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## Preparing teachers for aboriginal education : report on the national conference

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**M. L. O'BRIEN**

# **PREPARING TEACHERS FOR ABORIGINAL EDUCATION**



**EDITED BY ED BRUMBY  
AND NEVILLE GREEN**

**REPORT ON THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
—31 AUGUST 1977  
MOUNT LAWLEY COLLEGE  
NORTH WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

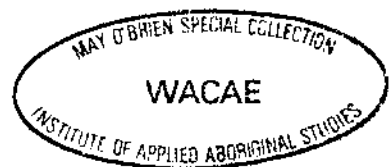
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# **PREPARING TEACHERS FOR ABORIGINAL EDUCATION**



**EDITED BY ED BRUMBY  
AND NEVILLE GREEN  
REPORT ON THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

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MOUNT LAWLEY COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, 1977**

**ISBN 0 908008 02 2**

**Printed and published by Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education  
2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley, Western Australia, 6050**

## CONTENTS

Planning Committee	(i)
Introduction	(ii)
1. <u>THE EXPECTATIONS OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES</u>	
The National Aboriginal Education Committee - Stephen Albert	1
Queensland - John Budby	4
South Australia - Paul Hughes	7
The Yolŋu Teacher - Kevin Rogers	10
2. <u>THE EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYERS</u>	
Northern Territory - James Eedle	13
3. <u>THE EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS</u>	
Derby - Sr Leone Collins	20
Milingimbi - David McClay	24
Walgett - Laurie Craddock	29
4. <u>TEACHER PREPARATION FOR ABORIGINAL EDUCATION</u>	
Bendigo State College - Len Hall	31
Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education - John Sherwood	39
Torrens College of Advanced Education - Max Hart	46
Townsville College of Advanced Education - Geoff Coombes	51
5. <u>THE VIEWS OF ABORIGINAL STUDENT TEACHERS</u>	
From Humpy to College - Lindsay Grant	62
From Housework to School - Louise Kearing	65
Crisis: Black Educator, Black Bourgeois? - Robyn Robinson	68
6. <u>ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES</u>	
Aboriginal Community College, Adelaide - George Smith	72

## 7. ABORIGINAL TEACHER AIDE TRAINING

New South Wales - <i>Alan Duncan</i>	78
Northern Territory - <i>Michael Uibo</i>	83
Queensland - <i>John Budby</i>	88
Western Australia - <i>Colin Mounsey</i>	93

## 8. CURRICULUM CHANGE

The Aboriginal Australian in North-East Arnhem Land: A Social Science Unit for Upper Primary/Lower Secondary Students - <i>Don Williams and Alan Fidock</i>		103
Curriculum Change for Teaching Aboriginal Children - <i>Laurie Craddock</i>		111

## 9. POLICIES IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION: Failures, EXPENDITURE

An Evaluation of Some Policies in Aboriginal Education: Successes, Failure and Expenditure - <i>Ian Mitchell</i>		122
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## 10. ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Saunders Street, Perth - <i>Ruth Kickett</i>	137
Strelley Community School - <i>John Bucknall</i>	140

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS 143

## 12. CONCLUDING REMARKS

<u>Stephen Albert</u> - <i>Chairman, National Aboriginal Education Committee</i>	148
<u>Paul Hughes</u> - <i>Member, National Aboriginal Education Committee</i>	150
<u>Neville Green</u> - <i>Conference Organizer</i>	154

## 13. APPENDICES

List of Delegates	157
Conference Budget	162

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

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The Planning Committee responsible for the planning and organization of the conference comprised the following people:

John Fleming	Catholic Education Commission
Neville Green (Conference Organizer)	Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education
Lorna Hume	Aboriginal Advancement Council
Ian Kerr	Churchlands College of Advanced Education
Colin Mounsey	Education Department of Western Australia
Peter Reynolds	Graylands College of Advanced Education
John Sherwood	Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education
Maureen Stepanoff	Secondary Teachers College
Ernie Stringer	Western Australian Institute of Technology

## INTRODUCTION

The first National Conference of Teachers of Aboriginal Children was held in Adelaide between 29th August and 1st September, 1976. The conference delegates expressed their concern about the ineffectiveness of teachers in Aboriginal schools and while recognizing that the task was often a demanding one, they were generally critical of the lack of expertise of recent graduates and the high staff turn over in Aboriginal schools.

"Specific concern was voiced that teachers graduating from training institutions lacked many of the specific skills needed in Aboriginal and Islander schools."

(Preliminary Report, 1976 p.3)

Arising from this concern was the following recommendations that there be convened:

"... annual meeting of representatives of staff involved in race relationship courses (focused on teaching about Aboriginals and Islanders and also encompassing other ethnic groups) at Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities. That such a meeting give consideration to possible exchanges of staff so involved".

(ibid, recommendation 5.9)

At a post conference discussion by delegates from the Colleges of Advanced Education, it was proposed that Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education make a submission for a National Conference to be held in Western Australia during 1977. It was considered inadvisable to attempt to cover the spectrum of Aboriginal Education. Instead the Perth Conference of 1977 would consider only the following areas:-

1. Pre-Service preparation of non Aboriginal teachers.
2. Training programs for Aboriginal teachers.
3. The objectives of Aboriginal Communities in relation to teachers.
4. Curriculum innovation in teaching Aboriginals and teaching about Aboriginals.



### PLANNING

On 30th March 1977. The first meeting of the planning committee decided upon the dates title and theme of the Conference and compiled a list of possible speakers and participants. In April the Teacher Development and Services Committee of the Schools Commission agreed to contribute \$2500 towards the Conference expenses, and the planning committee was then able to formalize the arrangements for a Conference Workshop on Aboriginal Education.

# **I. THE EXPECTATIONS OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES**

## THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Stephen Albert

Before describing the establishment of the NAEC, I would like to say a few words about the Aboriginal Consultative Group that was set up to advise the Schools Commission. Although the Aboriginal Consultative Group was involved in drawing up the chapter on Aboriginal Education for the Schools Commission report, it also made a number of recommendations and was able to do a report on TAFE needs for Aborigines. It was as a result of a recommendation from the Aboriginal Consultative Group that the NAEC was established.

After all these years of delivering education to Aborigines, the Government (with the help of the Schools Commission Aboriginal Consultative Group) decided to establish the NAEC in order to receive the advice it needed for present and future action on Aboriginal education.

As chairman of the NAEC I commenced my appointment on the 30th of March 1977. After three weeks in office I organized the first meeting that was held in the last week of April. This meeting gave members the opportunity to exchange views and relate individual experience and skills that would make up the composition of the committee. Members of the NAEC were selected from all States and the Northern Territory, covering as many areas as possible either geographically or areas of considerable populations of Aborigines.

In reference to the experience of members in the area of education, most aspects are covered, either by people who are in an advisory capacity or who are at present in a teaching situation. These include the areas of Pre-School, Primary, Secondary, Adult Education, tertiary plus teacher aide, Community Development workers and social workers. On the social aspect, members are derived from the traditional, fringe dwelling and the urban areas. With all these attributes, I feel the members of the NAEC have a very good balance for reflecting the views of their community's needs in Aboriginal Education.

Not all of the Aboriginal communities are represented on the NAEC as participants. It would be impractical to achieve such a situation. To give increased opportunity for representation on the committee members are appointed for two years with half the members retiring each year.

*Stephen Albert is Chairman of the N.A.E.C.*

I would like to spend some time on one of the resolutions of the first NAEC meeting which states

"It is the opinion of this committee that any committee, meeting to decide on any issues involving Aboriginal Education be composed of at least 50% Aboriginal membership".

This resolution is particularly relevant to the Northern Territory.

This statement reflects the feelings of the NAEC members and in many instances of Aborigines of this country that too many decisions are being made on behalf of the Aborigines without prior consultation or very little consultation with the Aborigines. It is not only logical that Aborigines should be involved in decision making but it is their human right that the Aboriginal people as a race choose their own destiny in this multi racial society that lives on their land. Thus it is necessary wherever possible for Aborigines to be involved where decisions are being made by committees on Aboriginal Education. Even conferences like this one should strike for more Aboriginal input and particularly the participation of more Aborigines than has been the case in the past.

In obtaining and formulating its advice to the Minister for Education and his Department, it is necessary for the NAEC to review and research existing projects and programs as well as initiate studies of its own. One project that the NAEC has undertaken as a matter of urgency is a study of the Black Community School in Townsville and submit a report to the Commonwealth Department of Education. The NAEC also wishes to make a detailed assessment of Early Childhood education programs involving Aboriginal children, and believes no other assessment should occur which would obviate any decision it makes. Both the Department of Education and Department of Aboriginal Affairs have welcomed the idea. The Early Childhood education is but only one aspect of the many areas in education. So there would be other projects and programs that the NAEC may wish to initiate.

Consultation with the Aboriginal people at all levels is one of the major roles of the NAEC. In order to carry out this role the NAEC has requested that State Aboriginal Education Advisory groups be set up to advise the State Departments of Education. This would ensure that consultation within the state with Aborigines can be achieved and the outcome expressed.

State members of the NAEC could also be on the State Consultative groups to ensure a common membership at state and national level. Between the NAEC and the State Aboriginal Consultative Groups, a national network could evolve which would include Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal organisations Aboriginal Teachers, Teacher Assistants Teacher Aids individuals and most important by Aboriginal Parents. When this network is achieved and becomes a working component, it is then up to the Government to respond positively.

## QUEENSLAND

John Budby

I work with the Department of Education in Queensland as an Advisory Teacher to two Inspectors of Schools and one of my roles is to visit communities and schools which have a large proportion of Aboriginal students. I attempt to visit each school at least three times a year and this paper is aimed at presenting some of the ideas that Aboriginal people have discussed with me. Obviously, communities in different parts of the state have different viewpoints and views on education. I intend concentrating on the Cape York area where the people are still in a fairly tribal existence. As a comparison I will present some points regarding Aboriginal people in the Brisbane and Ipswich urban areas.

The communities in the Cape York Peninsula area are under the control of the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement which is a state government department. I understand that in other states the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs controls the communities. One community, Aurukum, is controlled by the Board of Evangelical Missions and Relations. The Department itself tends to look after the senior positions which exist in the communities - positions such as the teaching staff, mechanics, project officers and the like. These jobs are being done by non-Aboriginal people and this is one of the major problems and concerns of the people.

Last year, Alan Randell from the Schools Commission, Alan Duncan from Sydney University, Margaret Valadian, Frank Young and myself conducted a survey of the Cape York area. We visited five communities, including Mornington Island, Aurukum, Bamaga, Yarabar and Kowanyama. We looked at the job opportunities that were available at each community and we discovered that there were at least 60 jobs being done by non-Aboriginal people - jobs that we felt could and should eventually be done by Aboriginal people. And this is a major concern of the people in these communities, as I said before, and they want an education which will allow their children to take on these particular roles. In actual fact, they want to become virtually self-supporting, with Aboriginal people running everything. Obviously there is the need for one or two non-Aboriginal people in each community, but most people feel that their goal is to become self-reliant.

Consequently, in the secondary school area, most of the programmes that have been devised are technically or pre-vocationally oriented and aimed also at equipping Aboriginal students with enough skills and expertise to be able, if they wish, to continue their education at tertiary institutions throughout the state. The emphasis is on traditional white Australian education rather than on teaching Aboriginal culture. The Aboriginal people feel that

*John Budby, an Advisory Teacher with the Queensland Education Department, is a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.*

the culture is best taught by the people themselves and there has been a suggestion that school terms and holidays should be arranged so that there is a period of time when the Aboriginal adults can take over and teach their children a bit of their culture. But the important thing is, that within the school itself, the Aboriginal people would prefer the concentration to be on the white educational system.

In the urban situation, the reverse holds true. At a recent conference I had with urban Aboriginal and Islander teacher aides in Brisbane, it was suggested and recommended that the Department of Education consider setting up camps in Western Queensland. These camps, holiday camps, would be run completely by Aboriginal people and would be open during vacation times to allow urban Aborigines to spend two weeks or so learning a little about hunting and gathering and the language and other cultural aspects of their people. The concern is obviously in the area of culture and urban Aboriginal people are very keen to have more culturally oriented programs. Of course, these kinds of camps or vacation schools could be set up also in the towns and urban areas so that Aboriginals and Islanders in the Cape York and other remote areas could get some idea of what it is like to live in a city or town.

Aboriginal people want teachers to become more involved in their communities. Many Aboriginal people have expressed to me their concern that most teachers rarely get to know the people in the community in which they are teaching. And this is a major problem. In Queensland we are hoping to overcome this to some extent by having teacher aides give some kind of orientation course for teachers going into particular communities for the first time. These courses will take place during the two or three days before the start of the school year. The aides will take teachers aside and basically outline for them, some of the problems that exist in the school and the community, the structure of the community and other aspects of community life that have a direct or indirect bearing on the functioning of the school. In this way we hope that teachers will take a greater interest in the community.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Paul Hughes

My talk will be a fairly general one concerning what Aboriginal communities and people expect of teachers and I will refer mainly to the South Australian situation of reserves, both the larger rural reserves and those near country towns. Perhaps the most significant thing that Aboriginal people are saying is that we want more Aboriginal teachers. It is all very wonderful having all these white fellows around the place but there is an absolute need, for two reasons, for having Aboriginals as teachers of Aboriginals. The first and major reason is that we can relate better to our own people. The second reason is that they ought to be there anyway, without importing strangers.

Aboriginal communities feel that the first thing they want in a teacher is someone who understands and has a real appreciation of life in an Aboriginal community and doesn't get hung up on the differences that exist - things like the time factor, kids turning up late for school, because last night was pension night and they have slept in; or kids going out visiting and getting home late; or purely and simply because the kids just want to sleep in for another couple of hours. Time means an awful lot in the normal school system where you start on the stroke of 9 o'clock, having morning tea at 10.30 and lunch at 12 o'clock and this sort of thing. In Aboriginal communities, time is not a major consideration and they want teachers who understand this sort of thing.

Another factor that causes problems is clothing. Aboriginal children very often wear clothing that is quite different from and often of a different quality from that worn by non-Aboriginal children. The kind of language spoken by most Aboriginal children with its shortened speech patterns and high proportion of swearing also causes difficulty. The shyness of Aboriginal children and their difficulty in coping with white-style authority structures is another problem area.

So the Aboriginal people want teachers who understand these kinds of things. They don't necessarily expect the teacher to condone them or accept them completely. But if they, the teachers, don't have an understanding, it inevitably leads to antagonism and other problems and the Aboriginal child ends up as the victim. More to the point, without this understanding, there develops a whole negative attitude on the part of the teacher, and instead of getting closer to the Aboriginal children and developing a more effective teacher-pupil relationship, the teacher withdraws and becomes over-influenced by his negative feelings.

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*Paul Hughes is a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.*



Another thing that people in Aboriginal communities have commented on is that teachers are so obviously different from the Aboriginal people. On most reserves teachers make up the majority of the non-Aboriginal population. They are respected and held in some kind of awe by most Aboriginal people. In fact, it is true that Aboriginal people have difficulty in relating effectively to them because they are so different. They are better dressed, more obviously affluent, have different speech behaviour, swear less, and are not anti-social in behaviour. (You generally don't find teachers drunk in the gutters). They are obviously different and are treated as being different.

Teachers do have a great influence because many Aboriginal people, like any ordinary parent, want their children to emulate them or, at least, to have the kinds of skills and expertise that teachers normally possess. This can lead to friction, particularly if the standards and the life style of the teacher are so different from, and so obviously unobtainable by the Aboriginal people. If the gap becomes too great then it is extremely difficult for an effective working relationship to develop.

Aboriginal people in South Australia regard teachers as advisors and there is a lot of pressure on teachers to become involved in community affairs in general, and not only those directly related to the school. They are often asked to assist various groups in organizing things, to act as mediators when arguments or disagreements arise, and to continually evaluate and assess ideas and projects on the basis of their experience and vast knowledge. A number of teachers remove themselves entirely from that kind of situation and refuse to become involved. Others do choose to become closely involved and act almost as community advisors.

Aboriginal parents, like all other parents, want teachers to provide their children with appropriate academic skills. They probably have greater expectations and apply greater subtle pressure than non-Aboriginal parents because by the time a child has reached Grade 4 or Grade 5 he has usually passed the level of academic ability of his parents. This means, of course, that the parent cannot provide the back-up and support that the normal non-Aboriginal parent can. More to the point, the Aboriginal parent is unable to really understand or make value judgments about what happens to his child in the classroom and so the teacher has to accept greater responsibility in this regard.

