from, or even at odds with, social justice and cultural competence national agendas. At times there are forms of bias towards disciplinary autonomy, evidenced as push-back, resistance or neglect to work towards a graduate attributes policy in lieu of disciplinary knowledge. Disciplinary biases may surface within interdisciplinary curriculum strategies, arising as tensions between individuals from differing home disciplines. There may be disparity of interest and effort between disciplines working towards the strategic goals and policy mandates as they grapple with their contextualisation of cultural competence and navigate their personal learning journeys.

The pedagogical framework adopted by Charles Sturt University works through a critically reflexive process that includes looking at the positioning of a disciplinary field and professional practice, and reflecting on the legacy of past practices that may have perpetuated forms of injustice. The development work from the Gulaay team invites each discipline to reflect on the historical practices and policies, for example, forms of power and privilege in the dominant beliefs that informed the field of Psychology. The approach may also include viewing forms of research bias that led to the adoption of the development of policy and practice standards. Academics in the fields of Policing, Law & Justice, Social Work and Psychology at Charles Sturt University (to name a few) work to ensure their critical eye over curriculum and teaching avoids a blame and shame approach, preferring to model equity and advocacy for continuing changes.

A recommended strategy is to invite academics to reflect on their discipline's response to steps towards reconciliation. Is the discipline taking appropriate steps? Where are the gaps when compared to other disciplines? How much does my discipline simply rely on the goodwill of its members? Can we look more deeply into the biases behind the statement 'That won't work for my discipline'?

Teacher Philosophies

According to Mackaway, Winchester-Seeto, Coulson, and Harvey (2011), individual academics, perhaps driven by a particular educational theory and philosophy, can

influence graduate attributes and their impact on curriculum and student experience. Implicit and explicit biases reside within individuals, including teachers, and can surface within the teacher inquiry process (Alhadad, Thompson, Knight, Lewis & Lodge, 2018). For example, learning through instruction holds implicit levels of power whilst learning through participation is designed to allow all students to undertake a range of experience-based learning activities (Bosanquet, Winchester-Seeto & Rowe, 2012).

Teachers are biased towards their preferred pedagogies. For example, the authors are biased by their preference to facilitate learning by creating opportunities for reflection and illuminating responses for deeper engagement, rather than direct instruction. We prefer extended abstract and complex phenomena, such as cultural competence, rather than concrete formulae and step-by-step procedures. We scrutinize the content of case studies and the practice of role plays as modes for learning about cultural competence, as both approaches open the possibility to explore biases.

Adapting our teaching philosophies and approaches towards an inclusive learning environment and safe learning spaces support learner feelings of discomfort and unconscious bias. Academic teachers often do not feel adequately skilled to facilitate learning in this way and require deep learning on country and immersive learning experiences with Elders and knowledge holders to build confidence and connections.

A recommended strategy for developing culturally sensitive teaching philosophies is broadening the repertoire of teaching practices available to the teachers, providing professional development which models a range of different teaching pedagogies. As teachers experience a range of pedagogies, including socially constructed and Indigenous pedagogies, they are able to reflect on where and how they might work in their discipline.

Student Assessment of Learning

Current curriculum assessment approaches privilege academic success based on Western ideas of learning and achievement. An alternative framing for student success within IACC curriculum lies in developing and building relational and reflective capabilities, for example, seeing connections and patterns, being critically reflexive, noting misconceptions, sitting amidst contested and complex situations, and building partnerships with communities. Furthermore, according to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy Evaluation Framework (2018) good evaluation is systematic, defensible, credible and unbiased. It is respectful of diverse voices and worldviews, with appropriate processes for collaborating with Indigenous Australians.

Within the advanced cultural competence online module offered to probationary teachers within a Graduate Certificate at Charles Sturt University, attempts to fit a grading rubric for the task of producing a lesson plan and written reflective assessment risked forms of judgement bias by markers. A preferred approach was to offer a reflective (conceptual) framework as a writing structure, outline a set of feedback criteria (e.g., depth, application), and an exemplar of an appropriate piece of work. In

this way, adult learners chose their specific focus in relation to their current teaching context making it authentic and relevant to the real-world. Facilitators aim to suspend judgement about marks or grades, preferring to focus on the task and the contexts impacting teaching and student experience by offering feedback on the suitability of the lesson plan in relation to cultural protocols, university policy and strategy for embedding Indigenous content in their curriculum.

A recommended strategy is to acknowledge that student assessment does not have to be based on specific knowledge or skills outcomes. An alternative is encouraging teachers to explore modes of assessment that include evidence of reflexive practice and progress towards ideals or self-actualisation. We cannot insist that each student arrives at a particular point in their journey, only that they engage with their journey. The growth of wisdom cannot be measured in the same way as the growth of knowledge. Where assessment aims to be inclusive and integrated to build self-efficacy, and in response to complex learning outcomes and content, the following principles may apply:

- Focus on the process not the outcome;
- Regard feedback as a continual process over an extended period of time offering the opportunity to learn, practice, reflect;
- Contextualise assessment tasks in daily life;
- Utilise reflection as a way to determine learning needs, next steps;
- Offer multi-method, multi-perspective approaches where students can think and act inter-culturally.

Ongoing Issues and Conclusions

Higher education remains predominantly behavioural in teaching, assessment, and in defining student learning outcomes. The drift towards professional entry as the driving force for many courses has reinforced the behavioural pedagogy, and brings about a bias towards knowledge and task capability, rather than nuanced transformation. Questioning the framework of knowledge, skills and application as the educational norm may offer space for reflexive practice, presence and identity to form part of a richer university experience.

Our goal of recognising and reducing bias isn't to make everyone feel and act the same, or feel ridiculed for their beliefs and actions. Increasing our diversity, inclusiveness, and cultural competency requires us to undertake a long journey of continuously challenging our perceptions and slowing down our impulse to judge instantaneously and reactively. This means we must continually confront unconscious biases that are problematic at the level of the organisation, curriculum, communities, and our learners.

As co-authors, Bruce and Melinda opened the chapter with a question as to whether Indigenous Australian cultural competence curriculum can work to debias teaching and learning in higher education? We believe with leadership, connections and consultation, together we can work towards shifting our own biases, and those

inherent within universities. Ultimately, the result will be more conscious, inclusive and humane organisations with greater opportunity for all.

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Chapter 15
The Place of Individual Spirituality in the Pedagogy of Discomfort and Resistance

Susan Mlcek

Abstract   The overpowering whiteness of everything is a process of erasure that has its historical genesis and contemporary perpetration in colonisation practices; white-washing history and current events in order to rub out the subtleties of oppression on so many levels. For me as Māori, reactions to this process are juxtaposed between feelings of discomfort and resistance, especially to the all-encompassing colonising term of 'Indigenous.' Audre Lord (1984) wrote, "I cannot afford the luxury of fighting one form of oppression only. I cannot afford to believe that freedom from intolerance is the right of only one particular group. And I cannot afford to choose between the fronts upon which I must battle these forces of discrimination, wherever they appear to destroy me. And when they appear to destroy me, it will not be long before they appear to destroy you" (n.p.). An overwhelming sense of despair is evident in the above refrain, but there is also a pedagogy of hope that comes from a galvanizing depth of social positioning and action. Is the source a mark of individual spirituality, perhaps? Through a pedagogy of discomfort and a dichotomous Māori-Indigenous resistance lens, the presence and resilience of spirituality is found across different layers of cultural tacit and explicit behaviours. This chapter highlights a contextual space for preparing social work students with just those layers of cultural behaviours; to start developing practice awareness that incorporates inner peace and well-being. These tenets are central to the core of what the profession needs in order to survive, but this context involves both personal and political insights.

As a Māori woman, I have been comfortable for a long time, with being identified as Indigenous, but mine is an ongoing learning journey about how this term has been used as a de-identifying label, and so, where I can, I resist that terminology for myself.

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Introduction

At Charles Sturt University in New South Wales, Australia, the learning and teaching approach is embodied in *Yindyamarra Winhanganha.* It is a Wiradyuri phrase gifted to the University by the Aboriginal Elders, and refers quite specifically to an ethos of having *the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in.* Social work students coming into this learning space have the opportunity to critique the importance of the deeper meaning behind the words. The enactment of those words actually offers a first point of 'resistance' because the tenets of Yindyamarra are juxtaposed precariously with other university values of being: agile; inspiring; impactful; inclusive, and insightful. These are homogeneous values that are manifested through the way that individuals strive to make something of themselves in a primarily competitive team environment. How can the people—engagement learning approach of using Yindyamarra Winhanganha be effective within such a framework?