Aboriginal people want teachers to involve them, the Aboriginal people, in the schools much more than is the case at present. They don't very often come up and tell people about it. They don't stand up openly and say 'Find a way of involving us.' in general, but they do like to be involved in the school and the teacher should therefore, find a way of creating opportuni-

ties for this to happen. Schools tend to be 'closed' places and the teacher inevitably becomes so involved and preoccupied with what goes on inside the four walls of his classroom that he neglects the opportunities to be found outside. Teachers should look outside more and take advantage of these opportunities - particularly where there are people outside the school who have some particular skill or knowledge that teacher doesn't possess. A very great benefit, both to the teacher and to the Aboriginal parent is lost if this doesn't happen. More Aboriginal involvement in the school means more support for the Aboriginal children in that school. And I don't mean this in the 'academic' sense alone. The children need back-up and support in all kinds of areas and without it they are doomed to failure. This is especially so when the child has to travel that extra 20 miles or so to high school when he or she has completed their primary education.

South Australian Aboriginals, especially those in the southern areas, are expressing a great deal of concern about the teaching of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal studies in general in the classroom. They, the people would like to be a part of it but, at this stage, they have no idea as to how to go about it. The onus is on the teacher to incorporate this into the school system. The people feel that Aboriginal culture should be a part of the school for two major reasons. Firstly, they know that they are a part of Australia's history and cultural heritage and think it quite wrong that they are, on the whole, being disregarded. Secondly, they are seeking more information about their own culture themselves. In some communities 'traditional' culture has been lost or has broken down completely and they want to recapture and re-establish it as part of their life-style. Much of it has been recorded by anthropologists and others but the people don't have access to this information, or, even if they have access to it, they can't read it. Teachers can play a big part in this re-discovery of the past - if they want to.

Aboriginal people also expect teachers to have some kind of political skill. Teachers and others working in Aboriginal communities are often asked to manipulate people and things - particularly where the community is near a town and there are a lot of local politics and other issues such as race relations and the like involved. Parents expect teachers to play a part in this kind of activity. Quite apart from the local scene, the teacher must have the skills necessary to deal with government departments. Teachers are often asked by parents, 'How do we get this thing done by the Education Department?'. To change things means manipulating people and teachers must have the necessary skills if they are going to implement desirable changes. This applies, of course, not only to the Education Department but to the wider range of government departments which can influence Aboriginal affairs in general.

And talking of Aboriginal affairs in general, there is another issue that Aboriginal people are concerned with - the issue of running things for themselves. They are asking non-Aboriginals to assist them in political action to remove non-Aboriginal people from positions of influence in order for Aboriginal people themselves to take over. This is a difficult thing to come to grips with, I know. There is a belief held by some people that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is going to phase itself out of existence so that Aboriginals can run things for themselves. As far as I am concerned, none of their actions to-date have indicated that this is the case. But it must happen sooner or later if any significant changes are to take place.

Teachers in Aboriginal communities are always under all kinds of pressures and they have to possess considerable stamina in order to become fully involved in their communities and to respond to the pressure effectively. Stamina, understanding and commitment are three necessary attributes for a teacher to be in any way successful in an Aboriginal community.

These are just some of the expectations of Aboriginal people in South Australia. They apply, I feel, throughout Australia as well. It is high time that something was done to satisfy them.

# THE YOLŊU TEACHER

Kevin Rogers

In this short talk, I will tell you what my people at Ngukurr on the Roper River think about schools and teachers. Please remember that I speak for the Yugal people at Roper and not necessarily for Aboriginal people in other areas. I will discuss European teachers in our school but most of all I want to talk about our own Yolnu teachers.

## INTRODUCTION

The community's concept of the Yolŋu teacher is changing at Ngukurr. The Yolŋu teacher (this includes Teaching Assistants) was for many years seen as a helper and an odd jobs man. My community wants its Aboriginal teachers to be leaders, to help build an Aboriginal school sensitive to Aboriginal needs.

The community is being given a chance to determine and manage its own affairs. We can see that we must use education so that we can have the knowledge to make real choices.

## BI-CULTURAL EDUCATION

People at Ngukurr want bi-cultural education - they want children to reach a good standard in English, Reading and Maths, to gain knowledge to inform others and also to work for the community.

However, perhaps most important for us, we want children to be Aboriginal - to respect and understand their Aboriginal heritage. Many people now say how important it is for the young children to be taught Aboriginal ways. For education to be truly bi-cultural, it must allow for this. This feeling is the strongest one in my community. Aboriginal people must know their heritage - this is our backbone - without it we cannot be secure.

My community also understands that pride is increased through being truly Aboriginal; through moiety Aboriginal children can understand and respect the Aboriginal teacher. So too pride in our community is increased by having pride in culture and language.

With these two important aspects of bi-cultural education in mind, I would like you to consider some specific ways in which the community sees the Yolnu teachers, what they think of the Yolnu teacher and what they want of him.

## THE "IN-BETWEEN" MAN

My community can see the Yolŋu teacher as an "in-between" man, for he must be able to have the knowledge and respect to assist

in teaching culture and also be able to understand and work in the European ways in which he has been trained.

As an "in-between" man, the community knows that the Aboriginal teacher must teach the European teacher more about Aboriginal culture and ways. The European teacher must also help the Aboriginal teacher to be a real teacher. (He must not be seen as half a teacher so the community wants him to be taught basic skills on-site). Some would suggest that having these skills is more important than having a formal training.

#### ABORIGINAL AND EUROPEAN CO-OPERATION

My community knows that Aboriginal and European must work side by side but we also know that increasing responsibilities must be given to the Aboriginal teacher. The community acknowledges that Europeans and Aboriginals must also support one another. This means more work for both teachers. For the Aboriginal, it means learning about both ways. For the European teacher, it means learning about Aboriginal culture and accepting that they do not have to always be to the fore. My community wants to see the European teacher continue working as a supporter, a resource person, and a capable trainer. My community wants European people of this type.

#### SPECIAL WORK OF YOLNU TEACHERS

The community would like to see the Yolngu teacher play a more positive part in discipline in the school. If the Aboriginal teacher controls and disciplines children more he can explain to parents about children's actions.

The Yolnu teacher can control and discipline children by talking, explaining to parents. We see that Aboriginal children will listen and accept advice given by Aboriginals. But to do this the Aboriginal teacher must have respect through moiety.

The community is saying more now about the value of the Yolnu teacher as one who builds pride in being Aboriginal. We have already seen increased interest in Aboriginal culture programmes, involvement of Aboriginal teachers in developing an Aboriginal studies curriculum. These factors have made people talk about and think about teaching culture to children.

There is no doubt that this has helped the community to regard the Aboriginal teacher as a link or bridge between home and school. This is a two-way process. The people appreciate European teachers who gain understanding and who have the spirit to be involved and interested.

My community likes on the other hand to see the Aboriginal teachers involved in making decisions, and finding ways to develop under-

standing of education. It is the voice of the Aboriginal teacher which gives the community an opportunity to express feelings and to explain needs.

Because the community is secure with the Aboriginal teacher, we can see that more demands are being placed on us, the Aboriginal teacher.

We may often have to explain European ways or "complicated Balanda methods" which often bewilder or frustrate the people.

The community can also feel more secure if it knows that Aboriginal people, informed and able, are making decisions for them. For my people to make choices, they need time and alternatives. Usual practice from Government Departments is to offer neither of these. My community wants educated people like Yolnu teachers to find out about these things and to assist particularly in education in finding out what its priorities are. Some of us must be vocal and uncompromising for our community.

#### INCREASED INVOLVEMENT OF YOLNU TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS

My community is seeing an increased involvement of Yolnu teachers in schools. However, this will need to expand even more. Only in this way can the community really believe that we are playing a part and that Aboriginals can get somewhere and have a real future.

The community is expressing its support in the way in which Aboriginal teachers are becoming more involved, through training programmes, through developing Aboriginal studies and through adult education. We certainly know that the Aboriginal person is the best person to express communities wishes on things such as hours of instruction, organisation of the school year and in taking into fuller consideration the Aboriginal life style.

The community is thinking more seriously about the education of their children, but the community wants greater opportunities for the employment of Aboriginals in education (at least as many Aboriginals as Europeans in the school). It also wants commitment of staff to training and leading Aboriginals to the fore.

In keeping with a community which has a chance to make its future, my people strongly feel that the Yolnu teacher must immediately be given the opportunities, support and training to really show the way.

## **2.THE EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYERS**

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

James Eedle

Last year at the first national conference I raised some matters of general concern; now I have been asked to indicate how I think action might proceed. It may perhaps be of interest that of the 28 resolutions from last year's meeting having relevance to the Northern Territory, 16 are being implemented and the other 12 are being tackled.

Last year I advanced the case for education being considered as a function of social and economic development. I suggested that there are limits to what schools and educators can do unless other developmental activities are going on at the same time. This, of course, has implications for the style and attributes required of teachers. This morning I am speaking primarily against the background of the Northern Territory, where of 100,000 people, half are either Aboriginal or migrant. We must accommodate to change in the Territory. We cannot approach the majority of our people in Australia encouraging adaptation to an ever increasing pace of change and at the same time urge the Aboriginal people to conserve their traditional ways and resist change. It could not be done, even if it were desirable. At the same time we cannot expect too rapid changes. Attributes do not change easily. We must look at the time scales on which it is realistic to expect major changes to take place because very often we see things either on too short or too long a time scale. In some cases we think we have time in hand where we do not and at other times we believe that we can do things in a short term that we simply cannot. If impatience is sometimes counter-productive, laissez-faire can only invite disaster.

Change is coming to Aboriginal people, partly as a direct result of education, partly as a result of other factors, for example, the entry of the Aboriginal people into the money economy, the acceptance of Western time systems, increasing ease of travel, the influence of the media - the transistor radio has proved to be a major instrument for social revolution over the last 20 years. Even advances in health services have unforeseen consequences because as a result of improvements in health there is now not only an increased population in Aboriginal communities but a different age distribution. The populations are growing younger and this is bound to have an effect on the needs and the aspirations of the people who make up those communities. Questions are being asked in societies where

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*Dr James Eedle is the Director of the Northern Territory Branch of the Australian Education Department.*



questioning was never encouraged: this must threaten the established system. We may well reach the point that is clearly evident in the island of Malta, where an increasing number of parents are dependent economically on their children, who are more educated and employed at higher levels. This requires a great deal of understanding and accommodation on both sides.

Against this background, what sorts of people are needed as teachers? The basic requirement is for both white and black teachers who are able to adjust their programmes to the local needs without losing their general perspective. To achieve this they have to seek opinion from the people that they are trying to serve. More must be done to ensure that Aboriginal people are asked how they see their needs and their future before programmes are drawn up in detail. Teachers, too, must increasingly consider the needs over the whole range of ages. The time has gone when schools could turn out the youngsters at 14 or 15 and believe it was somebody else's responsibility then to pick them up and train them and employ them. All too frequently responsibility for adult education and training lies in different hands to that of school education and this makes articulation over the life span unnecessarily difficult.

Let me attempt to list the qualities required by teachers going into rural schools. First of all, goodwill, a wish to serve while not losing perspective, not losing balance. Tolerance and respect for others, while remaining firm to his own values and being secure in his own society. Gregariousness, the ability to mix easily with both white and black. Realism, to temper the idealism, and here I warn against an insidious paternalism which seems to be creeping back into some attitudes towards Aboriginal people. The next attribute required of a teacher is stamina. Teaching in rural areas in a different culture with not many of the niceties of town life is hard work. Teachers in these communities are always on display, they are never off duty, whatever they do in or out of school is observed. Next, persistence, the will to persevere. Resilience, to survive disappointment. Self-sufficiency; too few people going to small remote areas have the ability to live with themselves, to be sufficient unto themselves when they are a long way from artificial entertainment. Initiative, the ability to capitalise when the opportunities do occur. Humility, a willingness to learn: it is all too easy for young teachers to be deluded into a sense of power in a rural community because they are amongst the most educated (in the western sense) people in that community, they tend to feel that they have responsibility, power and influence among the people they are serving which is quite disproportionate to their years and their experience. For that

reason I would ask that as far as possible teachers going into these remoter areas have a broader base of experience; ideally they ought to be somewhat older people, preferably people whose experience has not been limited to work in education. This requirement could be met by encouraging more mature entries into the teaching profession. With experience comes a soundness of judgement; judgement of one's self, judgement of the people one is trying to serve, judgement of the education authorities, which can lead to a compassionate involvement without interference and advice without prescription. Underlying all this must be the confidence that arises from being professionally competent. (Indeed I sometimes feel that some of the teachers now emerging from the five year training courses are not markedly inferior to those that used to come out of the two year courses).

If these are necessary attributes, what are the desirable skills? First of all the very real direct skills of being self-sufficient, self-sufficient professionally and self-sufficient personally in order to be able to conduct one's own life and the school programme. Of professional skills I have no doubt in my own mind the most important is the ability to teach English as a second language and as a foreign language. There is no class of children in the whole of the Northern Territory where every child has English as its mother tongue, either because they are Aboriginal or because they belong to one of the other 50 nationalities living in the Territory.

I would like to see more teachers more skilled in dealing with a greater range of age and particularly more teachers able to influence mature men in the communities to accept education as being for them and not just "kid's stuff". We have turned out of schools in Aboriginal communities over the past years a number of people who have half completed courses or who now need to re-enter the education system. I have often thought that what we need is a sort of institution that we could call a "drop-in for drop-outs", where we could offer an informal approach to people who have started but never finished, or never got as far as they need to get. Another very important skill is to recognise modest handicap, physical and mental. In Central Australia anything between 15 and 60 per cent of children are markedly hearing-impaired: there is also a problem of trachoma, causing visual impairment. These are problems of respiratory infections. We have no precise instruments for measuring mental capacity and mental shortcomings. I am concerned that a number of children have not benefitted as they could from school because the teacher did not recognise that they could not quite hear him, or could not quite see and so allowed them to fall behind.

Finally, what other attributes are necessary for teachers in rural schools? A certain amount of knowledge, a knowledge of the

local history, of anthropology and anthropological principles, some elements of linguistics, and preferably a smattering of language of the people that he is going to serve. There is nothing like an attempt to speak somebody else's language to win goodwill: it does not have to be perfect, the fact that an attempt is made is indicative of the underlying interest in the people. A knowledge of tropical hygiene is most important in the Territory, as is some knowledge of the aims and ambitions of the children and the parents. The Federal Minister for Education reproached me the other day, saying that during a visit to one of our Aboriginal colleges he had asked two students what they wanted to be. One said he would like to be a fireman and the other said she would like to be a nurse. The Minister followed this up and found that the courses that were being provided meant that in the present circumstances it would be quite impossible for either of those students to enter either of those occupations. It does seem, therefore, that even though we do not see schooling as being exclusively vocational training, we ought at least to bear in mind that if we are promoting schooling as helpful towards a useful life in the modern society, it has to be directed positively to that end.

How do we acquire these paragons of teachers such as I have described? At present we employers are on a buyer's market and increasingly we are able to specify our requirements and expect to have our requirements met. If the best service is to be provided, it is important that the special skills and attributes that are required for working in Aboriginal communities should be developed and then put to the best use. To this end I would support the suggestion made last year for a national force of teachers for Aboriginal schools. It is not easy to create a cadre of high quality teachers when the overall numbers required nationally are relatively small and therefore career prospects are relatively limited. But if we could move across State boundaries and develop a national Aboriginal teaching service it would make it that much larger and we would have some of the benefits of scale.

I believe the teachers' organisations have some contribution to make towards ensuring the high quality of teachers, too, by developing themselves as a self-regulating profession with the courage to weed out those who are inadequate. If the teachers' unions are to perform as professional units then they have to take the unpopular decisions as well and not leave them all to the employing authority.

In the Northern Territory we must recognise that most of our teachers should come from interstate. We would not benefit in such a small system by the incestuous production of the bulk of our teachers from within our own population. We will be

shopping on the national market for a long time yet. We have already begun to develop this systematically. Teachers for the Northern Territory are already being produced at Bendigo; Torrens and Mount Lawley are beginning to help from next year. The CTS scholars who are being prepared in these colleges to serve in the Northern Territory will follow a prescribed course, including the teaching of English as a second language, social psychology and anthropology. We will maintain contact with these students while they are in training; they will do their teaching practice in the Territory, we shall supply them with all our publications and arrange for visits to the colleges by Territory staff.

We are also endeavouring to improve the quality of teachers in the Territory by an ambitious programme of induction courses, although it is very difficult to do in three weeks what the colleges have not done in five years. The style of the induction will probably be changed next year, by the institution of short induction courses before teachers go to their schools for the first time followed by a longer course during the first vacation, so enabling the course to be done against a background of practical experience. Teachers must then be backed up on a continuing basis by inservice training. There would be much merit in devising inservice training to provide a series of cumulative credits leading to a further qualification because it is very difficult to ask teachers to give up vacation periods for inservice training if the sum of the parts is nil, where however many courses you go on it adds up to nothing. We must also maintain good conditions of service to encourage good quality staff to offer their services, even if they come to the Territory only for a finite time. I believe, too, that we can encourage teachers to rise to the occasion by delegating more authority locally. Over the last year I have nominated the Principals of the larger schools in Aboriginal communities as local education advisors, responsible not only for the teaching in the school but also for co-ordinating the work in the bilingual programme and the adult education and being generally my representative in that community, relating directly to the Regional Education Advisers. My aim is to provide support without suffocation, allowing local initiatives within policy guidelines.

One major problem in the Territory is the lack of continuity of staff and even that may be easing. Another difficulty is that of providing educational services to fragmenting communities, as tribal people return to their homelands. Then again we are confronted with a bureaucratic mentality which cannot easily distinguish education from forms of governmental involvement.

So far my comments have related primarily to non-Aboriginal

teachers but, as I said last year, the longer term solution lies in the production of an adequate number of Aboriginal teachers. This is the key to longer term stability; this is the key, too, to the acceptance of education in the communities, provided it does not lead to apartheid. I doubt the wisdom of single race staffs, black or white. As Margaret Mead said on Monday Conference a couple of weeks ago, once you begin to draw apart in that way, what you have is not a multi-cultural society, it is a fragmented society. Achimota School in Ghana, has as its coat of arms a section of a piano keyboard. When its first Principal and Vice Principal - a Scotsman and a Ghanaian, Fraser and Aggrey devised it in 1925, they declared that music could not be drawn from a piano by using the white notes or the black notes alone; only when both are played together is the potential of the instrument realised.

We must produce more Aboriginal teachers locally, and we can do so. We have begun at Batchelor; we are starting at Ti Tree next year and we are hoping that we can come to some arrangements with Torrens and Townsville to help us out as well.

What qualities would employers look for from Aboriginal teachers? First among them is a strength of character, because an Aboriginal teacher working in his own community has to accommodate to a whole range of pressures that are not brought upon the non-Aboriginal. The non-Aboriginal is an outsider, and while this can have some disadvantages it also relieves him of local family and social pressures. An Aboriginal teacher needs that much more strength to be able to resolve his position in his own society while he is purveying a western style of education. Coupled with that is common-sense and an ability to take advantage of the local circumstances as they arise. I would see Aboriginal teachers developing in the style of the French "animateur" becoming the local force for progress while not necessarily leading from the front but rather exerting influence, not only in education but in health, welfare and development generally. The establishment in the Northern Territory of a School of Community Health, Education and Welfare, where Departments pool resources to train Aboriginal health workers, Aboriginal teachers, Aboriginal social welfare assistants and others is a step in this direction. Finally, Aboriginal teachers have to indicate that they believe that teaching is a job for men. In saying this I do not disparage the contribution of women to education, but it is important for Aboriginal children, particularly at present, to see models of success; one of these would be to see a substantial number of Aboriginal male teachers as well as female. Staffing restrictions do not make progress easy but I hope that if the National Strategy for Aboriginal Employment comes into being, then we ought to be able to double our present number of 300 Aboriginal teachers.

More urgency is needed in training Aboriginal teachers. We must take chances. If we wait for the appropriate time to come before allowing Aboriginal people to move into positions of influence and authority, the time will never be ripe. A White Paper on Education in Nigeria in 1949 said that by the year 2000 a few Nigerians might well hold senior positions; of course the country was independent eleven years later. There is not the same intense motivation here, but we could nevertheless usefully adopt the United Nations' principle of counterpart staff, understanding at higher levels with a commitment that within a given target period they would take over these positions.

Another move which I believe to be important is for teachers' organisations to accept Aboriginal teachers as members. The Northern Territory Teachers' Federation at its annual conference this week is discussing associate membership for Aboriginal teaching assistants. Aboriginal teachers must feel that they are part of the overall teaching force.

It is possible, then, to state with some precision the requirements for teachers who will work with Aboriginal students. The next step is to examine the means by which such teachers are produced initially and supported professionally later. Having brought teachers together at two national conferences, there is a strong case now for a meeting to consider the selection and work of those teacher educators and advisors who prepare students to work with Aboriginal people and provide professional support through inservice programmes. This would help to ensure a common approach throughout Australia and make possible the highest quality of service to Aboriginal communities.

# **3.THE EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

## DERBY

Sr. Leone Collins

I feel a need to establish what I consider is the role of the Principal - and I speak from experience in the primary school only - experience gained in a semi-tribal situation, non-tribal situation, multi-racial situation and, at present, where a number of the children come from the Kimberley outback, are from the non-tribal town groupings or are European. This may help to broaden or provide awareness of the various situations the teacher is expected to cope with.

I think the Principal has to:

1. Act as a leader of professionals and paraprofessionals committed to the education of children. Included here are teachers, teacher aides and auxiliary staff such as various advisory personnel, social worker, liaison officer, school nurse and dental therapist.

2. See that the pupils enrolled at the school receive the education they have a right to. These may include children whose families:

are long-term business proprietors;  
have been born and bred in the town or surrounding districts;  
make up what I call the floating population - mainly government personnel who are in the town for a period of a few months to two or three years.

3. Respond in an appropriate way to the parents of the local community, where we may find:

those who have had the opportunity of lengthy education, with high expectations of their children and very ambitious for their future;  
those born in the area with a minimal period of education, yet ambitious for their children;  
parents who have not had the opportunity of any schooling and, therefore, have little or no understanding and appreciation of the school;  
those whose concept of the school differs from our own, and which often comes across to us as the parents having no interest in their children.

The Principal then becomes a catalyst, for after listening to and discovering the needs of the children and the desires, hopes and fears of the parents, there is the necessity to bring the staff to the point of sensitivity that provides the climate for the personal development of all individuals.

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*Sister Leone Collins is Principal of Holy Rosary Primary School, Derby, W.A.*



Now, that is how I see the role of the Principal developing in the primary school. Feel free to differ and I'd be delighted to hear from anyone who does. Because of what I have said about the Principal, the following are my expectations of new staff:

- a) Skill in getting one's message across;
- b) Concern for the personal self-development of the children;
- c) To accept the challenge of developing creativity and initiative.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF NEW STAFF:

##### Skill in getting one's message across.

What does it mean? It means the teacher must be thoroughly professional, must know what he is about and how to get there. Therefore, classroom management is an essential part of teacher competence. Firstly, the teacher must feel confident that the training received has provided all the skills and techniques to equip him for the organization of himself and the classroom,

Experience will deepen one's awareness and competence but experience is associated with time, and the teacher new to a classroom cannot afford time gaining experience in order to become reasonably skillful in knowing how to organize the classroom. To be faced with thirty healthy, and hopefully, eager new youngsters is a challenge to any teacher, particularly, when some or the majority are of a culture new to the experience of the teacher. A head full of theory will not provide the answer to the question, "What do I do with them?" If there are half-a-dozen hyperactive youngsters used to the freedom of the ranges one can expect problems if one does not know how to organize the class.

If there is one or more than one minority group in the classroom there will be the added necessity to adapt the curriculum accordingly. One can only do this when one first of all knows the basic curriculum, is well versed in the language arts and methods of teaching.

Quite possibly there will be a teacher aide in the classroom waiting eagerly to assist the new teacher. It's also likely the teacher aide knows the children and the routine of the day and will be helpful because of this, but if the teacher is unable to take control of the situation and settle all to work within a short time the children will have sensed the lack in the authority figure and respond accordingly.

The teacher aide can be a dynamic force in the classroom, supportive, informative and act as an intermediary. To function in this way the teacher aide needs to feel the security in the knowledge

and skill of the teacher, for it is the teacher who holds the responsibility of the children, not the teacher aide.

I feel the need for particular emphasis on this aspect of classroom management. Skillful use of one's own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of the aide can result in powerful teamwork but this cannot be developed if the teacher is unable to demonstrate method and direct his assistant accordingly. Without the knowledge of basic method there can be no adaptation and no foundation for team work.

Often the teacher aide will be of the same cultural background as the children and this common link will be noticed by the teacher. A knowledge of sociology and anthropology will be supportive here but this situation can provide a challenge for the use of classroom management skills.

The remark has been heard more than once coming from teacher aides - "They give us the duds!" (I disagree with the label). Perhaps it's true because the teacher thinks the cultural link is the answer - that maybe part of it, but it is not the total answer - the know how is vitally important. Whether the Aide is given the "duds" or those who are able to cope, the know how is still most important for the Aide, therefore a must for the teacher.

The teacher must be well prepared in order to be well organized throughout the day and unless the basic knowledge of how to go about things is part of one, new challenges will frustrate and disappoint.

A further aspect of this area of classroom management is that of being able to relate with children and to develop quickly a good rapport from the word "go".

#### PERSONAL SELF DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

An essential role of the teacher expected by parents, children and principals is that of self-development of the child. Centred on discipline, self-development, beginning in the early months of infancy and continuing throughout life, must be nurtured in the child if he or she is to solve difficulties in later life. In working through mistakes as they occur, the child should be able to find support and direction from the teacher. Some teachers fear using disciplinary methods in case they damage the child. Fear of a different culture may cause a teacher to withhold discipline at a time when the child needs it, but this will not present any great difficulty if the teacher is aware of the problems a child experiences at the merging of two cultures and is sensitive to the child being a child, therefore, needing direction.

Every child has to take his place eventually in a society that at any time may be hostile or kind. For some, after school years, it may be to return to the scene of the tribal life but for others the unknown lands of the broader world may attract. Not one of us is justified in making a judgement of what the future holds for any one of the children we teach. So we have to prepare the children as best we can to cope with either style of living. If we keep this in mind the children will not become "experimental objects" for the radical teacher.

Children have a keen sense of justice and ready acceptance of each at the level he is at, is a must for every teacher. Not an easy task but a vitally important one.

### CREATIVITY AND INITIATIVE

A challenge for every teacher is that of providing scope for children to use and develop their natural abilities and initiative. No matter whether the child comes from the Kimberley outback, one of Australia's big cities or from overseas, each has something that makes him unique, therefore important. The development of initiative, of creativity and originality can be a question mark for a teacher. Is it worth it? Can I cope with the individual who displays such qualities? Or must each child fit into a mould?

A sympathetic understanding of children experiencing the problems of adapting to new ways opened up by the merging of cultures is a quality desired in every teacher coming to a school where such a situation occurs. The knowledge gained through anthropology and sociology will be the supporting factor for this teacher.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I point to classroom management - method in how to organize oneself, the children, teacher aide and maybe a willing parent who lends a hand with reading.

This is the plea consistently heard from teacher, aide and student - provide basic method that fits one to teach.

Perhaps you are conscious of the absence of the word "aboriginal", Does it leave an unanswered question in your mind?

## MILINGIMBI

David McClay

What do we expect of new staff...? OR What would we like to be able to expect of new staff? These are two very different things. I'm going to talk about the latter, the ideal situation in which I get what I want.

New staff are often unprepared for the task they face. Some learn quickly and cope but others are overwhelmed by the task and make few positive contributions to the education of the children in their care. We can probably all think of teachers whose influence on the children has even been quite damaging.

My own viewpoint is that of a Principal working in a remote school catering for primarily Aboriginal children. It is bilingual and bicultural but my comments are more general and could apply to most schools where there are Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory at least.

Let's look at the progress of a not untypical first year teacher in an Aboriginal school in the Northern Territory - Mr. or Ms. "New Teacher". New Teacher arrives full of enthusiasm, bright-eyed, naive, - the great moment has arrived - the culmination of several years preparation, the realization often of many dreams.

New Teacher sets to work with a will often plunging into language study at the same time as setting up a class. The Principal, of course, is run off his feet and has little time to help New Teacher especially since at least half of his staff could well be new.

By the middle of the first term New Teacher has hit rock bottom. The climate has often been hard to take, the insect life has caused legs to swell and ulcerate; the children don't seem to respond to anything offered and they are hard to communicate with; the parents are distant figures impossibly remote and seemingly uninterested; the active social life New Teacher led before has given way to long periods of loneliness and isolation; the language is impossible to learn and why bother anyway.

This, I believe, is the crucial make or break point. Some new teachers at this stage start to take a more realistic view of their work and of themselves, start to find out who can help them, start to find ways of coping. It is very much a case of "work out your own salvation". Others, however, thrash around in this morass never coming to grips with their job and ultimately resign or transfer after a year.

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*David McClay is Principal of Milingimbi Primary School, Milingimbi, Northern Territory.*

There are several qualities I see as highly desirable for new staff if they are going to be able to get up and "work out their own salvation". Some are personal qualities. Others are dependent on training.

Firstly, I would expect that a new teacher should be able to cope adequately in his own society. Some young people simply cannot relate to other people from their own culture. I have met teacher trainees who are totally unskilled in the delicate field of interpersonal communication - the sort of person who just doesn't know how to carry on a conversation. Such a person will nearly always be ineffectual in an Aboriginal community. A certain gregariousness is necessary.

Worse still is the sort of person with all sorts of personal hangups and problems. I met one young teacher recently who related his past history to me which started with drugs, went through the occult to witchcraft and one to a very unorthodox branch of christianity. Now I'm not arguing for short back and sides or middle of the road politics. But I am asking that new teachers, young teachers going outside their own culture to work with people of another culture at least be on the road to maturity, at least be basically sound, well adjusted people. Social misfits have no place in our schools. There will be plenty of time to develop mild eccentricities after 20years of teaching.

Secondly, I would expect that new staff coming into a school are positively motivated towards teaching Aboriginal children. We still get the occasional teacher who finds himself or herself in an Aboriginal community only to discover that he or she has no empathy with Aborigines and no desire to teach them. Some harbour latent racist attitudes. For example, a teacher may be hardworking and conscientious in the classroom but then will not allow the children to approach her house let alone in it. Is it not possible to identify these people and steer them away from Aboriginal communities? Far more subtle and common however is the teacher with such a strong ethnocentric outlook that he is not able to view Aboriginal children and their society dispassionately. The tragedy with this sort of teacher is that he can't see what is wrong. To those around him who observe his thrashing around, his search for "solutions", his setting up of scapegoats for the mess he is in it is all too obvious. His view is unrealistic, it is hopelessly biased and subjective.

Yet the teacher can't see that. He judges the other society always from his own elevated viewpoint and always finds it wanting. Such a person may initially think he is motivated towards teaching Aboriginal children yet after a short space of time New Teacher will decide that the children can't be educated and will simply give up. Very rarely does such a person trace the problems back to himself. I remember one teacher we had who

lasted 6 weeks, before he resigned. This fellow had worked in Mexico but decided they were "spoilt". He then trained for 3 years with the aim of teaching Aborigines who were presumably "unspoilt" people. Milingimbi came as a shock. He left chastened but still clinging to his dream - he was off to the Pacific Islands where he had heard Paradise was located. (Needless to say he had a rich father who bought him out of bonds and gave him airline tickets and other nice things). New Teacher then should display a sincere and genuine interest in children and in teaching Aboriginal children. He should understand what that means before arrival and preferably by having had some practise teaching experience in the sort of school he hopes to teach in.

Thirdly, I would expect that new staff have had professional training in basic teaching skills. Now all College staff present will, I suspect, groan to themselves and say, "but of course we do this, of course we give them training in the basic areas". Good! But why is it then that so many young teachers seem to have so few skills at their disposal? I expect a new teacher should be able to teach reading. He should have a theoretical background and plenty of different practical approaches. He should understand the nature of literacy especially since he could find himself helping an Aboriginal teacher develop a reading programme in the vernacular. The new teacher must have training in the techniques of teaching English as a second language. Oral English is all important. If a teacher is going to work in the Northern Territory with Aboriginal children it is no good to think of himself as say an Art teacher or a Physical Education teacher. All teachers should have this knowledge of the principles of TESL. Many others should specialize in it.