The answer to that question lies in how students attribute their understanding to the manifestation of Yindyamarra, which is about *Respect, To Do Slowly, Be Gentle, To Be Polite,* and *To Honour* (Dr Stan Grant Snr. OAM; Leanna Carr-Smith, personal communication, August 2018). The discomfort for social work students comes from knowing that they have to be cognizant; to have an 'Albatross awareness' (Mlcek, 2018), and navigate effectively across different levels of cultural values and knowledges. The Albatross seeks far and wide; its strength is one of beauty and intrigue; it soars across vast oceans; it flies when we walk and swim; its cruising and resting is purposeful and focused, and it is a seeker of life and regeneration. The Albatross presence is entrenched in my own *Pūrākau* (storytelling; auto-ethnography); my Māori heritage, and my reference to pivotal creation stories, and on some levels they are the same, but on many, they are different.

For example, when engaging with communities, both Māori and Aboriginal Australians have a similar sentiment that is captured in the idea that, "We have a different epistemological tradition which frames the way we see the world, the way we organise ourselves in it, the questions we ask and the solutions we seek. It is larger than individuals in it and the specific 'moment' in which we are currently living" (Smith, 2012, p. 23). These ideas are not dissimilar to those from Nakata (2002, p. 283), who writes about the collectivity of rights and interests of Indigenous knowledges being held by Indigenous peoples, and how the dissemination of these knowledges is bound by rules of historical oral traditions, "regarding secrecy and sacredness". There are countless stories to demonstrate the 'largeness', the 'secrecy', and the 'sacredness' of situations that are bound together by so many different cultural threads that relate to spirituality, knowledge, life and death, land, and water—the world in which we live—and especially for Māori, *Te Āo Māori*—'the Māori World'. One *whakatauki* (proverb) emphasises and epitomizes the execution of goals for social work students—to set themselves forward to being in a better place, through being respectful, to go slowly, to be gentle and polite, and importantly, to honour:

Titiro whakamuri hei arahi mō āpōpō. We walk backwards into the future, our eyes fixed on the past. We look to the past so we can move forward understanding

where we have come from in order to understand who we are today (Gordon-Burns & Campbell, 2014, p. 4).

Spirituality and Moral Courage

In a similar fashion to the ideas noted above, Blackstock (2007, 2011) writes about having moral courage; about 'breathing forward', and about the "breath of life" (Dr John Healy, personal communication, August, 2019), whereby knowledge is passed from one generation to another. Following these tenets in life, work, and study, helps us to start developing the 'wisdom of living well, in a world worth living in', but we do not reach that state through undertaking and completing a degree qualification; we can only begin the process.

Blackstock (2007, 2011) reminds me of the problematic state of being Māori while trying to juxtapose my worldview with that of non-Māori, whereby, like many Aboriginal people, drawing "a correlation between being elderly and wisdom, setting aside the Elderly in favour of the less wise young and middle aged would be unthinkable".

Pedagogy of Discomfort

A 'pedagogy of discomfort' (Boler & Zembylas, 2003) includes social workers blending emotional intelligence with mindfulness in order to try to engage meaningfully and respectfully with individuals and diverse communities. There is little escape from 'doing nothing', otherwise we become part of the oppression we seek to expunge through anti-oppressive practices. We utilise our discomfort in situations of difference, to reflectively re- envision our ability to construct new emotional understandings of the ways we can live with others, through *praxis* (Mlcek, 2018); through intentional practice.

However, going backwards and forwards to the advent of individual moral courage, and maximising opportunities, re-envisioning can happen in quite unexpected and meaningful ways that go to the heart of making our own spirituality visible. To preface the following case example, I highlight the thoughts from Blackstock (as cited in Angela Sterritt, February 13, 2017), who advises that the most important thing is to '*identify your values and develop the moral courage to defend them'*. In my experience as a social work educator, those burgeoning social workers who venture out into the profession, or who are already-there, often demonstrate an ambivalence about what their values are, and that uncertainty can have a negative impact on ways to move forward and engage respectfully with individuals and communities.

Case study: Each year at the Social Work Residential Schools, I am invited as a senior lecturer, and associate professor of social work and human services, to

present on one aspect of the social work curriculum, which happens to be one of my research areas—critical whiteness and privilege: the impact on social work practice. My presentation is usually delivered to approximately 120 students, from both undergraduate and post-graduate social work courses, and I try to preface something different each time I present. In 2017, I presented on developing cultural competence, and started with the question: How do we channel new understandings about the negative impact of whiteness behaviours in order to progress developing cross-cultural competencies for social workers? As an outcome of that session with students, I wanted to identify my work on an 'adaptive social work model', suggesting that the answer lies in new trends in adaptive social work practice that problematise the idea that cultural competence is a framework that incorporates a 'one-size- fits-all' set of strategies that can be used in any context with different cultures, including work with Indigenous Australians.

In 2018, I wanted to explore with the students, their understanding of the nexus between: race, culture, and ethnicity, as well as the presence of privilege. Although the challenge would seem to present some complex dynamics (for example; Is there such a thing as race? What is culture? Who has ethnicity?), I took a deliberate auto-ethnographical stance, which for Māori, the closest alignment is to the methodological enactment of Pūrākau (telling of: legend, myth, and story). This theory is used in Kaupapa Māori research because of its ability to layer stories one upon the other (Pihama, 2010), and so in a variety of ways, becomes a fundamental transformative method for distributing knowledge, values, protocols and Māori worldviews. My first task was to create a culturally-safe place for me and students to discuss a potentially 'divisive' topic, and the best way to do this is to tell a story. That first story was to introduce myself; who I am and where I come from; my connection to land and water, and the pictorial development of my values and sense of privilege as being part of a Māori iwi (tribe), whanau (community and family), maunga (mountain), waka (canoe), moana (sea- surrounding area), and marae (tribal meeting place, and my particular one, Hungahungatoroa, being the 'resting place of the Albatross'). I showed them photos of my grand-mother with her chin moko (tattoo) that was bestowed on her by her Elders, the Kaumatua of our tribe; I showed them photos of my White Father and Māori Mother, but I did not identify any of them at first. I would like to think that my question to them—'who do you think these people are?—planted the seeds of critical thought around biases towards race, culture and ethnicity. I wanted the students to hear and see how my worldview can be thought of as an 'Indigenous worldview'—though since then I have become uncomfortable with the use and privileging of the colonizing term, 'Indigenous', and so this will become another story.

As my stories unfolded—about race, culture, ethnicity, and privilege—as expected, several students became more and more uncomfortable, and 'discomfortable'. Emotions appeared to become raw, with some responses reactionary, combative, and accusatory, but I held the Socratic, dialogic line from Western learning and teaching methodologies, to show empathy by facilitating students to explore their discomfort. I like to think that we all went some way to practising Yindyamarra, through respectful listening, and acknowledgement of different understandings and

opinions, and also by honouring the different values and worldviews that students brought to the discussion. Of course the discussion revealed complex levels of understanding and discomfort. One of the revelations for me, which has contributed to a re-envisioning of my own learning, is the way that several students objected strongly and vocally, to the potential of being identified as coming from a country on the African Continent. *We are not from Africa*, *we are from Nigeria*, or, *we are from Zimbabwe.*

Discussion

Immediately after my talk, and even much later when students had time to reflect on their own identity and values going into field education placements, I received mostly-positive feedback from students and group facilitators. Interestingly, there seemed to be a joined-up reaction whereby they both loved and hated the session. And that is okay; it was clear to me that the discussion had taken not just them, but all of us, out of our comfort zones; its outcomes cannot be erased too easily. For me, from now on, and certainly for next time, there are two important considerations.

First, I will not forget to include the very real place of 'nationhood' within intersecting and conflicting discursive frames of race, culture, ethnicity, and privilege. That is, there are Indigenous philosophical traditions that are as long-standing as Western philosophical traditions, but the very clear articulation from students about their geographical origins, is actually not just about that. Rather, it is "founded within knowledge that derives from learning, experiences, understandings, worldviews, values and beliefs that are ancient. These forms have been handed down through generations, and although disrupted and disregarded through colonial impositions they have survived to continue to inform how we are in the world" (Pihama, 2010, p. 12). Cornell (2015, p. 10) problematises collective identification into being part of a nation, and especially where the language of nationhood is not used amongst groups to define themselves. But there are some common themes that arise from such discussions, and provide the precursor for resistance: "We are not only a people; we are also a political community, and we intend to organise as such and make decisions for ourselves". Political responsibilities cannot be divorced from personal or collective realities, and vice versa.