Maths and social studies - these are the other basic areas a teacher must have training in. As well as instructional method I would see training in "curriculum design" as being important - in other words a teacher should be able to start from scratch and build up a teaching programme if the conditions demand it - conditions such as a poorly organized remote school or say a 1 or 2 teacher school in a remote area with few resources. A teacher needs to be a kind of magician - a showman with an infinite supply of tricks up his sleeve. His training should supply him with those tricks.

Fourthly, I would expect that new staff would have a degree of sensitivity for people. More and more, in the Northern Territory, at least, "Working in a school with Aboriginal children" implies working with Aboriginal adults - with Aboriginal teachers and teaching assistants. In my own school we have 12 Aboriginal Teaching Assistants whose average length of time teaching in the school is 6 years. The average length of time teaching of the 12 European classroom teachers is 2 years.

So often I see the situation of a young teacher coming into the school. New Teacher is fresh out of College - for 3 years he has been training but now its the real thing - a class of his own and those with their sleeves full of magicians tricks are ready to perform. And suddenly I'm down on them telling them to slow down, to back off even, to work with and through their Aboriginal co-worker. This comes as a blow to many young teachers. They have simply not been prepared to work in with another person let alone a person who may appear so shy, so quiet, so passive. Why not take over? Why not get this class moving? And how easily a barrier can go up between teacher and teacher - the one trained formally in an academic sense, the other trained on the job and having a whole array of skills and knowledge that may go unnoticed and untapped. The new teacher then should be prepared to work with Aboriginal staff. In one sense he may be training the Aboriginal teacher. But a relationship of teacher-trainee is not a healthy one to adopt in most cases, especially when the so-called "trainee" may have been working for 5 - 10 years already and the "teacher" is in his first year.

This ability to relate to other people was touched on in my first point - here I refer specifically to the ability to relate to Aboriginal people. Recently one of my teachers came to see me about her class. Attendance was way down and to use her words "she was at the end of her tether". I asked who the children were who were not coming and then asked her to list the parents. As I suspected she didn't know. What I suggested that one of the most positive things she could do to improve attendance in her class was to get to know the parents of the children she taught, the reply was "I'm no good at that sort of thing. I have trouble talking to people. I just wouldn't know what to say." Now that was from a teacher in her 3rd year of teaching. She is planning to keep on working with Aboriginal children. But she has no intention of interacting with the community outside the school. She claims to be unable to do so.

Lastly, I would expect that a new teacher should be well on the way to a realization of his own ethnocentrism and well on the way to reducing it. In other words New Teacher should be aware of the other culture and have a positive regard for it. This is an area in which basic training can help a lot. New Teacher should be given training in language learning techniques. He should have been helped through that mental block that most of us have that says language learning is an impossibility for me. (Yet of course not impossible for 30 children to whom he is going to teach a second language). It is also important to help the new teacher understand the nature of bilingualism and understand the problems the second language learner faces. Aboriginal studies is an obvious area. But not just a purely theoretical study of the idealized traditional life. The study should include contemporary lifestyles and issues.

A third area could be a study of Western culture pinpointing our own attitudes, values, customs, idiosyncrasies and absurdities.

The aim then would be to help New Teacher respond positively to the diversity of behaviour he will encounter in the cross-cultural situation. New Teacher should have as one of his major aims that he will assist children to maintain and extend identification with and pride in the mother culture (hopefully this will also include the mother language). New Teacher should approach his work with this bicultural outlook.

In summary then, the qualities I would expect in a new teacher going to work with Aboriginal children are:

1. The ability to cope with his own society. A teacher with good mental health.
2. A genuine and sincere interest in Aboriginal children.
3. Sound professional and academic training in basic subjects at least.
4. Sensitivity to people.
5. Cultural awareness.



## WALGETT

Laurie Craddock

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Where new staff are concerned, I believe there are some things we can reasonably take for granted. Obviously we would expect that a teacher fresh from college would have received a liberal education, and have a basic knowledge of teaching techniques. The ones that I would like to focus on are, I believe, those most crucial for success, and the ones where the greatest weaknesses are manifested.

I have some sympathy for the training institutions. They are often unjustly criticized for shortcomings that are not really theirs. Studies such as that done in Armidale in 1972 show how hard it is to produce permanent attitudinal change in student teachers. Nonetheless colleges can sensitize students to important issues and lay the foundations for professional development.

The teaching-learning process is an interaction. Where Aboriginal children are concerned an empathetic relationship between teacher and learner is essential. Because success is unlikely without it there are implications for teacher education establishments.

Young teachers ought to:

1. Be aware of cultural difference, especially in relation to social mores, and its effects on education;
2. Be aware that socially disadvantaged groups often have psychological problems of adjustment;
3. Have a determination to accept each pupil, communicate positive regard, be tolerant; and,
4. Have attained relative personal maturity.

The second area in which I believe teacher preparation can be significantly improved is in the development of professionalism. In recent years I have had contact with a large number of American teachers. One feature of good American teachers that stands out is their professionalism. Australian teachers, especially since the Vietnam war period, tend to be dedicated and rate highly on idealism, but dedication and idealism do not quite equate with professionalism.

I do not intend to essay on professionalism, but I would like to see in young teachers, internalized attitudes that would see

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them, when confronted with problems:

1. Seeking proper advice from other professional persons;
2. Researching questions e.g. from the available literature, and experimenting where necessary to find answers;
3. Realising that the way they were taught was not necessarily the best or only way;
4. Presenting themselves to their clients as professionals, which implies having some regard for the clients expectations in everything from dress to behaviour; and
5. Having a far better understanding of the relationship of the school to its community than is presently the case, and the implications of this relationship for curriculum.

There are obvious implications in the forgoing for teacher education bodies and for departments responsible for continuing education.

One final matter needs attention. We talk a lot about screening and we certainly need to do something about screening teachers who are going to work with Aboriginal children. Colleges need to refer relevant material about ex-students to the employing authorities. Over a three-year period colleges can surely assess the developing maturity level of the student teacher and make a succinct statement to the employing authority. I will not accept that employing authorities cannot at least have a quick assessment made by e.g. a principal, on potential appointees to the more sensitive educational areas. Of course some potential good teachers will be screened out, and some will still get through who should not, but the nett result must be a better staffing of arguably, the nations most significant schools.

# **4.TEACHER PREPARATION FOR ABORIGINAL EDUCATION**

## BENDIGO STATE COLLEGE

Len Hall

In Victoria teachers are trained for service in the Aboriginal context as:

1. Resource Teachers with the Victorian Education Department. These teachers are placed in schools of high or significant Aboriginal population to assist the children with their special educational difficulties, to act as liaison between the school and its teachers on the one hand, and the Aboriginal parents and community on the other, and to assist teachers in the schools with more effective teaching about Aborigines.
2. Teachers with the C.T.S. to teach in the Northern Territory.
3. Teachers who will teach about Aborigines.

The Aboriginal community seeks to gain fully qualified Aboriginal teachers alongside non-Aboriginal teachers in the schools. To that end, they seek admission to Victorian colleges to enable them to undertake the same Diploma of Teaching, on the same terms, as is done by the non-Aboriginal student. The only concession sought (and granted by most colleges) is in the area of special Aboriginal entry.

Almost all colleges make no special distinction within the course for students intending to follow a special interest in the Aboriginal context. Apart from some colleges conducting short units on "Aborigines", little more is attempted. The Victorian Division of the C.T.S. recognises this, and issues its students with a special bibliography on Aboriginal Education, which it recommends the students should follow up personally.

Bendigo C.A.E. is the only college which is the exception, so I propose to limit this description to what Bendigo does.

In general, the deliberations and reports of the two major Conferences-Seminars-Workshops on Aboriginal Education:-

Canberra 1973

Adelaide 1976

have formed the charter of the blue print for the development of what happens at Bendigo in courses in Aboriginal Education.

### 1. Courses

#### (a) Pre-Service

All students may, many do, and all C.T.S. students must

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select from the course elements available, those which are directly relevant to teaching in an Aboriginal situation. They are:-

- (i) A major (3 year study) in Social Science Education which includes:
    - studies in Ethnicity, Race and Race Relations
    - contact history
    - Aboriginal Studies (a full year)
    - Aboriginal language elementsand may include:
    - group dynamics: study of the pressures in isolated communities.
  - (ii) A major study in Education which includes:
    - Teaching English as a Second Language
    - Remedial Teaching
  - (iii) A Sub-major (2 year study) in English which includes:
    - Primary School Language Arts
    - the study of Language
  - (iv) A single (1 year) unit in Mathematics Education
  - (v) Practical Teaching Experience including
    - possibility of teaching in an Aboriginal situation in second year
    - teaching in an Aboriginal situation in third year, at least once.
- (b) (i) In Service
- At present approved on the V.I.C. Master Plan and undergoing the accreditation process for commencement in 1978, the post-graduate Diploma in Aboriginal Education
- This is to provide:
- (a) a program of study to enable teachers who are equipped as above, and who have a demonstrable interest in the area of Aboriginal education to extend their competence in order to undertake more effective responsibility in this area;
  - (b) a qualification for teachers in a career structure requiring a fourth year of study - the qualification to be equal in vigour and status to other similar fourth year qualifications;
- At the moment, teachers in the Aboriginal context in Victoria in this situation are required to undertake irrelevant studies, outside their immediate field of interest and practice, if they are to acquire a qualifi-

cation that is recognised. This PGI, provides the relevant qualification.

CORE STUDIES:

Aboriginal Australia  
Cross-Cultural Psychology  
Introduction to Language  
Curriculum Development  
Teaching English as a Second Language  
Language, Reading and Reading Disability

OPTIONAL (2):

Human Relations in Educational Administration  
Social Policy and Education  
Aboriginal Art, Music and Dance  
Field Experience for students without practical experience in an Aboriginal context; or Special Theoretical study for others.

2. People-centred

As in other culture studies carried out in the Department of Social Science Education, it is recognised that it is impossible to carry out a valid culture study in Aboriginal Australia without the students coming into direct sustained personal contact with Aboriginal people from a wide diversity of Aboriginal situations. Since the main aim of the culture study on Aboriginal Australia is to enable the prospective teacher to discover something about himself and his personal reactions to Aboriginal situations, and to enable him to develop attitudes appropriate for a teacher who is either going to teach Aborigines or is going to teach about Aborigines, there is no other way whereby this might be done with validity. It is primarily an emotive rather than an intellectual matter.

Means used are:

- (i) teaching practice in Aboriginal situations
- (ii) field work in Aboriginal situations
- (iii) Aboriginal visitors to the College to meet with and talk to students

These three aspects together are the laboratory of the culture study of Aboriginal Australia.

3. Teacher Training for Aborigines

This particularly concerns the training of Aboriginal teachers for communities of distinctively Aboriginal people, usually of low Europeanisation. Bendigo does not concern itself with this activity. However, by the Special Aboriginal Entry Scheme, Aboriginal people are enabled to enrol for the normal Diploma of Teaching (Primary). Under

the N.E.A.T. Scheme, a tutor is engaged by the administration, to act as special tutor to these students. In addition, two staff members have duties as Counsellors to Aboriginal students.

#### 4. Staff: Teacher Educators

(a) Aboriginal people in the teaching team

This need is recognised by the College. It was one of the earliest factors to be introduced when these courses first started some years ago. Whilst it has always been recognised that it was necessary, ultimately, to have a full time Aboriginal staff member, it is only recently that the College has initiated positive steps towards achieving this end. It has also taken steps to secure the appointment of an Aboriginal Resource Person/Trainee. An important program for involving Aboriginal people in the teaching team over the years has been the Aboriginal visitors scheme, whereby 6-8 Aboriginal people from diverse Aboriginal situations are invited each year to the College for varying periods of time. While at the College they meet students and tell them about their own personal lives as Aborigines, and what is important to them about being an Aborigine, what is special about being an Aborigine, what is valuable about being an Aborigine and what is difficult about being an Aborigine. The College now needs to direct its attention to finding ways of including a training element for the Aboriginal visitor himself.

(b) Lecturers who are graduates as specialists in Aboriginal Studies and Education, generally do not exist as such, yet are required for the courses. In effect it means appointing concerned people whose speciality lies in allied disciplines (e.g. linguistics, anthropology, history, sociology, etc. etc.) and who are teachers, and, after appointment, by conscious and deliberate college policy, enabling them to acquire the additional expertise they need. The details of this are dealt with in (c) following.

In general, this program is proceeding and an increasing number of staff have had direct personal contact with Aboriginal Australia, probably a greater proportion than any other College in Victoria.

(c) Each year, a number of staff, who are directly involved with students preparing for teaching in the Aboriginal context, are kept in personal touch

with the Aboriginal situation.

- (i) Staff visit students who are doing their teaching practice in Aboriginal schools. They will sometimes visit Aboriginal schools which do not yet have our students in them, in order to look at the situation and try to arrange for the school to become another of our training schools. With the approval of the appropriate state administrators, this has been done in a number of schools in N.S.W. and S.A.

Visits are also made to Aboriginal communities in order to seek ways in which students may be able to spend some time in those communities. Staff are then involved in conducting student residential field work in these communities.

These activities are invaluable means of keeping staff members in personal touch with the Aboriginal situation. The extent to which the staff are able to do this, in many ways determines the validity the course has in the eyes of Aboriginal people and of Aboriginal educators.

- (ii) Exchange programs with teachers in Aboriginal situations are recognised as desirable, and there are staff in this College who would avail themselves of such opportunities. (The College is at present negotiating with the Education Department of the Northern Territory to see how such a program could be set up.)
- (iii) There are Conferences, Workshops, Seminars, etc. at which it is important that this College be present. Indeed it is these workshops which, in recent years, have hammered out the broad policy guidelines and goals that colleges engaged in Aboriginal Education try to work to. In addition to the contributory content that a staff member brings to such a workshop, attendance and participation themselves provide an enriching experience, and extend the expertise of the College itself.

## 5. Evaluation

At present, in the absence of any reliable methods, this is based on quite subjective personal judgements on how the courses in general are meeting their aims. It is, of course,



acknowledged that the main aim is to enable students to come face to face with themselves to enable them to discover something about themselves and how they personally react to the Aboriginal situation as persons and as teachers. To do this, the course needs to provide opportunities (the more, the better), for each student to meet with Aboriginal people and for each student to interact in Aboriginal situations.

The course also needs to provide opportunities for the students to share their experiences and their reactions to those experiences. However, what is experienced directly needs to happen to a person who is accurately informed about the Aboriginal situation. The course, therefore, needs to provide a solid intellectual content, not only to provide the accurate information, but also to counteract the usual misinformation most Australians have picked up in their schooling and by living in the white world. The course needs to be evaluated against these criteria, namely, that it is providing students with the most possible, and best quality experiences of this nature.

6. The following is the pre-service course that is undertaken by all C.T.S. students who come to the College. Non C.T.S. students, of course, may elect to do it too, and quite a number do.

<u>YEAR 1</u>	<u>YEAR 2</u>	<u>YEAR 3</u>
Major (3 hours p.w.) Social Science Education (Discipline Studies)	Major (4 hours p.w.) Social Science Education (Discipline Studies and Ethnicity and Race Relations)	Major (4 hours p.w.) Social Science Education (Aboriginal Studies)
Sub Major (3 hrs p.w.) English - Language I plus either Children's Literature or Drama	Sub Major English - Language II plus Primary School Language Arts	
Single Unit (3 h.p.w.) Mathematics Education  Single Unit (3 h.p.w.) either Art Education or Music or Science Education	Curriculum Studies (6 hours p.w.) Studies in Mathematics, Educational Media, Science, Art, Music, Physical Education, Integrated Studies and Reading	
Education I	Education II	Education III 1st Semester T.E.S.L. 2nd Semester Remedial Education (4 h.p.w.)
School Induction: 16 days PPT 1 h.p.w. Training Schools	School Experience: 36 days PPT 1 h.p.w. Training Schools (including the possibility of Abor- iginal situations, either Vic., N.S.W., or S.A.)	School Experience: 47 days. Programme: Melbourne/Northern Territory Training Schools PPT 2 h.p.w.