Second, in being mindful of the above, adopting the decolonising methodology of reclaiming and sharing stories is not a one-size-fits-all endeavour. Auto-ethnography is a central part of an adaptive social work practice (Mlcek, 2018); knowing who we are, where we come from, and the values we hold. However, this form of identity development is but one aspect of *Pūrākau*—the richness of which includes Māori ways of storying through spiritual connections to myths and legends, as well as to *whakatauki* [proverbs]. This connectivity is fundamental to biography; who we are in relation to others. In other words, to explore and re-think Indigenous biography requires astute moments of sometimes- spiritual discomfort; *Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua*: 'I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past'.

Māori travel 'backwards into the future', because the past is central to, and shapes the present and the future. I need to be considerate of what aspects of that process make it distinct for me, what issues and concerns need to be taken into account, and how I convey the voices and perspectives of Māori and other Indigenous peoples in different ways; how might I approach biography more creatively in the future, but also how do I do that correctly and respectfully—often through my own 'discomfort' at doing things slowly?

The past is central to and shapes both present and future identity. From this perspective, the individual carries their past into the future. The strength of carrying one's past into the future is that ancestors are ever present, existing both within the spiritual realm and in the physical, alongside the living as well as within the living (Rameka, 2016, p. 387).

A further lesson from the experience at the Residential School, is that we cannot claim the stories of others through collectivizing them; we cannot re-tell their stories, and we cannot even perceive them from a *Pūrākau* lens. Where *Pūrākau* is about layering stories one over the other, it is also a fundamental methodology for distributing knowledge, values, protocols and worldviews (Ihimaera & Hereaka, 2019, 2014, Slide 6). Claimants of their own stories are the only validators and legitimisers of that knowledge.

In social work and human services education we discuss the scholarship of understanding how ontology, epistemology, and axiology informs our own personal theoretical frameworks. But, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2000) acknowledges, Indigenous Peoples have their own epistemological traditions that help frame their worlds and ways of doing things, through transformative praxis (Smith, 2005). As an example, those frames for Māori are built around the ethics and philosophy within Tikanga Māori, which is one of the central components of Kaupapa Māori Theory. If Western terminology is used, for Indigenous Peoples, how we 'do things' is best-understood via an axiological interdependence (Ciofala, 2019, p. 13), that is continually transformational.

Kaupapa Māori is a combination of philosophical beliefs entwined within social practices, and this approach to life is not unique to this particular Indigenous group. As observed in the case study, what can be added to the socially positioned ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspective, is the importance of people and their spiritual connections to place as well as to every animate and inanimate object within their whole environment. To downplay this connectedness is to miss the complexities inherent in establishing and maintaining belongingness, cultural identity, and a fundamental sense of worthiness; of relevance and comfort.

Pedagogy of Hope

Social work practice can be intentionally focused work that generates opportunities to find out things; to explore possibilities and to capitalise on situations that may at first appear to be limiting. Knowing from discomfort (Wong, 2018), the social

worker must overcome such 'limit-situations' (Freire, 1972). For Viero Pinto (1960, as cited in Freire, 1972), limit- situations are not 'the impassable boundaries where possibilities end, but the real boundaries where all possibilities begin (they are not) the frontier which separates being from nothingness, but the frontier which separates being from being more' (p. 71). When deep listening (*dadirri*) is called for, engaging in sitting quietly with someone is not about doing nothing, but a way of helping to live in two worlds (Ungunmerr-Baumann, 2002). Listening deeply to what is being said is not about mindless contemplation, but a deliberate act of respectful engagement in relationship-building in order to generate trust and pragmatic endeavours. To recognise that people have strengths which they can bring to achieving solutions in their situation is also an act of unselfish practice. Ultimately, having cultural courage (Zubrzycki and Bennett 2006), as well as moral courage (Blackstock, 2011), is part of the process whereby social workers acknowledge that their being this way with people is 'the being with, not the doing to' (Bennett et al., 2011, p. 34).

Adaptive Social Work to Counter the Discomfort of Whiteness

In being adaptive in our social work practice, we problematise the idea that cultural competence is a framework that incorporates a 'one-size-fits-all' set of strategies that can be used in any context with different cultures, including work with Indigenous Australians. In addressing some of the ideas and questions raised by the social work students from the case study, it is helpful to revisit how both the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and the Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) have suggested adopting a new way of working that asks practitioners to be more *culturally-responsive.* Cultural responsiveness in action, is a framework developed by the IAHA (2015) to respond to a call for a capability framework that provides guidance around what we need to know, be and do, in order to be culturally responsive. The central tenets and principles of this framework can be used to inform any human services situation, for example: seeing *culture* as a primary consideration for all engagements with individuals and communities; taking *holistic* and *inclusive* views of the best outcomes for diverse peoples; adopting a *rights-based culturally responsive approach*; recognising *leadership, strength, resilience* and *self-determination*; understanding the *unique professional and cultural perspectives of Indigenous peoples*; acknowledging the *diversity of individuals, families and communities*; and undertaking rigorous *education, evidence-based practice* and *research.* Will this be enough, going forward into the future?

A critical view of the above capabilities identifies a functional aspect to being adaptable, but there is another side to consider. Mlcek (2013, p. 1) notes that, "outdated ideas that have as their source prejudice, racism, whiteness behaviours, fear and mistrust, and a lack of knowledge and understanding about the complex layers in understanding situations of access and equity, discrimination and the abrogation

of human rights for marginalised communities", require a call to action that can be discomforting. Dealing with oppression can be a fearful and seemingly powerless experience; recognising privilege is difficult when one is born into it, or has acquired it through normalised, hegemonic means. As social workers, we continue to scrutinise our own biases and entrenched worldviews that are often developed out of an ethnocentric monoculturalism, as well as whiteness behaviours dominated by unearned privilege and power. We have to become both personally and politically astute in how we listen to the many 'voices' that impact our lives on a daily basis (Langton, November 2, 2019). Being impervious to self-critique can produce willfully negligent consequences, whereas the recognition of the entrenched nature of those behaviours comes from adopting cultural tacit behaviours and actions, for example, deep spiritual engagement with Pūrākau methods—the outcomes for which require moral courage and resistance.

Conclusion

An innovative model of social work practice that can be used to inform a culturally-responsive one is necessarily made up of critical pedagogy; a way of working that transforms social relations and raises awareness about issues in society at large. Freire (2000, 2004) likens this stance to a 'pedagogy of indignation', when it is not enough to "wash one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless", because to do so "means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral". Another stance relates to a 'pedagogy of discomfort' (Boler & Zembylas, 2003), whereby social workers blend emotional intelligence with mindfulness to engage meaningfully and respectfully with individuals and diverse communities. We utilise our discomfort in situations of difference, to reflectively re-envision our ability to construct new emotional understandings of the ways we can live with others, through *praxis.*

The supposed neutrality of silence is problematic, and at least the above pedagogies, as well as others, become the cornerstone of anti-oppressive practice, and are used to build an adaptive framework for social work. The element of praxis becomes critical here, because intentional knowing will inform the adaptation that needs to occur, depending on the cultural context. That is, the practical consequences of being adaptable from a place of discomfort and indignation may not be appropriate, or even ethical, for all situations because cultural contexts can be diverse, complex and layered. The idea of 'truth-telling', for example, has to be part of a process of agreement-making—going into a scenario like the one highlighted here in the Case Study, requires respectful attention not only to the spirit of self, but to that of others; whose story are we asking or telling, and for what, and whose purpose?

There is no doubt that an adaptive social work practice framework can be used to counter discriminatory practices; the practitioner's involvement can be one of discomfort, but to do otherwise is to be negligent. Derailments, hesitations, naivety, even chaotic variations, all happen as part of becoming a social worker/human services worker. Resistance can come from the tiny behaviours in life. A good place to

start is through a capability engagement that includes not only constant scrutiny and awareness of self, through rigorous education, evidence-based practice and research, but also through developing a political awareness about the realities of oppression within the world.

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Chapter 16
Developing Students' Cultural Competence Through Embedded Emergent Learning

Check for updates

Anne Llewellynn

Abstract Universities are increasingly including Indigenous cultural competency as a graduate learning outcome for students. Undergraduate degrees incorporate specifically designed subjects to achieve these learning outcomes but their success has yet to be validated. This chapter describes the successful implementation of emergent learning in Indigenous culture through completion of assignments in non-Indigenous subjects. For an assessment item in their course, final year advertising students were briefed to develop a marketing communications strategy to encourage Indigenous student enrolments in Bachelor of Communication courses. Students were required to research attitudes of potential Indigenous students to develop their campaign recommendations. The impact their findings had on these students, through this embedded emergent learning experience, was significant. They were deeply moved by their learning about problems facing Indigenous students. A second cohort of marketing communications students was also briefed on an Indigenous project. This also required investigative research into Indigenous issues by the students, with similar emergent learning outcomes. Students made progress in their journey towards Indigenous Cultural Competence. This was achieved by embedding the learning into real life problems (in these cases, research for assessment tasks), by motivating students to carry out their own investigation to answer their own questions, through experiential situations and Emergent Learning. Educators could consider this model to achieve a shift of Indigenous cultural perspective, awareness and competence, by embedding Aboriginal education into non-Indigenous subjects.