## 7. Conclusion

For the teacher, each Aboriginal situation is an individual one. Ultimately the young teacher must make his own adjustment to the situation he finds himself in. We believe the college courses will help him to be able to do it more easily. The graduating teacher needs to be professionally prepared to adjust to teaching in a wide variety of inter and cross-cultural situations, including adult and community education. The fact that Aboriginal situations are stressed in this aspect of this College's training does not mean that the graduate is professionally prepared for nothing else - nor should it. Actually, the graduate thus prepared should be able to be also a highly effective teacher in a mono-cultural, anglocentric teaching situation in Victoria if he were to be placed there.

It is really teacher preparation for diversity, i.e. that the teacher has been prepared by the development of appropriate sensitivities and attitudes, to function in situations very different from his own. Hence, for example, little attention is given to intense examination of the Aborigines of the north - the tribal - as distinct from the urban Aborigines of the south. Rather Aboriginal Australia, with its rich diversity and variety, is the subject of study. One can fine down distinctions, but, for purposes of teacher preparation, we reject, for intense study, the distinction between north and south, between one side of a river from another, and so on, as being impractical, preferring to acknowledge that there is a richness of Aboriginality in Australia amongst the diversity of its expression - as, indeed, it always has been.

It is this that we seek to prepare a teacher to understand and to handle in pre-service qualification, whether he is teaching Aborigines directly or teaching about Aborigines.

## MOUNT LAWLEY COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

John Sherwood

Until 1973, there was no specialised training of teachers for Aboriginal education in Western Australia. The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) was established at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education (then a Teachers College) to develop a variety of pre-service and in-service programs for Aboriginal education.

Aboriginal Studies at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education is taught within the context of Intercultural Studies, which offers students insights from the experiences and needs of a variety of ethnic minorities in Australia and overseas, and the development of educational approaches which are appropriate for cultural and linguistic differences in pupils. Intercultural Studies is based on a recognition that Australia is a multicultural society, and that teachers and pupils should be made aware of this in every area of the curriculum, both in content and in interpersonal relationships. School systems and teacher training institutions must change to initiate and develop that awareness, and to develop education which is directly relevant to members of different ethnic groups.

Both Aboriginal and migrant communities must be included in an intercultural (or multicultural) approach. Any program which emphasises Aboriginal or migrant issues while ignoring the other is hypocritical and monocultural, because it is guilty of the same kind of neglect of some ethnic minorities as its supporters complain about receiving. A true multicultural awareness will only become widespread in Australia if the aspirations and needs of all ethnic groups are promoted and fulfilled.

All of the courses in Intercultural Studies at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education involve interaction between students and different ethnic communities. Aboriginal and migrants make up a majority on course advisory committees, and contribute to the teaching of courses as staff members and guest lecturers; field trips enable students to personally visit and meet members of communities; and teaching practice is arranged in predominately Aboriginal or migrant schools.

Intercultural Studies courses have three main components: Anthropology/Sociology, Linguistics and Education. Units in Anthropology/Sociology examine culture and cultural differences; the social structure and organization of various ethnic communities; race and ethnic relations; and teaching about ethnic groups in Australia.

Linguistics units involve an introduction to descriptive linguistics; language acquisition, the nature of English and major Aboriginal and 'Migrant' languages teaching English as a second language; and the learning of an Aboriginal or other Australian community language. Education units build on the concepts and information from the anthropology and Linguistics units, and introduce approaches and skills needed in Aboriginal and migrant education; curriculum development; and teacher awareness.

Students usually specialise in either Aboriginal or Migrant Studies, depending on their intended area of work, but all students cover some common issues. Each student may choose units from the range indicated in the list below. As this paper has been written for the national conference on Aboriginal Education, held at Mount Lawley in 1977, emphasis will be placed on teacher preparation for Aboriginal education. It should be noted, however, that most features of the structure and organization of Aboriginal Studies are parallel in Migrant Studies.

In 1977, Intercultural Studies offered units in four different courses, as indicated below.

#### DIPLOMA OF TEACHING

A major consists of:

Seven 45-hour units in 2nd and 3rd year.

1-week field trip to Aboriginal communities

3-week teaching practice in selected Aboriginal schools

13-week teaching practice in selected Aboriginal schools

A sub-major consists of:

Three 45 hour units in 2nd and 3rd year

1-week field trip to Aboriginal communities

3-week teaching practice in selected Aboriginal communities

13-week teaching practice in selected Aboriginal communities

Because of the special program for training Aborigines as teachers (reported below), the major and sub major classes now have both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in them.

#### DIPLOMA OF TEACHING

##### Aboriginal Studies Major

Aboriginal Studies 210:

Introduction to Aboriginal  
Culture

Intercultural Studies 210:	Multicultural Australia
Aboriginal Education 210:	Teaching Aboriginal Children
Linguistics 210:	Intercultural Linguistics
Aboriginal Education 210:	Aboriginal Education in Australia
Intercultural Studies 340:	Race and Ethnic Relations
Language 340:	Teaching English as a Second Language (English Department)

#### Migrant Studies Major

Migrant Studies 210:	Introduction to Migrant Cultures
Intercultural Studies 210:	Multicultural Australia
Migrant Education 210:	Teaching Migrant Children
Linguistics 210:	Intercultural Linguistics
Migrant Education 310:	Migrant Education in Australia
Intercultural Studies 340:	
Language 340:	

#### Aboriginal Studies Sub-Major

Aboriginal Studies 210:	Introduction to Aboriginal Culture
Linguistics 212:	Aboriginal Languages

#### Migrant Studies Sub-Major

Migrant Studies 210:	Introduction to Migrant Cultures
Linguistics 214:	Language Issues for Migrants

#### DIPLOMA OF TEACHING - CONVERSION

(To upgrade two year trained teachers to a three year tertiary award) Units are offered by external (correspondence) studies to all parts of Australia.

Aboriginal Education 390: Introduction to Aboriginal Education.  
Migrant Education 391: Introduction to Migrant Education.

#### BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

Units are offered part-time (evenings) and externally (by correspondence)

#### Education Studies Unit

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

Education Studies Unit

Education 458: Aboriginal and Migrant Education

General Studies Units

Aboriginal Studies

Aboriginal Studies 484:	Education for Aborigines
Aboriginal Studies 486:	Aboriginal Languages
Aboriginal Studies 480:	Remote Aboriginal Communities
Aboriginal Studies 482:	Aborigines of the South-West of W.A.

Migrant Studies

Migrant Studies 482:	Migrant Children and their families
Migrant Studies 484:	Language Problems in Migrant Education
Migrant Studies 480:	Sociocultural Backgrounds of Migrants
Migrant Studies 486:	Migrant Education in Australia

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

This is a complete course for people interested in Aboriginal and/or Migrant Studies. It is equivalent to one year's study, although because it is presently offered only in the external mode, it can be completed in two or more years. Teachers from all parts of Australia, including many in very remote Aboriginal Schools, as well as linguists community workers, administrators and others. The Graduate Diploma has been accredited and registered at PG 1 level by the Australian Council on Awards in Advanced Education (ACAAE) and is recognised as a fourth year of training by most employing authorities.

CORE UNITS

Intercultural Education	Comparative Ethnic Education
Intercultural Studies 490:	Cross-Cultural Perspectives
Linguistics 490:	Intercultural Linguistics
Intercultural Studies 492:	Intercultural Research

## Electives

### Aboriginal Education Major

Aboriginal Education 491:	Developments in Aboriginal Education
Aboriginal Studies 491:	Traditional Aboriginal Society
Aboriginal Studies 493:	Aboriginal and Social Change
Linguistics 491:	Australian Aboriginal Linguistics
Language Education 493:	Teaching English as a Second Language (English Department)

### Migrant Education Major

Migrant Education 491:	Developments in Migrant Education
Migrant Studies 491:	Immigration and Cultural Differences
Migrant Studies 493:	Migrant Communities in Australia
Language Education 493:	Teaching English as Second Language (English Department)

### Dissertation

Intercultural Studies 499:	Research and Dissertation
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In addition to these four courses, a further course is planned for 1978, and since 1976, a special program has commenced to train groups of Aborigines as teachers, in the Diploma of Teaching course. A brief summary of each of these programs is offered below.

### CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION

After extensive investigations and planning, a course is being designed to extend the education of Aboriginal people working or living in remote areas of W.A., particularly those working in education, health, welfare, or the police force. The course will be offered externally by (correspondence), to enable these people to continue working and living in their own communities, and will be designed and operated to offer maximum relevance and support to Aboriginal people.



Local tutors will be appointed to assist with studies on a one-to-one basis.

#### TRAINING ABORIGINES AS TEACHERS.

##### ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Since early 1976 people of Aboriginal descent have been admitted to the Diploma of Teaching course at Mount Lawley College under special entrance provisions. Funds for the project have been provided by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Eight students are now in second year and another ten students are in first year. They were selected after extensive advertising throughout Western Australia and after completing a special testing program which focussed more on the skills required for teacher training and teaching than on previous educational achievement.

The students come from a wide range of social and occupational backgrounds and from all parts of Western Australia and include school leavers and mature aged people. The students are all enrolled in all units of the Diploma of Teaching course, in order to obtain normal teacher qualifications. Special assistance is provided outside the course and includes the special advertising and selection procedures, tutorial and counselling assistance, and help in obtaining accommodation and child care.

N.B. These Aboriginal students have already made a significant impact on the staff and other students of the College, and in the schools in which they have had teaching practice. I look forward with great anticipation, to December, 1978, and subsequent years, when groups of Aboriginal people will graduate as teachers, and will commence to make many important contributions to the education of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children, and to the teaching profession.

#### SUMMARY

The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education has developed several different programs to prepare teachers, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, for Aboriginal education. These programs cover pre-service and in-service teacher education, as well as education for Aboriginal teacher aides and pre-school aides. Intercultural Studies is the underlying framework of all courses and programs in Aboriginal or Migrant Studies, because it is considered that comprehensive multicultural perspective is required in order to counteract the

destructive monocultural attitudes, policies and programs which have existed in Australia until the present.

An important component of Intercultural Studies is the contributions made by Aboriginal people on advisory committees, and as lecturing staff and students. In this way, the College population and teaching profession, as well as the courses, will reflect more accurately the multicultural nature of the Australian population.

## TORRENS COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

Max Hart

### SOME OF THE PROBLEMS

The false image of the Aboriginal, as a naked boomerang-throwing desert dweller is hard to dispel. Most students have learned about them as a slightly sub-human species, very few know them as real people.

Many students are surprised to find that different groups of Aborigines have different customs, that some didn't follow the custom of circumcision, that some didn't use boomerangs and that some actually wore clothes.

In our lectures at Torrens we aim to dispel the major misunderstandings both about the traditional cultures and the present day situation, but because students are naturally interested in the dramatic differences in customs, languages and ecology of Aborigines from ourselves, there is a tendency not to accept them as having all the attributes of 'homo sapiens'.

It has been necessary to use audio-visuals, especially documentary films and video-tapes which again dramatize the differences between Aborigines and ourselves. Some of the older anthropological films dwelling on the physical aspects, tend to present them as part of the flora and fauna. Some of the modern T.V. versions over-emphasize the differences in their way of life.

Even in tutorial discussion where we may attempt to correct these impressions, the ideas that the students have may be more clearly seen, but not always changed.

The library resources which we have built up, the books, periodicals, tapes, pictures are helpful in dispersing some of these incorrect ideas provided that students can be encouraged to read. Many will only read when it is necessary to write assignments or to work out tutorial papers so that they are more intent on getting an acceptable mark for the exercise rather than learning about Aborigines as people.

Most of our students are confronted with Aboriginal art and artifacts in the lecture room. We have, in our new buildings, a special lecture room for Aboriginal Studies. Here we have been able to display weapons from different areas, carvings, bark paintings, and other art work from different areas. The various styles of art and craft help to illustrate the differences in the way of life of several tribes. It is helpful to have such a valuable collection available where students can notice it.

*Max Hart is Senior Lecturer, Aboriginal Education at Torrens C.A.E.*

Visits from Aboriginal speakers are very necessary so that the warmth of the personality or the effects of racial prejudice can be seen and explained. To meet Aborigines as people is important but it tends to give only one facet of the Aboriginal cultures. The more fluent, more successful urban Aboriginal agrees to come to speak to students. Those afflicted by unemployment, poverty and alcoholism are unlikely to appear in our lecture room.

Experienced teachers who have had some years of experience with Aboriginal communities can give valuable insights into understanding of the Aboriginal child and his environment. These teachers especially the more successful, have a contribution to make in instructing students in teaching techniques and about life in an Aboriginal community.

But until the student has been in that situation and has spent a few weeks in the Aboriginal community the advice can be somewhat meaningless.

Students do need to have the opportunity to visit Aboriginal schools for observation and teaching practice. They need to work alongside of Aboriginal people, and to meet them in their own environment. The lecturers need to share these experiences and to supervise them.

After that our lectures, tutorials, displays, audio visuals, books and periodicals, the whole course begins to come alive.

#### THE COURSES

Some students who are intending to teach in Aboriginal Schools will continue Aboriginal Studies in the second and third years. Many will go no further than one year of the course.

Most students will teach about Aborigines and need reliable information. The majority of students will meet some Aborigines at some time during their teaching career and should understand the Aboriginal child. A minority will elect to teach Aboriginal children in tribal or settlement schools.

A full course is set out showing the options open to any student. All courses are electives - there is no compulsory course.

<u>First Year</u> Dip. T.	Aboriginal Studies 1	1 term
	Aboriginal Studies 2	"
	Aboriginal Studies 3	"
<u>Second Year</u> Dip. T.	Social Issues	1 term
	Pitjantjatjara Language Linguistics	"

	T.E.S.L.	1 &	
	"	2	2 terms
<u>Third Year</u> Dip. T.	Anthropology		1 term
	Cross Cultural Studies		"
	Ethno Science		"
<u>Fourth Year</u> (B. Ed)	Teaching Strategies in Aboriginal Schools		3 terms
	Research in Teaching Strategies.		"

In addition to these courses, we offer electives (one term courses) in Studies in Education both in Aboriginal Education and in Cultural Anthropology.

Approximately three hundred students have enrolled for three courses this year, some full-time students, others part-time and others external. Numbers are fairly evenly divided between those students who attend lectures and those who do courses externally by correspondence, and only come in for one week.

#### External Students

Since 1968 the number of external students has steadily increased from two to one hundred and fifty. Lecture notes and Study guides are now put out in book form although in some sections, such as T.E.S.L., the lectures are sent out on cassette tapes supplemented by brief notes. External students in their first year come in to the College during their vacation to spend a week in conference discussing problems, working with tutors, joining other students in lectures and audio-visuals. The State Library, External Students Section, has a supply of the necessary reading texts and these books are available on request to country teachers.

#### Part-Time Students

A number of teachers living in the metropolitan area attend lectures in the evenings. This means that the college is very busy most evenings of the week with a number of staff members working up to seven or eight o'clock two or three evenings each week.

#### Staff

We have a staff of four not including two part-time lecturers. This year we have an Aboriginal tutor, Allan Randall who is gaining formal qualifications while at the College and has been very successful in helping students to understand an Aboriginal viewpoint. He has had previous experience in Aboriginal Legal Aid and in the Museum.

### New Developments

Three new developments are planned for next year. Generally they are extensions of the present courses. Although these are outlined here, we have no firm guarantee that they will be financed by the Board of Advanced Education.

### ABORIGINAL TEACHERS

#### Non-Tribal Teachers

Those Aborigines who could cope with the tertiary course of education given at this College, but perhaps may not complete it at the same rate as other students, will be admitted on a mature age test rather than on matriculation results. An advertisement for a lecturer/counsellor has been sent out for someone who can assist these Aborigines in any academic or social problems they may encounter.

It is hoped to begin with a small group of about twelve and to help them select courses in which they will be successful. We have had, in the past, a few Aboriginal students but we hope that a group of this size will be able to work together and support each other more effectively.

#### Tribal Teachers

Short courses for Aboriginal teaching assistants have been conducted by Torrens since 1974. The most recent one was held at Ernabella in July this year.

### Associate Diploma

A number of government officers in departments of social welfare, employment, health and housing as well as some of the Aboriginal teacher aides in the metropolitan area are interested in understanding more about Aboriginal people and their culture. A two-year full-time (or longer part-time) course has been devised for these people and we are applying to start this next year. There will be a considerable overlap with the present courses in Aboriginal Studies.