I am a non-Indigenous woman. I am Senior Lecturer and Advertising Discipline lead at Charles Sturt University. I am a member of the Wiradyuri Traditional Owners Central West Aboriginal Corporation Advisory Board and committed to improving my students' Indigenous cultural competence. I do not teach Indigenous

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subjects but recognised the opportunity to introduce Indigenous Cultural Competence learning outcomes within my advertising subjects by embedding Emergent Learning opportunities into student projects.

Conversation and Relationship Building with Elders

'Yindyamarra Winhanganha' is a phrase from the Wiradyuri, the traditional custodians of the land of Charles Sturt University's (CSU) original campuses, and meaning 'the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in'. Acknowledging the culture and insight of Indigenous Australians, it is a sentiment at the heart of the University's approach to education, and reflects its ethos 'to create a world worth living in'.

In active support of this philosophy, I set out to contribute to my students' education in Indigenous Cultural Competence by embedding Emergent Learning opportunities through experiential situations in my non-Indigenous subjects. Emergent Learning encourages students to learn through their own experiences and to seek out answers through their own investigation (Loh, 2019). The purpose the of this chapter to present case studies where implementation of Emergent Learning strategies in some non-Indigenous subjects has been successful in achieving a shift of cultural perspective, awareness and competence in students.

CSU acknowledges that the institution has a significant role and responsibility in enhancing educational and socio-economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians, both within the University's footprint and nationally. The University recognises that to improve Indigenous educational outcomes an integrated policy approach is needed to advance Indigenous higher education. Equal attention must be given to the recruitment and support of Indigenous students (James & Devlin, 2006).

As a result of Universities Australia (2011) National Best Practice Framework, which outlined a pedagogical scaffold for the development of Indigenous cultural competency in undergraduate degrees, universities are increasingly including Indigenous cultural competency as a graduate learning outcome for students. Many undergraduate degrees incorporate specifically designed subjects to achieve these learning outcomes but their success has yet to be validated. CSU includes learning fundamental aspects of history, culture and contemporary context of Australian lands and Indigenous people as essential Graduate Learning Outcomes in its curricula for all undergraduate courses (Charles Sturt University, 2019b).

With the aim of expanding students' learning about issues facing Indigenous Australians, I liaised with Associate Professor Barbara Hill, Senior Lecturer and Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Coordinator, to generate a client project brief on an Indigenous issue as an assessment item for final year advertising students. The subject they were undertaking, Advertising Strategy and Planning, required them to respond to a client brief/problem by preparing marketing communications/advertising campaign strategy recommendations. The pedagogy for the subject follows industry process to achieve this and students work in advertising teams in

the authentic learning environment of their on-campus advertising agency, Kajulu Communications.

Whilst the primary purpose in responding to the client brief was for the students to meet the learning outcomes of their subject, my secondary objective was to broaden these students' education and understanding of the cultural issues surrounding Indigenous Australians.

The task outlined in the brief was to increase Indigenous participation in Higher education, with focus on the Bachelor of Communication courses, and in particular, the Bachelor of Communication (Advertising). The client's main objective for the campaign was to build aspiration, encourage enrolment, and develop a passion for a career in communications, particularly advertising.

As background, the brief referenced Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Indigenous Education, Professor Jeannie Herbert who highlighted the real need to empower Indigenous students to participate as equal citizens in their own country (O'Brien, 2014). She said: "It's vital that people understand the complexity of the issues we are dealing with as we strive to deliver educational programs which provide Indigenous students opportunities to empower themselves by engaging in their own education." She also said: "We are trying to provide these students with opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to take control of their own lives and participate as equal citizens in their own country." (Professor Herbert as cited in O'Brien, 2014).

The brief stated the campaign was aimed at future Indigenous students, schools and Indigenous communities. However, the client required the advertising student teams to develop a more specific target market profile. Pedagogy for the campaign development process entails research into consumer attitudes and beliefs which leads to insights to develop the ultimate campaign strategy.

The live briefing from Dr Hill and Associate Professor Michelle Evans, the co-author of the brief, evoked a very emotional response from the student teams. As a first step to develop their marketing communications strategy recommendations, they followed process and initiated both secondary and primary research.

The teams sought to identify the key issues surrounding motivation for Indigenous enrolments in tertiary education. Their initial qualitative research would have given them sufficient information to arrive at the required consumer insights to drive their campaign recommendations. However, triggered by what they had found, they pursued this further. Their passion to continue to delve deeper into the issues surrounding Indigeneity was motivated by their research journey and their preliminary findings. This was not just about discovering better insights to drive their advertising campaign strategies, it was a genuine quest for knowledge. They were amazed that they had not learned about the real issues confronting Indigenous Australians and they were shocked by what they found.

My students identified insights in the Indigenous people who were potential students which included their lack of motivation, lack of parental support, cultural tension, lack of self-confidence and lack of 'inclusion'. These insights were their key drivers in development of the strategies to encourage Indigenous students' enrolments.

Knowledge and Scholarship Around the Topic

During the investigation into the course projects, the students' deeper findings about Indigenous issues were informed by the theory of Emergent Learning. Emergent Learning is a new learning concept that is gaining relevance worldwide in both academia and schools (Loh, 2019). It is a progressive approach that can help students to learn through experiences by encountering important challenges. Loh found many academic experts believe that traditionally planned lessons, which present a large volume of facts and information, may not provide students with the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes and results.

Emergent Learning is a collaborative approach to teaching that presents problems in a way that encourages learners to seek out answers to complex questions while working as a team (Gold, 2018; Loh, 2019). It enables individuals and teams to collectively learn from experiences and activities and to adapt their learnings in real time; allowing learners to navigate ambiguity and complexity. Whilst students may be efficient in answering complex questions in class, Emergent Learning allows them to create a model from their own ideas, to articulate these ideas in detail and to propose their own solutions (Butler, Story & Robson, 2014; Gold, 2018; Loh, 2019).

In contrast to traditionally planned education, Emergent Learning invites more people into the thinking space and makes the learnings demonstrable (Darling et al., 2016; Gold, 2018). By starting with an open-ended framing question, it encourages discussion, develops and tests out theories about what the group should do to move their project forward, and shares insights across the community.

Emergent Leaning provides a process to access collective wisdom (Gold, 2018). However, to encourage Emergent Learning, facilitators need to provide flexible opportunities for students to investigate and compare experiences around questions that matter to them (Darling et al., 2016); and to be successful, the learners involved must be convinced that taking the time to gather and apply what they have found will actually improve their outcome (Darling & Parry, 2007).

While this way of working requires a significant shift from traditional methods for most people, it also yields significant benefits. As Darling and Parry found, at least three of the major benefits of working in this way are, "(1) it generates more robust solutions that take into account a range of situations; (2) it creates more ownership for the solution rather than imposing it; and (3) it sets the stage for learning and adaptation at every level of implementation." (Darling and Parry 2007, p. 4).

In their study, Williams et al. (2011) found that whilst Emergent Learning is unpredictable, it is retrospectively coherent. Emergent learning is likely to occur when many independent learners interact frequently and openly, with a great deal of freedom, but within specific constraints. Emergent learning is open and flexible, so it is responsive to context and can adapt rapidly. It allows students to create and develop their own ideas to solve complex problems and encourages the students to answer questions in a non-traditional way. More knowledge will come to them through a cycle of successive learning experiences (Loh, 2019; Williams et al., 2011). According to Wenger (as cited in Williams et al., p46), "designing for emergence

can only be an intention; learning will be emergent whether it is designed for or not; we cannot anticipate what will emerge".

The literature indicates that Emergent Learning is a flexible pedagogical approach that relies on the students' interests and the circumstances they encounter. It encourages students to approach their work differently and to seek further results from their investigation.

Emergent Learning has always occurred in education in some measure, whether by design or as a result of unstructured learning. This is important as, in the examples in this chapter, Emergent Learning evolved as a result of initial investigative research employing qualitative interpretive and quantitative methodology.