### Teachers for Northern Territory

Torrens C.A.E. has been asked to organise a course of teacher education for teachers who will go to Aboriginal post-primary schools in the Territory. These teachers will specialise in art, home economics or technical crafts, and will all have courses in Aboriginal Studies and T.E.S.L. as well as studies in education. This again will make use of the existing courses in Aboriginal Studies but Teaching English as a Second Language will be extended.

### Developments from these Courses

There have been quite unexpected developments from these courses

and I can only mention a few. Perhaps the most important is that many teachers who have completed Aboriginal Studies at Torrens have developed some race-relationship course in their own primary or secondary schools. At present a committee is working on a curriculum for these schools to suggest a course within the Social Studies courses syllabus.

Some teachers who were indignant about racism in text-books and biased material about Aborigines have started a Schools Library Project in which the books available to children are reviewed and the best books about Aborigines are recommended. In some cases grants have been obtained to put suitable books into some school libraries.

Then the Aboriginal Community College in North Adelaide developed as a part of Torrens C.A.E. in 1973. At that time it was on the College campus but now it has its own site in North Adelaide.

Perhaps it is not too much to say that in the last ten years the change in attitude to Aboriginal Education in this state has been partly influenced by the increasing number of teachers who have studied in these courses.

## TOWNSVILLE COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

Geoff Coombes

The following is a brief outline of what one tertiary institution in Queensland, the Townsville College of Advanced Education, is attempting in the way of preparing teachers to cater for Aboriginal students in their classrooms. The Diploma in Teaching course offered by the college does this in a number of ways; firstly, the college now runs a modified Diploma in Teaching program for a special intake of Aboriginal students. Secondly, each student enrolled in the Diploma program has to complete a "Race and Culture" course, usually in their third year at college. Also in the third year of the college course, an elective "Aboriginal Education" is offered.

A specialist course, now in its third year, the Graduate Diploma in Aboriginal Education along with the courses already mentioned, is outlined below:

### PART A: DIP. TEACH. OF ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER STUDENTS

#### RATIONALE

The need to increase the number of minority group persons in the teaching profession and the need to provide special training for teachers of Aboriginal children have been recognized for the last few decades. For example, the Native Welfare Conference of 1951, attended by State and Federal ministers, made recommendations on this latter point.<sup>1</sup> The fact that twenty-five years later there has been relatively little done is a matter of some concern. Further, there has been a rapid increase in the Aboriginal population, especially those of school age. The Aboriginal birthrate is approximately double that of the general population; as Lippman states, "Over 40% of the Aboriginal and Islander population (was) under the age of 15 years compared with less than 30% of the general population, and almost 20% was under 5 years compared to less than 10% of the general population (in 1971)."<sup>2</sup>

These figures indicate that it is increasingly important for Aborigines and Islanders to be trained as teachers so that:

1. Aboriginal and Islander children are provided with Aboriginal and Islander teachers as role models. Of all adult groups, teachers are uniquely visible to children. The aspirations of Aboriginal and Islander



children can be developed as they realise the possibility of attaining such "status occupations" as teaching.

2. Aboriginal and Islander teachers may make their particular contribution, of understanding and providing for the special needs and interests of Aboriginal and Islander children.
3. Aboriginal and Islander teachers can provide for children of the dominant groups in our society important perspectives related to cultural pluralism.

There is another perspective from which to justify a special program to train Aboriginal and Islander teachers. Social justice demands that Aborigines and Islanders be given opportunities for advancement equal to those of other groups in our society. However, the failure of secondary schools to cater adequately for Aboriginal and Islander students has provided an institutional barrier to almost all Aborigines and Islanders who aspire to become teachers. Tertiary institutions ought not to erect a further barrier by insisting upon secondary school qualifications which the schools themselves have rendered unattainable to almost all Aboriginal and Islander people. Public tertiary institutions have a responsibility to be accessible to the many publics which they are supposed to serve and to provide conditions under which capable persons have a reasonable chance to succeed.

#### PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program follows the basic structure of the Diploma of Teaching. Students, on completing the course, will be expected to meet the same standards as other candidates for the Diploma of Teaching. However, some modification of course content and sequence, and particular organizational arrangements are required. The experience gathered in a large number of programs for minority group students in the United States indicates that the following features are desirable in achieving success in these programs:

1. Adjusted curriculum taking account of the special interests (e.g., Ethnic Studies) and needs of the students;
2. Financial security for the students;
3. Tutorial support;
4. Remediation directly relevant to course work;

5. Counselling and social/psychological support, especially to protect students from the impersonal atmosphere of many colleges, and from institutional pressures.<sup>3</sup>

Given these desiderata, the Dip. Teach. is modified to:

1. Spread the first year of the Diploma of Teaching over three semesters;
2. Provide tutorial assistance on a regular basis as well as on a demand basis;
3. Retain the students as a discrete class group for at least the first three semesters of the program, although gradual integration with normal-entry students occurs;
4. Provide additional courses in Study Skills and Communication.
5. Provide introductory courses in Mathematics and Science to prepare students for the second-year Professional Studies units in these two subjects;
6. Make provision for a possible major study sequence in Social Science: Australian Society.

These modifications give rise to the following course structure over the first three semesters (thereafter these students will follow the normal course pattern); the normal first-year course structure is shown for comparison:

COURSE STRUCTURE FOR AB. DIP. TEACH., SEMESTERS 1 - 3

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
<u>EDUCATION STUDIES</u>		
ED 100 3	ED 100/101 3	ED 101 3
<u>GENERAL STUDIES</u>		
Elective 1 3	Elective 2 3	Elective 3 3 Elective 4 3
<u>PROFESSIONAL STUDIES</u>		
Tchr. Devel. I 2	Tchr. Devel. I/II 2	Tchr. Devel. II 2
Phys. Ed. 5	Art 5	Lang. Arts A 5
Music 1	Music (cont.) 3	
<u>ADDITIONAL COURSES</u>		
Study Skills 2	Study Skills 2	Study Skills 2
Communication 2	Communication 2	Intro. Science 2
Intro. Maths. 2	(Intro. Maths.)	
Total Hours 21	20	20

REGULAR DIP. TEACH. COURSE STRUCTURE, SEMESTERS 1 AND 2

Semester 1	Semester 2
<u>EDUCATION STUDIES</u>	
ED 100 4	ED 101 4
<u>GENERAL STUDIES</u>	
Elective 1 3	Elective 3 3
Elective 2 3	Elective 4 3
<u>PROFESSIONAL STUDIES</u>	
Teacher Development I 2	Teacher Development II 2
Art 5	Language Arts A 5
Music 5	Physical Education 5
Total Hours 22	22

NOTES ON THE MODIFIED COURSE STRUCTURE

1. The Dip. Teach. program is modified for only the first year of the course, to cover three semesters in time. At the end of this time, it may be desirable that the students be fully integrated in the regular program; however, the option of retaining the students as a discrete group needs to be maintained.
2. The two units Education 100 and 101 are spread over three semesters. As in the regular program, assessment will occur at the conclusion of each of these two units.
3. Similarly, Teacher Development I and II will be spread over three semesters although for these units the students will be integrated with students taking the regular program. Teaching practice, which is closely related to the Teacher Development units, is organised in the same way as for the regular program and is undertaken with students in the regular program.
4. General Studies elective I Aboriginal Studies is a specially designed course. This forms part of a possible special major study sequence, but is also regarded as an acceptable prerequisite for existing Social Science major studies if the special major study proves to be impracticable because of financial restrictions.
5. General Studies elective 2 is also a specially designed course, to be offered as Social Science 124: Contemporary Australian Society.
6. General Studies electives 3 and 4 are to be chosen from the regular electives (including a unit chosen from Group B subjects).
7. These students will undertake the first-year Professional Studies, except for Teacher Development I and II, as a discrete group.
8. Inevitably, there will be considerable flexibility with regard to -
  - (a) the relation between the additional units in Communication, Study Skills, Introductory Maths and Science, and the set and requested tutorials; and
  - (b) the interconnection between Study Skills, Communication, and the tutorials and the regular Dip. Teach. units.

The tutors will be free to modify their programs to meet individual and class needs. Lecturers in the regular Dip. Teach. units will be expected to indicate tasks for Communication, Study Skills, and tutorial sessions, and tutors will be able to request such exercises when they or the students consider them necessary.

Such flexibility will also apply in special cases to the completion of both regular Dip. Teach. units and the additional courses designed for these students. Thus students who have not reached the required standard in Introductory Maths will have to continue working in this subject into second semester. Similarly, students who have not reached the required standard in regular units such as Physical Education and Music will have to continue working in these in the following semester.

#### SELECTION PROCEDURES

It is expected that candidates will be mature people, with experience either as classroom assistants or in some other field related to education or community development, or will come direct from secondary schools.

An assessment of each candidate's potential will be made through:

- (a) interviews conducted by teams of staff either on campus or in local communities;
- (b) an evaluation of his/her reading and writing skills to provide a ranking of candidates;
- (c) consideration of school and other academic results;
- (d) recommendations from the Australian and Queensland Education Departments;
- (e) recommendations from previous employers, from Aboriginal communities or from any other nominated referees, one of whom ideally would be an Aboriginal or Islander.

Final decisions on admission will rest with the College.

#### STAFFING

The program is conducted by the regular College staff and by two specially selected teachers seconded to the College staff from the Queensland Department of Education.

#### CAREER OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAM

Graduates of the complete 3½ year Dip. Teach. program will be eligible for normal registration as teachers on satisfactory completion of their probationary year. It is hoped that many

will elect to teach in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community schools, but this is not a requirement of their admission to the program.

PART B:

- (i) RACE AND CULTURE (Third Year of Dip. Teach. -  
Compulsory for all students)

The general aim of this course is to introduce students to the concept of cultural pluralism and its relevance to Australian education. This will be achieved by a threefold approach:

1. the invitation of members of various minority ethnic groups to present their perspectives to the students;
2. the exploration of various topics of crucial importance to minority groups in student-led discussion groups;
3. the exploration of the implications of cultural difference for teachers.

Among the guest lecturers invited are those of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Pacific Islander, Jewish, and Italian descent. Each will lecture on a topic in which he or she has special experience or expertise.

This unit also intends students to examine various elements of 'mainstream' culture, especially the subject of race relations.

This course will aim at reducing racial prejudice and producing more positive attitudes towards community relations. Students will become aware of the racist component of Australian culture and its consequences for both white and black Australians. It is vital that teachers explore, challenge, and have challenged their own racial attitudes.

The emphasis in this course will be placed on Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders not only because they are least effectively accommodated by current educational programs in Australia, but also because they are the people white Australian teachers will find it most difficult to relate to and to understand. Moreover, if racial prejudice exists among white Australians it will be most likely to be directed towards black Australians.

This unit sets out to provide opportunities for students to develop:

- (a) an understanding of the concepts - culture, cultural

difference, cultural pluralism, cultural void or vacuum ideology, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, and racism;

- (b) an understanding of minority ethnic group perspectives;
- (c) an understanding of various topics of crucial importance to minority groups;
- (d) more positive attitudes towards minority groups within the community, especially towards Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders;
- (e) an understanding of the implications of cultural difference for teachers.

(ii) ABORIGINAL EDUCATION (Third Year of Dip. Teach. - Elective Unit)

This unit is based on the belief that effective educational provision depends heavily upon teachers' understanding of the cultural systems of children entrusted to them. In the case of Aborigines and Islanders, there is ample evidence of a general lack of such understanding. Widespread failure of Aboriginal and Islander children to achieve in our schools is also apparent, reflecting in part the culture-specific nature of much of what occurs within our schools and colleges.

A course in Aboriginal education has benefits beyond the immediate concern of catering for ethnic minorities. Through attempting to examine one's own beliefs and practices from the perspective of another culture, teachers may gain greater self-awareness and added insight into 'mainstream' society and its institutions. By acquiring skills which increase effectiveness in accommodating cultural differences, students will also extend their competencies in catering for individual differences within groups.

OBJECTIVES:

This unit provides opportunities for students to develop:

- (a) an increased awareness of ethnocentrism in themselves and in Australian Society;
- (b) an appreciation of cultural relativism;
- (c) increased understanding of cultural difference, and empathy with members of other cultures;
- (d) an ability to perceive others within the context of their own culture;
- (e) increased sensitivity in communicating and interacting with members of other cultural groups;
- (f) increased awareness and understanding of viewpoints

held by members of ethnic minorities, particularly in relation to education;

- (g) increased ability and motivation to critically examine their own teaching practices and beliefs in the light of increased understanding of culturally different learners;
- (h) increased awareness of differences in learning styles and learning contexts of children;
- (i) increased skill and confidence in structuring learning experiences which utilize characteristics of culturally different learners.

#### PART C: GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

##### PROGRAM

The Graduate Diploma in Aboriginal Education course provides a one-year program for teachers who wish to teach in schools with a predominantly indigenous enrolment. It is designed to meet one immediate, urgent need of Aboriginal people: the provision of skilled, qualified teachers with not only an understanding of Aboriginal society before and since European colonisation but also a sensitive awareness of its evolving needs.

The course occupies two semesters, each having five components. Education for Ethnic Minorities, Curriculum Studies and Strategies for Promoting Learning, Teaching Workshop, and Aboriginal Studies extend over the two semesters. Socio-linguistics is conducted in first semester and Race and Culture in the second semester. Each unit involves three hours of student-lecturer contact per week. One hour is time-tabled for consultation and planning; another for films and videotapes relevant to the courses. Students, as well, spend another two hours per week working with local Aboriginal and Islander children. There is thus ample time for students to prepare for their full participation in the above subjects, to read more widely, or to pursue at greater depth their own interests which emerge directly or indirectly from the course.

##### COURSE OUTLINES

###### Education for Ethnic Minorities

Educational provision for Aboriginal Children in the white Australian school system has been characterised by ethno-centrism. School experience has been such that interests, learning styles, and motivational states of Aboriginal children have been ineffectively engaged. When poor progress has resulted, this has frequently been interpreted, not as



failure of the school, but as a failure due to lack of ability in the children or to a home background judged by ethnocentric white Australians as 'undesirable' or 'inadequate'. The experience of failure for many Aboriginal children has therefore been a consistent and damaging influence throughout much of childhood. Some educationists plan to utilise the features of cultural differences to plan effective school programs. A major feature in such programs is the importance of home-school relations and the role and wishes of parents in determining their children's educational experience.

### Curriculum Studies and Strategies for Promoting Learning

The aim of this unit is to equip teachers to devise appropriate curricula and strategies which utilise characteristics of learners and their sociocultural systems. Students will be expected to apply theoretical insights, to demonstrate sensitivity to the culture of their pupils, and to consider processes of consultation with parents and other members of the local community.

Throughout this unit there will be a consistent attempt to maintain relevance of curricula and effectiveness of strategies which are based on children's familiar learning contexts and characteristic learning styles.

### Teaching Workshop

Through this unit, teachers will increase their technical skills and gain experience in developing activities and materials which accommodate the cultural systems of the children and meet particular needs of individual children within the group.

### Aboriginal Studies

The aim of this unit is to introduce teachers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies prior to and since European colonisation so that they may appreciate the traditional way of life and values and come to a realisation not only of the impact of European domination but also of the response of the indigenous people.

The present condition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies will be examined and an attempt made to understand their varying aspirations and possible future development.

### Sociolinguistics

Problems in Aboriginal education are often perceived by non-Aboriginal teachers as located in the Aboriginal population.

Sociolinguistics may help teachers to recognise that many problems arise from the interaction of two different cultural systems. Acceptance of this position requires teachers to become learners and to develop new skills in receiving meaning from Aboriginal children and to develop increased sensitivity to the effects of their own communications devices on the children.

Throughout this unit, teachers will participate in practical sessions. These will sometimes involve observation and analysis of interaction patterns in classrooms and in play groups. Tape recordings, language transcripts, and video-tapes will also provide stimulus material.

### Field Experience

Students will spend one period of three weeks' duration at an Aboriginal community school to gain experience in living and teaching in an Aboriginal community. Students will observe for the first week, gaining as wide an understanding of the school and the community as possible, and teach, in co-operation with the Principal and teachers of the school, during the second and third weeks.

Students will also participate in a local experience program of three weeks' duration.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> ROWLEY, C.D. Outcasts in White Australia, Ringwood, Vic., Penguin Australia, 1972, p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> LIPPMAN, L. Aborigines and Education, Mimeo, 1976, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> GORDON, E. Equal Opportunity in Higher Education: A Review of the Studies of Programs, I.R.C.D. Bulletin, Winter 1976.