The key benefits in this context were to encourage the students to explore the ambivalence and complexity of their findings. The very nature of their initial findings motivated them to pursue further questions which led them to a deeper investigation about Indigenous culture, experiences, history and the contemporary issues facing Indigenous Australians today. The answers to these students' questions resulted in Emergent Learning beyond the specific, structured learning outcomes from the compulsory Indigenous subjects they had completed as part of their degree. The depth of their learning was increased through collaboration and dialogue both within their groups and with me.

Methods of Teaching/Sharing/Providing Evidence/Student Voices

The client brief was to increase Indigenous student enrolments in the Bachelor of Communication degrees. Low student numbers, student entry, student retention, racism, and cultural ignorance were issues that had to be considered. Following the pedagogical process in the advertising subject, the students undertook initial research to discover consumer insights which would drive their strategy.

Their primary research included both qualitative interpretative and quantitative methodology. Students conducted in depth interviews with two Indigenous students who were then enrolled at the University, as well as with non-Indigenous enrolled students. They conducted online surveys with Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents. They also sought further information from Associate Professor Michelle Evans who is a Wiradyuri woman and academic. Motivated by their findings and to seek a deeper understanding, they sought other sources. They conducted an in-depth interview with Mr Joseph Hull, a Pitjantjara/Adnyamathanha man of South Australia, who was a member of the Indigenous Student Services on the University's Bathurst campus at Wammarra. This interview was particularly revealing. Mr Hull reflected on several relevant issues of which the students had not previously been aware. These included the need to consider possible cultural tension between different Indigenous tribes, that self-confidence was a major issue with Indigenous students at university,

as was Indigenous student retention. Mr Hull also explained Indigenous students' strong focus on community, their need to give back to their communities.

These far-reaching research findings strongly influenced the students' marketing communications recommendations for their client project. Their deeper understanding of the questions raised allowed them to develop relevant and successful strategies to answer the brief. Also, importantly, through their Emergent Learning, they developed a new understanding of the cultural issues surrounding Indigenous Australians and the associated problems. This went far beyond their learning from the compulsory Indigenous subjects they had completed as part of their degree. They were overwhelmed by their first-hand discoveries. We discussed their learnings in our weekly team meetings. It was evident that they had not previously considered that there were any real differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, and they found the discrepancies difficult to accept.

We discussed their findings and their new understanding of the real obstacles that Indigenous students encountered. This led to a better way to address these in their marketing communications for the brief. However, it also heightened students' awareness about future actions as professionals and citizens 'to create a world worth living in'.

The advertising students admired and respected some of the positive aspects they discovered, like the strong Indigenous bond to family and community, and the desire to give back. Although they struggled to understand the depth of these feelings, they did reflect profoundly with me on this different type of culture, and addressed these concerns in their recommended marketing communications strategies for the client.

The tone of their final recommendations report to the client indicated their shock at some of the findings. This was highlighted by one sentence in particular: "The research results proved to be *remarkable* as the Indigenous population surveyed was much less likely to think it was possible to attend university" (Students' report, May 2014). This finding was totally unexpected on the part of the student advertising teams. In discussing this with me, they expressed their surprise and disappointment that Indigenous students considered themselves to be different and that they lacked self-confidence. This provided deep insight which contributed to the development of the advertising teams' marketing communications strategies.

The students pursued further answers. Following Emergent Learning theory; that taking the time to apply what they had found, and then to investigate further would actually improve their outcome, they conducted an interview with a member of the Future Moves team. Future moves is the University's program which encourages enrolments from lower socio-economic and Indigenous school students, who have the potential to complete a university degree but may come from families with no tertiary education experience (Charles Sturt University, 2019a). This supplementary research added an additional perspective to the teams' investigation. Attitudinal findings from Future Moves' school workshops reinforced aspects of self-doubt in Indigenous students and also highlighted a lack of positive influencers in these children's academic lives. Again, this surprised the advertising students.

My students' experiences and learnings from this client project were so significant that I sought a further brief for the advertising student teams involving another

Indigenous theme in 2018. My objective was both to meet the learning outcomes of their final year subject and to expand the students' understanding of the contemporary issue which affect Indigenous Australians. The pedagogy was designed to encourage Emergent Learning.

In March 2018, I arranged a project brief from the Wiradyuri Traditional Owners Central West Aboriginal Corporation to prepare marketing communications strategies to launch the Heritage Park Bathurst Cultural Precinct Indigenous Education Program. The program offered Aboriginal educational activities which met learning requirements outlined in the new Australian Education Curriculum for schools, one of which was the integration of Aboriginal Perspectives (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2015). This authentic program was delivered in partnership with and by the local Wiradyuri Elders. The students' task was to develop an integrated consumer marketing communications campaign aimed at increasing visits and bookings to the Cultural Precinct, predominantly by educators and school children. This was a new Aboriginal Educational Program which offered a cultural education and experience. Similar to the first project, the students followed advertising industry process. Under my guidance, they worked in authentic teams on their client brief in the on-campus student advertising agency, Kajulu Communications.

In this case, the teams again undertook primary (qualitative) and secondary research to gain consumer insights in order to develop their strategies. As with the previous brief, students were motivated by their preliminary findings to seek a deeper understanding of the cultures, experiences, history and contemporary issues of Australian Indigenous communities. Whilst the brief itself contained some good information on Aboriginal history and several cultural aspects, the students were stimulated to gain some firsthand insights. They were given permission to talk to Wiradyuri Elders, Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant and Gunhmadha Aunty Jill Bower. Both Elders are local residents and have a long historical connection to Bathurst and the surrounding area. They are the knowledge holders of Country, and possess stories that have been passed down for thousands of generations. Due to the generosity of both these Elders, the students were able to ask questions about the brief, but also about cultural and historical topics. Again, the insights the students identified far exceeded the requirements for their project and had a very profound effect on them.

Hearing about Aboriginal history and events first-hand from Elders, in an unstructured environment, was inspirational. The Elders showed the students Wiradyuri art and explained its significance, involved them in a Wiradyuri weaving experience (women only), and presented other cultural narratives. They also explained the Cultural Immersion Experience which was offered to the school children in the Aboriginal education package. When the students learned the detail of this authentic education package, they were inspired to understand more. Whilst all this was excellent background for their brief, the advertising teams were engrossed in what they were learning. They were particularly intrigued by Elders' explanation of the Dreamtime stories, and the passing on of knowledge, cultural values and beliefs to later generations.

> They [The Elders] just talked to us, it was amazing. The way they talked about the program, what they did and especially what it meant. It was inspiring. We wanted to attend one of the children's camps to find out more!

(Student feedback, personal communication, April 2018).

> I wove a bracelet, look. The little girls [school children at the camp] all had something to take home. They all loved it.

(Student feedback, personal communication, April 2018).

In relaying their learnings, these students were genuinely excited and amazed by what they had discovered. This was not just about background for their client project, this was about truly understanding significant Aboriginal history and culture. They felt a warmth they had not experienced before.

The students' investigation of this brief not only reinforced to them the importance of the Aboriginal education program offered by the Wiradyuri Elders, but also its cultural significance. A real understanding of the need to embed Indigenous learning requirements in the school curriculum was achieved. They regretted that they had not had the opportunity to better develop their own Indigenous cultural competence at school. The students acknowledged that the Emergent Learning experience was exposing them to many understandings and diverse perspectives they had not previously considered. It had resulted in a cultural journey and transformation which they felt would better prepare them for their future. It also awakened a developing commitment to social justice and the processes of reconciliation (students' personal communication, 2018).

Reflections as Scholar/Teacher

CSU is committed to improving the Indigenous cultural competency of its students and has in place programs to enhance students' learning in these areas. Embedding this in real world experience in an unstructured way through Emergent Learning, has produced very powerful learning outcomes for my students.

The experience from the first client brief had a significant impact on the students. They were deeply moved by their learning about problems facing Indigenous students. They achieved a far greater understanding of the challenges facing Indigenous Australians in general, and more specifically Indigenous students. The advertising students emerged as agents for social change and reconciliation. They expressed to me the need for action to be taken based on their new found knowledge. Their presentation to the client was passionate in its demonstrated empathy. It literally brought the Indigenous client to tears.

Rather than feeling objectified by this approach, one Indigenous student in the class found the outcome validated his own experience and that of his Indigenous friends. He felt a sense of empowerment as a result of his peers' engagement with the topic and identified with, and verified, their findings. He privately expressed to

me his own lack of parental support, and initial lack of self-confidence, were both issues he had overcome to enrol in his CSU university course.

The resulting marketing communications strategy developed from this client brief, the actual focus of the advertising students' project, was outstanding. With the new understanding of the real issues facing Indigenous students, the advertising students were able to identify breakthrough strategies to encourage new Indigenous enrolments. The strategies were finely honed to communicate in meaningful terms with the Indigenous target market. This was achieved through the advertising teams' immersive engagement with their investigative research.

The outcome for the University was also significant in that it gained potential marketing strategies to increase Indigenous enrolments going forward. The results from the project are best expressed by Dr Hill's feedback following the students' presentations:

> We were all completely 'blown away' by the students, their considered and thoughtful work and its quality, their passion and engagement and the wonderful spirit of their presentations in general.

> This is the best example I have seen at this institution thus far of how Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy as a capstone experience informs learning and teaching in such a powerful nexus.

> What is the added bonus is that you now have three 'ready to go' marketing strategies that could be usefully employed by the university [to increase Indigenous student enrolments].

> What will not leave any of us is the impact this experience had on the students; how deeply moved they were by their learning and deepened understanding of the experience of Indigenous Australians in general and Indigenous Students more specifically.

> We can celebrate the fact that now we have handfuls of students who will emerge into the work force in 2015 as agents for social of change and reconciliation.

> (Associate Professor Barbara Hill, personal communication, 22 May 2014)

The second brief from the Wiradyuri Central West Traditional Owners Corporation exposed the students to a lot of Indigenous history and particularly revealed many Aboriginal cultural sensitivities of which they had not previously been aware. The brief itself contained sufficient detail to stimulate a passionate and somewhat indignant reaction from the advertising students. They were surprised at their lack of cultural competence and general lack of knowledge. As with the first client brief, this brief again stimulated their immersive investigation into the issues which affect Indigenous people, with particular focus on history and culture. Their findings informed their journey towards Indigenous cultural competence and significantly changed their attitude to the need for social change and reconciliation.

The students' response to this brief, driven by their new understanding of the importance of in-school Indigenous education, was ground-breaking for the Wiradyuri client. Their recommendations included powerful strategies to increase bookings for visits by school children to experience the authentic Aboriginal education program. The students' new learning about culture from the program itself was a revelation. Motivated by their initial findings, and following the process outlined by Emergent Learning theory, these students went beyond the research required for

the task at hand to satisfy their quest for better knowledge and understanding about issues of concern for Indigenous people. This now really mattered them.

The students' work resulted in this unsolicited feedback from Senior Elder, Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant:

> I wanted to pass on my sincere thanks for the very professional marketing communications strategy response to our brief by your students. The standard of their work was extremely high, and their strategies will have a significant ongoing influence on the marketing communications and promotion of the Aboriginal educational program at Heritage Park Bathurst Cultural Precinct. We are currently acting to implement many aspects of their recommendations.

> The Wiradyuri Elders have also asked me to thank you on their behalf for your passion, mentorship and teaching throughout the project.

> (Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant, Senior Elder, personal communication, 25 August 2018)

These students gained Indigenous knowledge and developed their cultural competence from the clients' briefs; through their own research and investigation, through exposure to cultural experiences, and through interviews with Indigenous Australians and Aboriginal Elders. I encouraged their development of diverse perspectives, and ongoing reflections. Students' understanding of the issues which affect Indigenous people and their journey toward cultural competence was enhanced by their in-depth investigation of the topics surrounding the briefs.

The students had already achieved the required learning outcomes from the embedded, core Indigenous subjects in their degrees. These subjects teach the fundamental aspects of history, culture and contemporary context of Australian lands and Indigenous peoples. However these students had the opportunity for unstructured, captivating, firsthand experiences with Elders and other Indigenous Australians. The experiential aspect of their Emergent Learning had a significant effect on transforming the students' knowledge, understanding and importantly, their passion. They also had the benefit of detailed project briefs which brought to their attention some of the potential challenges for Indigenous peoples.

The students actively sought out answers to the questions which evolved from their own research. They were looking for insights to answer their briefs. In the process, through Emergent Learning, they discovered new-found awareness about Indigenous Australians. They reported that they were totally absorbed in their new learning, far more so, than through their engagement with their Indigenous subjects. In working with the students throughout these projects, I found they had truly developed a desire to 'create a world worth living in' for their future world of professional practice. For them this meant seeking social change and improving the potential outcomes for the lives of Aboriginal Australians.

Whilst I had some concerns that students might cross cultural boundaries in their quest for knowledge, I was genuinely impressed by the respect and sensitivity they employed during their investigations. I did brief them to the best of my understanding and knowledge, being a non-Indigenous woman, with advice from the Elders. One group did, in their enthusiasm, approach the Elders on location seeking information and firsthand experience of the facility. They had an initial unplanned encounter with Wiradyuri Senior Elders, Mallyan Uncle Brian Grant and Gunhmadha Aunty

Jillene Bower, who were gracious in their handling of the situation and in giving their time. Following this encounter, and my reiteration that prior consent must be obtained before meeting with or interviewing Elders, if anything, their respect and knowledge of Indigenous culture increased, yet another Emergent Learning outcome. Subsequent meetings with the Elders were by appointment.

The Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework in the National Best Practice Framework (Universities Australia, 2011) encourages educators to build and develop competency through various strategies. Structured learning is one strategy. By embedding the learning into real life problems (in these cases, research for an assessment task), by motivating students to carry out their own investigation, to answer their own questions, through experiential and Emergent Learning, these students have achieved a greater degree of Indigenous Cultural Competence than they had previously. Educators could consider this model to achieve a shift in Indigenous cultural perspective, awareness and competence, by embedding Aboriginal education in non-Indigenous subjects through Emergent Learning.

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Chapter 17
When the Elders Govern Your Learning

Yaliilan Leanne Windle

I am a proud Wiradjuri/Dharawal woman—I always have been proud of the Wiradjuri/Dharawhal blood which courses through my entire being. I have been a fortunate Yinaa (woman) surrounded with family and mentors. Blood and not, these individuals are my family all the same. This piece takes you on a journey of four years—where my Elders have certainly governed and supported my learning in multiple ways. A few have stood out and I will speak about them in length—with their permission.

I have always known I am a Traditional Owner of this beautiful dhaagun (land) since birth; however, due to assimilation, the wiping out of my Ancestors and multiple other factors, my family has been left with wiray (no) knowledge of culture, kinship, language and more. I found from a young age I had knowledge that a Yinaa who has not been brought with cultural knowledge or language should not have. Growing up on Wanarua Nation, I had friends who went on camps and had cultural days. I was never invited to these events and, accepting that it was not my Nation, felt I did not deserve to be a part of them.

Gunhidhaagun garraybu (Mother Earth and land) have always had a soothing effect upon me. I will plant my hands and feet in her wherever I feel the need to connect to Gunghidhaagun: Yaliilan is cranky—make her go outside and place her feet on the grass or dirt; Yaliilan feels anxious and out of control—send her outside to find a piece of dhaagun (earth); Where is Yaliilan? Go look for the closest patch of gungil (grass), manhang (dirt) or galing (water) and ngadhu (you) will find Yaliilan.

My Elders governing my learning journey really began when I was living at Port Macquarie (Birpai Nation) New South Wales in 2016, studying my first year of Paramedicine. I had always been insecure and embarrassed in the lack of knowledge I had about my own people, especially when I had to admit it to others. I remember the distinct moment I really had a meltdown, completely losing it over my embarrassment at my lack of knowledge and understanding and so angry at what my people and I

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had lost. This defining moment set me on my current path, one which has been a crazy, amazing and fulfilling journey of learning on many levels.

I had invited a few of my Paramedic friends to come and join us in celebrating 'Reconciliation Week'. These guys and girls were so excited to be invited and to join in. Consequently, the questions began flying my way, thick and fast, one after the other. I felt as though I were a broken record, continually replying: 'I do not know' … 'I am not sure' … 'I could not tell you'… 'I did not grow up with culture and no one in my family knows Wiradjuri'. I knew then and I know now, my friends were purely excited and wanted to show their genuine curiosity regarding my culture, the culture I was so proud to say I am a part of. I had witnessed men, women and children of the Birpai Nation singing in language, dancing and participating in many activities throughout the day. As inclusive and welcoming as these people were, it left me with a feeling of emptiness.

I was so ashamed I could not answer my friends' questions. As the day went on, I found myself becoming quieter, a little volcano bubbling away in the pit of my stomach. That afternoon, I found myself in the Indigenous Liaison Officer's (ILO) room, scaring her no end.

I was an absolute mess … snot coming out of both nostrils … sobbing … inconsolable … howling unable to utter one word or to give any indication what was wrong.