## **5. THE VIEWS OF ABORIGINAL STUDENT TEACHERS**

## FROM HUMPY TO COLLEGE

Lindsay Grant

It has only been in recent years that Aboriginal people have been able to gain admission to tertiary institutions in any significant numbers. The Aboriginal student has, in fact, been notable by his absence. This applies to the professions as well, where Aboriginal people are again notable by their absence. For example, we have never trained an Aboriginal doctor. The same applies to dentists, engineers and architects and to my knowledge, only one Aboriginal person has ever completed a law degree. There are some fully trained Aboriginal teachers - but the numbers are lamentably small.

Why does this situation exist? Why do so few Aboriginal people make it to tertiary level education? A comparison of the Australian and Papua New Guinean situations reveals significant anomalies and some large gaps. In a relatively short time the Australian government took a whole nation out of what we might call 'the stone age' to political independence. In doing so they trained large numbers of teachers and other professionals, many of whom came to Australia for their training. Papua New Guineans are now represented in all but a few of the professions. Why hasn't the same been done for Aboriginal people? Is it because the Aboriginal person is incapable of attaining the necessary standards? Should he be content to be regarded as a second-class citizen and accept this as his lot in life?

Thankfully, during the past decade there have been some changes. Not enough, true. But at least some steps have been taken to change the situation. Prior to the past decade government policies with regard to Aborigines moved from 'protection' to assimilation to integration until today the 'in-word' is 'self-determination'. On the surface, at least, the government seems to want the Aboriginal to 'do his own thing' and to determine his own destiny. This policy has found its way into the educational systems and are just now beginning to have some effect on Aboriginal people.

Until quite recently there was very little progress at all in the area of Aboriginal education and seeking to answer the question 'why?', I can only speak from my own experiences and background.

When I was a young boy at school, very few Aboriginal people made it into high school. Most dropped out at 6th grade and those that did make it into high school dropped out after 1st year. I was a little more fortunate than most - I dropped out after 2nd year. Those of us who did get to high school usually sat in what we used to call 'the opportunity class'. When I was in primary school I started off in an A class. I was in 3A, then 4A and then 5A. In that last class I came second but then for some reason or other,

when I went into 6th class, I was put into 6B. Again, I came second in the class but when I went to high school I was put into 1D. In the half-yearly examinations I was in the top three and I can remember the headmaster calling me in to congratulate me because I was the only Aboriginal student who had excelled. My reward was promotion to 1C. But, after that I lost interest in school and dropped out at the end of 2nd year.

One of the reasons so many of us dropped out were the conditions we had to live in at home. I lived on an Aboriginal reserve for the first 21 years of my life, in a kerosene tin humpy on the outskirts of a town in the western districts of New South Wales. We had no facilities for studying. There was no electricity, no cooking facilities apart from open fires and certainly no separate room or place to study at night. Our parents had no education and couldn't get steady jobs to settle themselves and us down. They had to rely on fruit picking, pea picking or shearing and the children had to move around with them in search of work. They couldn't settle in one place and so there was no continuity of education. In some respects I was fortunate because my parents did have a reasonably settled life and that was probably why I was able to make it to high school. But other children were not so fortunate and that is why so many of them had to sit in the opportunity class at school.

One of the major reasons that Aboriginal people don't make it into tertiary institutions is that entry requirements are too high for them. If you don't come up to standard then you don't gain admission. However, the fact that there are several of us here today at this college bears witness to the fact that we are able to cope with tertiary studies, even without the necessary bits and pieces of paper from high school. And I think that the same would apply to other professions if the same opportunities were given. There are Aboriginal people who have been given these opportunities and have proved that they can do it and I feel sure that if entry requirements were relaxed, as they were for us, then more Aboriginal people would be able to take their places in the professions.

Aboriginal students at this college, Mount Lawley College, are doing exactly the same course as other non-Aboriginal students. There is no special dispensation given whatsoever. The fact that several Aboriginal students have dropped out does not necessarily indicate that they are incapable of completing the course. I think that it's mainly because of the many pressures that they experience, both inside and outside of the college - pressures that other non-Aboriginal students experience as well. And non-Aboriginal students drop out too!

The one, and perhaps the only thing that would make me drop out would be financial problems. I came into this college having to support a family of four people. Two of my children are self-

supporting. One daughter is here with me doing the same course as I am and my other daughter is completing her studies at the Western Australian Institute of Technology. My two sons are still dependent on me. Maintaining a family under these circumstances is quite difficult. We do receive special grants, for which I am grateful, but they are barely adequate to keep us going. They are just enough to keep us above the breadline.

These are some of the pressures that I face as a student. But I intend taking full advantage of the opportunities that have been given to me and I know that in just over two years' time I will be out there doing my bit for Aboriginal children and Aboriginal people in general.

## FROM HOUSEWORK TO SCHOOL

Louise Kearing

My family was fairly stable and I was fortunate in that they provided me with a great deal of support as I was growing up - though we still suffered many of the things that other Aborigines suffer. I come from Pinjarra in the south-west of Western Australia and the problems that we face were, in many respects, quite different from those facing Aboriginal people in, say, the Pilbara and Kimberleys regions. We seem to suffer more from discrimination, probably because in the south-west, we are a minority in every town whereas in the north, Aborigines often make up the bulk of the population and so discrimination is not so evident.

One of the most frightening things that I faced in coming to college was mixing with white people. I hadn't really mixed with them before coming here because in Pinjarra, the whites and the Aborigines don't mix very much. Besides this, before I came here I was a housewife for ten years, raising four children, and my world was my house. We did have small social gatherings with other Aboriginal people but my husband, like many Aboriginal men, didn't want me to work or go mixing with other people. So, coming here meant the opening up of a whole new world.

I had other problems to overcome even before I entered the college. I'd recently separated from my husband and I found it difficult to find suitable accommodation for my four children in the metropolitan area. My sister and I searched all over but most places refused me because they thought that the college should provide accommodation. Finally we settled on a place about 100 miles south of here - Rowlands Village, run by the Church of Christ. This was just the place I needed. There is plenty of space for the children to run and play - my children were used to living in the country. And the people there are loving caring people so I know that my children are being well looked after.

This left me all by myself and the transition from housewife to student was a frightening experience. From being locked inside a house all day I found myself with all the spare time I ever wanted. All that freedom and having to speak with people I'd barely had contact with was, at first, hard to take. The very first experience I had at this college was almost enough to make me give up right at the very start. I was one or two minutes late for the first lecture during Orientation Week and I walked into this very lecture theatre, looked up and saw 200 people, 200 strangers looking at me. My first reaction was to turn and run. But I thought that if I'd gotten this far then I was going to go on. I was determined to become a teacher, and this determination helped me overcome this fear and I felt that if I could get through this first lecture then I could get through the rest. That determina-

tion is still with me and I know in my heart that I will succeed.

Meeting new people, especially other Aboriginal people helped to lessen the fear in meeting a lot of people all at once. The other Aboriginal students have given me a great deal of support. Initially I found it difficult to talk with them because they looked and acted so confidently and I felt so insecure. But I soon learned that this was just a 'front'. Another factor was the age difference. Many of them had come straight from school and for them it was just a continuation of school - not like me who had been out of the school system for so long. But this just made me all the more determined to knuckle down to serious study straight away.

Another problem we all faced with the jargon that is used in college. It was like translating a new language and what with this and settling into a study routine it was nearly 6 months before I really settled down. We have all received a lot of help and support from our families. The students from the north are always getting letters from their families and this helps a lot - knowing that there is someone there behind you, supporting you.

One other thing that needs mentioning is that other Aboriginals have had a tendency to be jealous of us and I know that many of them talk about me behind my back and accuse me of being a 'bighead' and trying to become better than they are. But the whole aim of the Aboriginal students at this college is to help our people one way or another - even if we don't take Aboriginal Studies as our major study. We want to get out there in the schools and show Aboriginal children that they, too, can aim their sights high and achieve as much as any other people, white or black.

Second year has been much easier than the first year for me. I have overcome most of my problems, settled into a good study routine and learned how to read and study more effectively. Getting to know the lecturers has helped tremendously and I must say how very helpful they have been. They have gone right out of their way to help us and I know that I speak for all Aboriginal students at Mount Lawley College when I say how grateful we are for their help.

Another aspect of second year is that non-Aboriginal students seem to have accepted us more and we feel their support a lot more than we did before. We are all headed in the same direction and it's good to know that there is a unity and a sharing of hopes and ideals. Also, we seem to be doing much better and getting higher marks than we did in first year. In first year we were just concerned about passing and that was all. Now we are trying to get the best marks we can. We are really aiming high and it is really inspiring to see just how well we can do.

I think that once a student gets through first year, then he can



make it all the way. I have changed a great deal in my transition from housewife to student and I just hope that I can make the same changes when I leave this college to go to my own class.

## CRISIS: BLACK EDUCATOR, BLACK BOURGEOIS?

Robyn Robinson

Throughout this paper, the term "bourgeois" is defined by the English adjective "middle-class" rather than the more ambiguous Marxist interpretation. Teaching is a typical, white middle-class profession also through the education process the trainee teacher is exposed to conventional, white middle-class beliefs, attitudes and values. Therefore, Aboriginal educators, that is, educators of Aboriginal descent, risk losing their identification with the majority of their people occupying the lower socio-economic rungs of the social structure.

There is also the inherent danger of regarding the teaching profession primarily as a means of upward mobility, escaping from the Aboriginal community into the white, through the process of assimilation. The Aboriginal educator working in Aboriginal communities, may also be confronted by the moral issue of maintaining and reinforcing the status quo, thereby advocating the superiority of White Australian cultural and ethical values. Operating within the white Austracentric education system, the Aboriginal Educator working amongst Aboriginal students may come to view his/her role as that of an Uncle or Auntie Tom, reinforcing racist attitudes and beliefs, the invasion of the Aboriginal culture and the gross inequality in material and social rewards between the whites and the blacks.

Also, internalization of the bourgeois desire for personal success would enable the Aboriginal educator to be easily manipulated by whites, thereby fulfilling of the "Black Capitalism" concept, the black replaces the white in an exploitative relationship with the black community.

However, the black bourgeois deserves credit for his long hard struggle to "make it in a white mans system" and understandably is not eager to gamble his hard earned status. Perhaps his own life history rationalizes any guilt feelings he may have about the mass of his people living in poverty. However, the middle-class black is not completely insulated from his people, he is aware of their problems, their needs and their way of life. He is also socially identified as an Aboriginal. As such the black bourgeois is an untapped and increasing resource invaluable to Aboriginal Protest Movement.

Distrust of black professionals and intellectuals by less educated or militant blacks is impractical. The bourgeois black promises power and impetus to the Aboriginal protest movement and should therefore, be involved and utilized. Referring to the

Blacks in the United States Samuel Proctor (in Goldstein 1971:288) writes, that it is folly for young blacks to allow the press and class structure to divide the blacks. Blacks are categorized either as activists, moderates, conservatives or radicals. These labels also weaken Aboriginal power, that is, the ability of Aboriginal communities and/or Aboriginal individuals to influence decisions made by the white authorities.

Frazier (1957:234-237) maintained that the black bourgeois in the United States in the late nineteen fifties had become "exaggerated Americans", attempting to conform to the behaviour and values of the white communities in the most minute details. He also wrote that many negro teachers did not identify with the negro masses of their traditional culture. He concluded that the Black bourgeois did not suffer from persecution but from nothingness due to this separation from people and culture. Should this have been the case, the up and coming Aboriginal bourgeois should be wary of following in the footsteps of their American counterparts.

#### Importance of Education Aims

Aboriginal educators should aim at advancing Aboriginal unity, self respect, and political and economic power which is the key to Aboriginal self determination. Aroused black consciousness is the foundation of political strength. The Aboriginal educator is morally obliged to provide his/her students with the tools to enable the students to develop an awareness of their personal and social realities. That is, the causes of their political powerlessness and their low socio-economic status.

Until they develop this awareness, life is perceived fatalistically.. "because of their identification with the oppressor (the whites)\*, they have no consciousness of themselves as persons or as members of an oppressed class". (Freire, 1972:30)

Aboriginal educators by identifying with the Aboriginal people, do not impose their attitudes, and values on them. By providing the tools of critical awareness of reality, Aboriginal educators give Aboriginal students the opportunity to discover their own consciousness, the oppressor, reflect upon the causes of their oppression and act upon their reflections.

The Aboriginal educator should bear in mind Paulo Freire's belief "that every human being, no matter how ignorant equipped with the proper tools can gradually perceive his personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his own perception of that reality and deal critically with it". (Shaull in Freire, 1972:13) The main aim of the Aboriginal educator therefore, is that of Aboriginal consciousness raising to ensure greater political maturity and therefore, greater Aboriginal political and economic power.

### Aboriginal Educators and the Aboriginal Protest Movement

Before proceeding, a personal interpretation of the Aboriginal Protest Movement will be presented. The Aboriginal Protest Movement is reticulate and segmentary. The movement is comprised of numerous cells or organizations, holding a diverse range of black ideologies and methodologies. They are politically autonomous cells, entities independent from other cells in other areas either rural or urban, and states. Despite each organization doing "its own thing", the connecting thread is the perceived need for Aboriginal pride, self determination and greater political and economic power. There are numerous Aboriginal leaders, either genuine or media made, each head of a particular cell. Gerlack and Hine in their paper, "The Social Organization of a Movement of Revolutionary Change: Case Study, "Black Power, maintains that the autonomous self sufficient local cells comprising the Black Power Movement in the United States make effective suppression of the movement very difficult. (1969:24) Attempts by whites to show the segmentary nature of the movement as being indicative of the disunity and incapacibilities of the Aboriginal people and attempts to increase conflict between the various cells and part of their divide and rule strategies first implemented with the caste method of Aboriginal identification.

Awareness of the Aboriginal Protest Movement and similar movements in the United States, as well as of current affairs in Aboriginal/European relations in Australia is crucial to the Aboriginal Educator. Given the mammoth task of black conscience raising, Aboriginal educators play a latent but important role in the Aboriginal protest movement. Conscience raising through bureaucratic channels is futile. Personal contact or one to one communication through teacher-student interaction is more effective. Freire (1972:153) writes that professionals are almost unshakably convinced that their mission to "give" the people their knowledge and techniques. They are therefore, contributing to their own act of cultural invasion by imposing their world view, upon another. Aboriginal Educators must strive to avoid assuming or perpetuating those characteristics of the white system that serves to maintain Aboriginal people in material poverty and political powerlessness. They must be aware of the danger of contributing personally to the cultural invasion and the oppression of their people.

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# 6. ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

## ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ADELAIDE

George Smith

### Background

I come from a fringe area in Deniliquin. I can remember when I was about six we lived on the north side of it down on the river and we were living in humpies there. When my father left my mother she looked after the four of us and we kept moving about following seasonal work and ended up in Swan Hill. It was not in Swan Hill itself but more or less in N.S.W. just over the border at a place called Windy Hill. That's where I lived five or six years. It was there that I encountered the attitude of the white community - just how they looked on the fringe dwellers, as though we were nothing. My brother and I would go looking for work and they would know that we came from Windy Hill, as they call it, because it was a hill that caught all the wind about the place. There were a few pepper-corn trees and nothing else. We had to carry water about a mile, and we had to hunt for wood as we lived about three or four miles out of town. If we had to go into town to buy anything it always meant walking, which gave us plenty of exercise.

But it was home to us. It was a humpy; just a tent with a few tins put up around it; that was all we could afford, but it was home. It was something to us because we had nothing else. We didn't know what was being offered to the Aborigines at that time, whether there was anything we could benefit from. We were out on the outer; we didn't know anything.

The only time I was able to go to school was when I was about thirteen and I went for about eighteen months. I reached third grade in public school. Then I had to leave. I felt I wanted to help my mother, because she had done a lot for us, and it was time that I got out and returned the favour. Later as I was working in the mission, there was always something in my life that I felt I wanted to go back to school to start from scratch, to some school to learn the first principles.

### Introduction

For a large proportion of the adult Aboriginal population, currently available education programs and facilities are either irrelevant or demand prerequisite qualifications that have not been able to be attained within existing systems.

For such Aboriginal people, the College aims, generally, to provide opportunities for them to continue their education in areas that are meaningful to them.