Finally, I was calm enough to be at least a little coherent. All the sadness, frustration, hurt, and shame came pouring from my mouth, like a waterfall. All that I kept in for 32 years was finally released. I felt better, yet the fact remained—I still had no language or cultural knowledge and was no closer to having it either. I felt so silly having had my meltdown in front of my ILO, yet she was so sweet about it. She asked if it were okay for her to get the two Birpai Elders and have them speak to me. I was petrified, both would tell me to wake up to myself and stop being silly, but agreed anyway. My fears were unfounded—both Elders were absolutely amazing, sweet, understanding and empathetic. In fact, both cried with me… for the hurt and sadness we and many others have endured from our loss of culture and all this has entailed. I found myself spending a lot of time in and around the yarning circle—by myself, with the centre's clapsticks, thinking, healing and talking to my Ancestors. This was where I felt safe and connected with all that I was feeling.

Two weeks after my meltdown I was looking for academic articles for an assessment—well I should have been. Instead I was looking up how to change my degree on CSU's website, looking at a Bachelor of Arts and planning my whole degree out with what Indigenous units I would love to take. Three hours later in my class, instead of paying attention to the lecture or the following tutorial, I found myself googling other Universities and the Indigenous programs/units they offer, finding the Indigenous Liaison Officer's contact emails. I spent the rest of the day researching—and not for my assessment. I was talking non-stop to my Ancestors to help me find something … anything to appease my yearning for cultural knowledge and practices. By luck, I entered 'Indigenous degrees at CSU' into the search engine; the 'Graduate Certificate Language, Culture and Heritage' comes up. As I read and reread the

information before me, my heart was pounding, my skin had goose bumps all over… this is too good to be true, I must be reading it wrong.

But luck was on my side, the Grad Cert degree was still being offered. 'What do I do now'? I asked myself, 'Apply for a place, silly girl' I heard in my mind—I knew exactly who was saying this. It was my Ancestors—all with the eye rolling no doubt. Never wanting to rush into things, I decided to take my time and think about this. I sent the degree outline to a handful of friends and family. Every person I sent the degree outline to reacted positively, believing this could be a fantastic opportunity for me. Approximately two weeks later, I was still sitting on whether to make the application or not. Finally, my friend—Amazonian Princess (this girl seriously reminds me of an Amazonian warrioress) asked if I had heard about the degree. I told her I might have, and might even be thinking of applying. I thought, head spinning, this only happens in the movies. Amazonian warrioress said with her deadpan face, 'If you have not applied for the degree by the time my last lecture of the day has ended, I am applying for you'. With that she was gone from the centre like the breeze, and on that breeze all I heard was her shouting: 'I am dead serious woman, I will do it if you do not!' I did not apply for the degree that day, or that week. But I knew, just knew, my Ancestors were all standing behind, beside and in front of me, not hiding their looks of frustration, and probably wanting to smack my bubal (bum), and I applied the following week—receiving word mere days later I was accepted.

It was February 2017… stifling hot summer weather, and I had come to Wagga Wagga for residential school. It took me 16 h to get to Wagga and my accommodation: the caravan park way up the back, where I have convinced myself snakes and swamp monsters live. The two women (Aunts who will become significant to my life and the learning journey) and I began the long walk to our cabins in the fast-fading light. We were sweating up a storm, struggling down this long road which leads to many campsites and cabins. One Aunt said, 'I feel like I am a little girl and walking to school …though I do not remember sweating so much'.

The next day, first day of residential school, and the bus did not turn up. The two Aunts and I sat. I was fuming and one of the Aunts took my hand and said 'Do not worry yourself bub, this is meant to be'. Huh?! We are meant to be sitting here in the scorching sun—it is already 30 something degrees and we are meant to be here?! I was not having it. I sat silently, not trusting myself not to swear.

Finally, one of my zillion phone calls was returned and they send someone to get us. I was tired by the end of the day; however, I was feeling good. Come the second day, I wasn't feeling so good. It seemed everyone spoke in language and I sat there wondering firstly what in the heck possessed me to think I could learn language—I am convinced I am never ever going to learn, let alone pronounce any of this—and secondly where the nearest store is—I need some tanning lotion, to get some colour on me. These people looked tanned and fabulous, whilst I looked like an English woman just stepped off the plane; just another reason to feel like I do not belong—great. Just another reason to add to the very long list of how and why I do not belong.

As the residential days ticked over, I felt more and more deflated, shamed and embarrassed. I couldn't enunciate correctly, I was left behind with understanding what was happening when the teachers spoke in language. How am I meant to write assessments in language, when I do not understand, nor speak it!? I am over-whelmed at how much knowledge and culture everyone has, shamed I know zilch, and beginning to think it would be best I do not pursue this avenue.

Aunt Beth and Aunt Iris have been watching me, as only Aunts can and on the second last day, they approached me to ask me how I was doing. I played it cool—both saw right past my facade. Both told me they teach Wiradjuri language and suggested I go to Dubbo and learn language with them at Yarradamarra Tafe. Both assured me I can learn language and will be able to speak it before I know it. I'm not so sure.

I did not quit Graduate Certificate and I signed up the following week to language classes, partly because I was told by everyone I was in big trouble if I did not and partly because I did not want to walk away before trying to pick up my language—the language that my Ancestors had been speaking on their traditional lands for many thousands of years. Even if I could speak but a handful of words, I believed it would be worth it. Granted, I would prefer to have been speaking it from birth, however, at least I was being taught by Wiradjuri men and women and hopefully I would be able to make my own kinship system and become included in culture, regardless of my skin colour. I asked my Ancestors to hit me with culture, with knowledge and lots of it. I learnt a major lesson from this—be very careful what you ask your Ancestors for. You will be given it, literally in many ways …

Not only did I not quit and, sign up Cert I and II for language at Yarradamarra, I also found myself signed up to a Diploma of Aboriginal Studies and Music at Yarradamarra. I also discovered a cousin I did not know even existed. That brought many a visit back to the town of my paternal side and many discoveries of culture and a family that seemed to double every single time I looked away. How I survived studying a full-time degree with residential schools, and three Tafe courses, plus many trips on Country, and doing everything else being an adult entailed, and not have a nervous breakdown is beyond me. I not only passed all units and courses, I excelled at them. As I write this, I have graduated from Certificate in Language I and II, a Diploma, a music course and one of my biggest achievements today—Graduate Certificate Wiradjuri Language, Culture and Heritage. I have completed my last three units for Bachelor of Arts and I am now studying my Masters of Aboriginal Studies academically and personally and the Elders who have been instrumental in governing my learning. Along the way, I have benefitted from the wisdom of many Aunts and Uncles; however, a few stand out.

Aunt Iris, Aunt Beth and Aunt MaryAnn have been strong, empowering and brilliant teachers at Yarra, guiding me to where I currently am on this journey. I have come away with strength, courage and a head and heart full of knowledge, for which I am grateful. Aunt Jules has stayed the course with me, dried my tears, hugged me when I needed it and gently guided me through many obstacles and people attempting to tear me down. She has not only given love and encouragement, she has assisted in healing and in moving forward. Aunt Jules is always a phone call or text away no matter how crazy busy her life is. Aunt Jules is patient, loving and caring; she

always encourages me, motivates me and pushes me to go outside of my comfort zone to gain knowledge and experiences. She reminds me that I am worthy of knowing language and culture—that I have every right to learn and to be immersed in our culture. Aunt Jules merely laughs when I say, 'No more study for me after I graduate this year',—she knows me. This woman exudes love and strength; she is resilient, staunch and passionate. She is a major motivator and supporter in my life, teaching and giving me knowledge wherever and whenever our Ancestors guide her to. Above all, Aunt Jules is my Aunt. A proud Indigenous woman taking on a traditional role and guiding me as she would have if our kinship and culture were not desecrated and taken from us.

Uncle Lloyd … there is so much that could be written and said about this man and his hand in my learning, in my knowledge and in governing my learning path. He has opened up various avenues and opportunities, introducing people who would never have been on my journey otherwise. He is not only an Uncle, but also he is a saviour. He is kind, and he is patient, he is knowing—he just knows. He is so full of knowledge, and yet he is humble. He reminds me that it is okay to feel as I do, that I am worthy of being educated and that I can make a difference in this world, locally, nationally and internationally. He has sat with me face-to- face and on the telephone, he has given me food for thought, he has given me avenues through which to learn about myself, about who I am and what I can be—if I choose to.

Aunt Sim … how do I even begin to describe this extraordinary Yinaa?! From the first unit I took with her, she had me thirsty for knowledge, she had a way of teaching I had not experienced before—outside of Graduate Certificate. Her video introduction to the unit immediately made me think, 'I like her—she is going to be fantastic, I just know'. I was right, so incredibly right. I was so shy in contacting her, yet I wanted to meet her. I got my chance when I was going to Wagga via Dubbo, and I was not disappointed in the slightest. This amazing Aunt came to CSU Dubbo campus on a weekend—on a WEEKEND! To meet me. That is pretty special. This Yinaa has helped me to find me—the Wiradjuri Yinaa and the academic Yinaa. Aunt Sim has been instrumental in enabling me to be myself, find myself and use my voice for many things, including what truly matters to me. She has taught me that there are mayiny (people) who are committed to make a difference to my mayiny, to bringing up my mayiny, not tearing them down. For whatever reason, I had assumed Aunt Sim was a Wiradjuri Yinaa, she resembles a tall Yinaa Ancestor, thin and on a mission. But Aunt told me straight away that she is not Wiradjuri; however, her children are and she has friends and family who are. I did not care, I was going to be stubborn and claim her as a Wiradjuri Yinaa. Her soul screamed it, her attitudes and her way did too. My Ancestors did not tell me differently and they usually let me know in some form when they do not agree. Wiradjuri community accepted her, my Ancestors accepted her and so did I. That was settled. Even though I have not taken a unit with her in many moons, I have remained in contact with her, and have continuously explored avenues of further education and learning with her. Her intelligence and willingness to engage and ensure her students have the best experience she can possibly give is incredible— tell her that and she will tell you otherwise. But I am still right nonetheless. Aunt Sim has given me strength and knowledge and she has been my mentor. Her values,

attitudes, patience and willingness to teach are what make her, amongst many things a valuable asset to me. Aunt Sim has taught me academically, she has taught me personal lessons, she has unwittingly become an instrumental and vital piece to my personal and academic journey, whether she realises it or not, this Yinaa is humble, she is my Aunt Sim, and no one can say otherwise.

Aunt Di … she has been an instrumental piece to my cultural knowledge and practice puzzle. From the first moment that we met, it was as though I had found someone who wanted, begged, to teach me some of what she knew. She is warm, she is funny, she has so much knowledge and she works to her own time clock. Anytime I go to visit her, she is covered in paint, smells like tanning leather, has crazy hair and is usually sitting on the floor working on something. Aunt Di has given me more cultural knowledge than I could ever imagine having. She was instrumental in my desire to wear a kangaroo skin to my graduation. Over one weekend, she taught me how to tan, dry and mark my story on his skin. I wore that skin and ochre at my Graduation—in stinking hot heat, dripping with sweat, and I wore it proudly. I had so many people commenting and watching as I had my skin and ochre placed upon me. I had my Ancestors standing around enveloping me. I could feel the pride, I could hear it and I could taste it.

Aunt C is not Indigenous, but she is an ally and a major one at that. I call her Aunt C because, like Aunt Sim, she wants to make a difference, she wants to make changes. Aunt C is instrumental in my learning academically, and she is a motivator in me learning my culture.

She cares and she is my Aunt C, no matter the colour of her skin or the ancestry that she has, she is my Aunt C.

Uncle Stan … Without this man—the Mamaba (Grandfather/Uncle) of Wiradjuri—I and many others would not be afforded the ability to learn and practise, to speak our Ancestors' language. It would have been sleeping for ever. Uncle Stan loves to see each of us practicing and teaching culture and language, in whatever capacity. At residential school, we once had a conversation regarding why I did not come and speak directly to him, staying always in the shadows. I explained to him that I did not feel worthy, as I did not know culture and I did not know language and I was not able to converse with him in language like everyone else. Uncle told me to never be ashamed of what I do not know, as it is not my fault.

Every single time I saw him after that, he always made a point of speaking to me, in both language and English, showing his genuineness and his patience, having a little giggle with me at my tongue-tied attempts to speak to him in language. I remember two distinct conversations I had with him. Once we were sitting under a tree together, I asked him if I could get him a drink, and he said no, what I could do for him was sit and yarn with him and tell him my story. He looked at me and told me that I was going places, would make a difference and that I am to keep on going and only ever be looking forward not backward.

The other distinct moment was after the Graduation ceremony. I was sitting beside him after photos were taken and he put his hand in mine and said 'Bub, you did it, you graduated, and you did it. I am so proud of you and I am even prouder that

you have worn ochre and your skin to show your pride in our culture'. If making it through the year and through so much did not make me cry, Uncle's words did.

Gungidhaagun (Mother Earth) is my biggest teacher. Gungidhaagun envelopes me in love, in strength and in many lessons. She teaches me to be still, to look, to listen and to hear. She has taught me to hear the messages of my Ancestors on the wind, to hear the animals calling to me; she has soothed me with her ochre, her galing and her dhaagun and sheltered me with her foliage and her elements. Gungidhaagun has protected and healed me with ochre and her elements, allowing me to hide within her. Gungidhaagun shows me so much; artefacts suddenly unearth themselves for me to see, touch and learn about. She warms my skin with her sun, cools my skin with the moon, she shows me my Ancestors in the skies at night. She takes care of me, turning the weather to let me know where and when I should be going. Her raindrops sooth my soul with their sound, teaching me that it is not always the one with the head start that gets to the destination first. She also teaches me how one can come back from abuse, hurt and sadness and be even more beautiful than before. She allows me to see her humility in all areas of her, her beauty, her vulnerability and her resilience in times of turmoil and sorrow. She is good to me and she always teaches me something new.

Country … My Wiradjuri country is of the utmost importance to me on many levels. She provides me with comfort, with knowledge, with love and with the feeling of being 'home'. I have always known where my Country begins and ends—I feel her, I hear her, I smell her and I taste her. I have been sleeping and I have known I am on Country. I respect her and I will always protect her.

Ancestors … whether I have met them, or they had gone to the stars before I came to be, have taught me so much, have told me where I am going even when I am thinking I am not, giving me a boot up the bubal when they felt I needed it, and believe me, they have their ways … they really do. Ancestors have always surrounded me, giving guidance, love, support and strength. I get my resilience from those who came before me. Through oral history and books/videos, I have been given insight into how my Ancestors lived, loved and did for myself and generations. I have known that many had given up so much, at such a toll to themselves. I dream of stories, of sitting with Elders of various ages and responsibilities, I hear words and see messages all around me. My Ancestors teach me in whatever way they believe I can receive at that time. They always find a way.

My Ngamangurrang (Nanna/grandmother) … This Yinaa, on earth and in the sky has always supported me and taught me many things; she always told me I would be someone.

Ngamagurrang always supported me in learning and discovering; she would sit for hours telling me of the things she knew. One of the last things she ever said to me was 'Don't you ever allow anyone to dim your little light, or to tell you not to learn, look for answers or ask them'. Ngamagurrang taught me staunchness, love, determination, to dig in and to never give up.

Ngama (Mum) … she always encouraged me to seek knowledge I was entitled to. Over the last four years, Ngama has read every assessment, heard most lectures

and read many articles. She has taught me to go get what I want, to seek it, to create what I need when I cannot find it. I am nothing without my Ngama.

I have grown in these years, grown in my own skin to be who I am meant to be. I am finding my Wiradjuri identity, my personal identity and my academic identity. I am going places, and have learned to use my voice with confidence to say what is important to me, using my knowledge, the way my Aunts, Uncles and Ancestors have shown me. I'm still on my journey, with my Elders governing my learning path; I now trust without question, as I know my Elders will never steer me wrong. My Elders are all unique and different and yet they fit so perfectly together. My greatest desire is to have my Elders stay the course with me. I still have much to learn and achieve, and am enjoying the journey, walking the path my Elders provide. The Elders I have written about here are just some of the Elders who have stayed on the journey, Elders I can sit and yarn with, learn from, heal with. They teach me that is a perfectly beautiful journey I am on.

I know my Elders have me where I am meant to be. Each of my Elders is my Elders for a reason. I love, appreciate and trust them each with my being. They are as important to me as oxygen is to my lungs.

I am still discovering the pieces to this Wiradjuri Yinaa, slowly I am being pieced back together and with each passing day, my Elders show me the next puzzle being un-earthed. Every day I heal a little more, not only for myself, but for my Ancestors, and I heal the DNA that I carry, full of intergenerational and transgenerational trauma. I work every day to learn, to see, to hear and to feel, for myself and for my mayiny— in the present and the future. To make a positive difference and changes that are so desperately needed.

Mandaang guwu to each of my Elders, my mayiny, my world …