To facilitate the achievements of this aim, the College provides opportunities for students to pursue individual education programs whose objectives are not only to enable them to become more satisfyingly involved in their immediate community, but also more generally, to gain access to more satisfying employment, social activities and life-style in the wider multi-racial and multi-cultural Australian society.

### The Aboriginal Community College

In 1973, the Australian Department of Aboriginal Affairs provided funds to establish, on a trial basis, an Aboriginal College of Education as part of Torrens College of Advanced Education. As a result of assessments of College activities during its first two years of operation by Ms. Lorna Lippman of Monash University and Mr. Noel Wilson of the Education Department, the College was guaranteed funding by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs until the end of 1978. To give recognition to the College's development as an educational focal point for many Aboriginal people in Adelaide, South Australia and beyond, the College's name was changed to the Aboriginal Community College in 1975. The College is governed by a Management Committee with its powers delegated to it by the Council of Torrens C.A.E. whose Director or his nominee is Chairman. The Committee includes representatives from the Aboriginal community, State and Federal Departments, student and staff. The majority of its members are Aboriginal. The results of a survey conducted by a sub-committee of Aboriginal people in 1976 indicated that, while the Aboriginal community believed that a continued association with Torrens C.A.E should be maintained, the College should develop as an autonomous institution with a governing Council of Aboriginal people and student/staff representation. The Torrens Council approved a Management Committee proposal that such a governing Council should be established over a transitional period of twelve to eighteen months, at the end of which time the College should become an autonomous educational institution. A request for approval for this proposal is currently with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

### Broad Aims

Since most applicants to the College, when asked why they want to enrol, say that they want to do something better in life than they have done up until then, the broad aims of the College are to:

1. Enable the student to determine and pursue his personal goals in life;



2. Develop the student's sense of "powerfulness" and initiative;
3. Develop positive self-concepts and a positive identity as an Aborigine;
4. Facilitate his taking up whatever role in society he chooses provided it is in keeping with his abilities and interests.

Achievement of these aims involves the identification of personal goals, facilitating the social and personality development that will make a choice possible, and providing opportunities for development of the academic and vocational abilities and skills to facilitate pursuit of personal goals.

It is the experience of the College that the achievement of its aims will be greatly enhanced in an environment where one's Aboriginality is respected, where pride in cultural identity is fostered, and where group support and cohesion is engendered because of the commonality of needs, attitudes and values of individuals within the group. The College's view of education is neither narrowly academic nor specifically vocational in orientation.

It is a basic assumption that, for people whose personality has been damaged to varying degrees by the effects of prejudice, institutional subordination and explicit racism within the society, the development of a stable personality, the breakdown of aggressive tendencies, the development of a positive sense of self-esteem and identity must be achieved if further academic and vocational skill development programs are to be successful. At the same time, the College is not simply an institution for personality rehabilitation. It must also be recognized for its role in providing opportunities for Aboriginal people to move into further education, employment or prevocational training.

The College could possibly be best summed up as a bridge between an individual's unsatisfactory past and a more satisfying future - personally, academically, vocationally, socially, culturally.

### College Programs

While we avoid hierarchical and competitive concepts in education in this College, and while the divisions between the programmes are, in practice, of much less significance than between programmes in other institutions, it is convenient to see three major programmes operating:

1. The Comprehensive Studies Programmes, in providing opportunities for the students to recommence or continue their education and seeks to take account of the major social and

personality problems resulting from repression by and alienation from the dominant Euro-Australian society.

The College sees these problems as fundamental to the students' previous lack of success in academic or vocational education, in employment and in other areas of involvement in community activities. Thus the program deals first with the development of positive self-concepts and a positive identity as Aboriginal people in a multi-racial, multi-cultural Australia:

It seeks to develop a greater knowledge of the range of opportunities that exist for satisfying involvement in the community in work and in other activities and thus to enable him to live well with independence and self-management. The Program offers studies and other experiences in a range of areas including Aboriginal culture and society, communication and creative expression of many forms, community studies, job experience and work orientation. Academic studies, ranging in level from basic literacy to upper secondary, depending on the individual's present abilities, include English reading and writing skills as well as oral skills and Mathematics. Courses in this program average one year in length. If the student feels he needs more time then he can apply for an extension.

2. The Specific Studies Program, allows those students who have established confidence and self-respect and clear goals in life, and who need further academic qualification or skills to enable them to continue to a particular job or further training in another institution, to remain on in the College for about twelve months and pursue specific academic, pre-vocational, or vocational courses. Courses followed are generally geared to particular primary or secondary school levels, and have included English, Arithmetic, Mathematics, History, Navigation, Aboriginal Studies and Art. This program also caters for a small number of students from Aboriginal communities who have been nominated by their Council to come to the College to learn particular skills that they will apply in their community, to develop greater understanding of the structure and methods of Euro-Australian society, and to develop a greater command of oral and written English.

3. The Community Education Program, seeks to develop a greater understanding amongst non-Aboriginal people of Aboriginal people, society and culture. The ultimate aim is to develop a greater cross-cultural understanding in the multi-racial, multi-cultural Australian society. The program also provides experience for the students in communication, and opportunities to demonstrate and practise the knowledge and skills learnt at the College.

#### Teaching/Learning Methods

The principal techniques used in producing the educational process going on in the College include:

1. Teaching Aboriginal culture and society, both traditional and non-traditional. The approach is positive, and consideration of the "problems" of Aboriginal people has proven to be best undertaken late in the program;
2. Teaching Community Studies or practical Social Studies;
3. The development of Communication skills in English and in an Aboriginal language if any student wishes it;
4. Introduction to art and development of skills in creative expression e.g. art, music, pottery, photography, sport, film making, carving, etc;
5. Providing opportunities to see and experience a wide-range of social situations and employment and then concentrated experience in any job that interests the individual student in order to determine job goals;
6. Development of Techniques to enable the growth of attitudes and habits appropriate to holding a job in the workforce. A research project in this area is being planned for 1976 and 1977;
7. Counselling, personal, academic and vocational, has high priority in this College. The constant discussion between student and staff, and between student and student is vital in the educative process taking place.
8. Individual programming of students' courses, especially after the First Term in the Comprehensive Studies Program;
9. Provision of follow-up support on request, to students leaving the College;
10. Provision of a Community Education program aiming at modifying attitudes to Aboriginal people in the wider community;
11. A remedial approach to teaching in all academic subjects (especially English, reading and writing skills and Arithmetic).

### Conclusion

The College is there to bring them out and help them to take their place in society. A broader outlook on life is not saying that, "I am an Aboriginal, and that there is nothing really for me". But there is something offered for them if they want to get ahead then it is up to them to make it. The staff encourage the students a lot, they help them, even students who are very pessimistic and have problems in home life, or personal problems. The staff were sometimes up to two or three o'clock in the morning helping students and trying to establish confidence in themselves. They are always there to give advice

when needed. The students have benefited from this.

The College is a stepping stone to further education if the students want to follow it. But the College is really a help to those of use who have never had any education. We can apply and if there are any open positions, we are accepted. There were three or four there who could not read or write. They can now. When they started from ABC, it was amusing to see cat, and mat written up on the board, but it does something to you to know that here is a place where people can come; a place we can call our own. Not working among the white students and feeling perhaps a little awkward in that situation, but among Aborigines, we feel at home. I only hope in time to come that there will be more colleges like this one. Although I came from N.S.W., I give credit to S.A. for having the first Aboriginal College.

I believe there is a real need for similar separate bridging institutions in areas throughout Australia,

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# **7. ABORIGINAL TEACHER AIDE TRAINING**

## NEW SOUTH WALES

Alan Duncan

### Background

During the past two years the Department of Adult Education, University of Sydney has conducted a Training Course for Aboriginal Teaching Assistants appointed to schools as Aboriginal Teachers' Aides in New South Wales. The Course is funded through the Division of Special Education of the N.S.W. Department of Education from a grant provided by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The Course has been organised in close consultation with the Division of Special Education with whom very close liaison is maintained at all times.

In both the pilot course conducted in 1975 and in the course conducted in 1976 students were graded into three levels depending upon their educational background, potential and motivation. The Basic Course for Level I and Level II students was designed to cater for students with limited educational attainments or potential and emphasised job competence and personal development. At the end of this Basic Course students were awarded a Level I or Level II Certificate depending upon their progress, attitudes and performance.

Students whose progress during the year was above average and who were highly motivated were invited to undertake the Intensive Training Session in 3rd Term and to sit for an annual examination. Those who successfully completed this section of the Training Course and who passed in all subjects were awarded a Level III Certificate. Over half of these students then proceeded to tertiary institutions to undertake full professional training.

The following is a summary of the results over the past two years:-

<u>Students</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
Awarded Level III Certificate	5	9*
Awarded Level II Certificate	7	20
Awarded Level I Certificate	7	6
Incomplete	2**	3**
Left Dept. of Education	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	23	40
Level III students proceeding to tertiary***	4	4

\* Includes two 1975 students who undertook "Upgrading" Course

\*\* To complete training in 1977

\*\*\* As at 1 February 1977

During the two years that the programme has been operating, continuous evaluation is made of all aspects of the course. Last year, for example, the number of professional staff engaged in the training programme was increased from two to six so that the quality of the courses and the individualisation of students work was greatly increased. It is anticipated that student accommodation arrangements will be improved and that much closer liaison will be maintained with schools where Aboriginal Teaching Assistants are employed.

The basic aims of the Training Course are as follows:-

1. To assist the student to become an effective and useful member of the school staff.
2. To enrich the personal growth and development of the student so that their self-concept is enhanced.
3. To improve both the oral and written communication of the students to enable them to express themselves with self-confidence in a variety of situations.
4. To provide each student with basic understanding of child growth and development so that each one will be able to assist teachers and parents to relate more effectively to Aboriginal pupils at the school.
5. To equip the student with a tolerant understanding of cultural and social processes in local, national and international communities, thus enabling them to function more effectively in the school and in the local community.
6. To make students aware of their unique role as a link between the school and their own community.
7. To assist students to relate to and work with all sections of the community so that greater parental participation and community involvement will be facilitated.
8. To provide an opportunity for students, regardless of their previous educational attainments, to undertake studies which will enable them to proceed to tertiary education if they so desire.

#### 1977 Training Programme

There are now sixty two (62) Aboriginal Teaching Assistants in N.S.W. and this year the Department of Adult Education is organising three types of courses so that some form of training will be provided for all Teaching Assistants. The programme comprises a Basic Course, an Upgrading Course and a short In-service Refresher Course.

### Basic Course

The Basic Course is similar to that which has been provided for Level I and Level II students in 1975 and 1976 but it is intended that this year the Course will be completed by the end of Second Term. Students will be awarded a Level I or Level II Certificate on the basis of their performance. As in past years, students who show potential and whose performance during the year is above average, will be invited to join the Intensive Level III training session in Term Three and to sit for an examination in five subjects. The subjects studied in the Basic Course, and at much greater depth in the Intensive Course, are English, Educational Psychology, Educational Methodology, Elementary Sociology and Anthropology, and Government and Current Affairs.

Students who successfully complete the course will be awarded a Teaching Assistants Certificate by the University in December, 1977.

The training programme for the Basic Course will be five weeks in first Term (28th February to 11th March, 18th April to 6th May), six weeks in Second Term (30th May to 17th June, 25th July to 12th August), and one week in Third Term (5th to 9th December) for the Certification Ceremony.

Students selected to undertake the Level III (Advanced) Course will also be required to attend a four weeks training session from 12th September to 7th October or from 17th October to 11th November and will attend University for study and examinations and for the Certification Ceremony from 21st November to 9th December.

### Upgrading Course

The Upgrading Course is offered only to selected students whose performance during the 1975 or 1976 Basic Courses indicated that they have the potential to undertake study at a level at least equivalent to that of the Higher School Certificate. The Course is designed to enable those students with the ability and the desire to tackle the Level III examinations to work steadily towards this goal throughout the year. It will involve a lot of work, both during the course sessions in Sydney and at home and only those who are genuinely interested in gaining a Level II Certificate and are prepared to work hard for it will be accepted for the course. Progress of each student will be reviewed each term and only those students who are considered to be making satisfactory progress will be permitted to continue with the course.

Students will attend sessions at the University for two weeks in First Term (28th March to 7th April) and for two weeks in



Second Term (15th to 26th August). Students whose progress is satisfactory will then undertake a four weeks Intensive Course from 12th September to 7th October or from 17th October to 11th November and will attend the University for study and examinations and the Certification Ceremony from 21st November to 9th December.

#### Inservice Refresher Course

This two week Inservice Training Course, financed by the State Development Committee, will be offered to all Teaching Assistants who are not enrolled in either the Basic Course or the Upgrading Course.

It will be conducted from 11th July to 22nd July and will include seminar discussions directly related to the work being undertaken by the Teaching Assistants in schools. It will provide opportunities for Teaching Assistants to discuss matters of mutual interest including the ways in which they are involved in their school programmes and how they are overcoming any problems or difficulties.

Opportunities will be provided for all students to increase their verbal and written communication skills and their general knowledge. Arrangements have been made for a number of guest speakers to participate in the training programme. These include Aboriginal Vocational Officers with the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, representatives from the Aboriginal Medical and Legal Services, officers from the N.S.W. and the Commonwealth Departments of Education and from other government departments and representatives from such community organisations as the Federation of Parent and Citizen Association.

#### General

The Courses are made as practical as possible and are directly related to the work of the Teaching Assistants in the schools. Special features include visits to a number of schools in Sydney for practical observations, visits to live theatre and to places of special interest to enhance communication and personal development. Except for students undertaking the Refresher Course, all Teaching Assistants will be expected to complete various written exercises, assignments and projects whilst working in their schools. It has been accepted that Teaching Assistants will be granted two afternoons each week for study purposes.

It is apparent that all students undertaking the Upgrading or Level III Intensive Course will be expected to undertake a considerable amount of study outside normal school hours. They will need study advice and coaching assistance from a

suitably interested member of the teaching staff or someone in the local community. It is hoped that arrangements will be made for this necessary support in the local area.

#### Accommodation

Arrangements are being made for students to live at International House during course sessions, with residential costs being covered by the N.S.W. Department of Education. This arrangement worked very successfully with the Level III Intensive Course last year and was very popular with the students. Amongst other advantages, it completely eliminates travelling time to and from the University each day, provides a friendly congenial atmosphere for study whilst living in Sydney and facilitates access to the library and other University departments and contact with the course staff. Students will be expected to take advantage of these special accommodation arrangements and it is possible that students may not be eligible for the government living allowance if they decide to live elsewhere during the course sessions.

#### Liaison with School

It has been clearly demonstrated that the closer the co-operation which exists between the school and the Training Course, the greater are the chances of success for the individual student concerned. It is important therefore, that the Principal, or a person nominated by him, should provide counselling and advice to the Teaching Assistant at the school and should act as the contact person for the Department of Adult Education to ensure that the school is kept fully informed of details of the Training Course and of the progress of the individual Teaching Assistant concerned.

Each school will be visited at least once by a member of the Training Team during the year and it is hoped that where possible these visits will include some form of inservice training for teachers working directly with the Aboriginal Teaching Assistant.

Since continual evaluation is being made of the Course comments about the effectiveness of the Training Course from Principals and teachers would be welcomed.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

Michael Uiibo

As course co-ordinator at the Aboriginal Teacher Education Centre and a lecturer, I have worked closely with other lecturers and the Aboriginal Teaching Assistants since activities began at Batchelor in 1974.

In the Northern Territory, Teaching Assistants are Aboriginal people who work in team-teaching situations in schools with predominantly Aboriginal enrolments - that is, mainly "bush" schools, but some town schools with a reasonable proportion of Aboriginal enrolments.

Some of the Teaching Assistants are part way through a three year course structure which will qualify them as Teachers - with full Commonwealth Teaching Service Band 1 status.

The structure of grades for teaching assistants has been formulated in conjunction with the Department of Education and the Australian Public Service which gives both trained and untrained teaching assistants parity with A.P.S. clerical assistants, in wages and conditions. This is as follows:

Untrained Teaching Assistants are Grade 1

Graduates of the 1st Year Course are Grade 2

Graduates of the 2nd Year Course are Grade 3, or they may elect to join C.T.S. as a Temporary Band 1 Teacher.

N.B. This must be converted to C.T.S. Permanent Band 1 within five years, by completing successfully the 3rd Year course - or the teacher reverts to T.A. Grade 3.

The majority of the applicants for the 1st Year course at Batchelor have worked in schools as teaching assistants - and as a general rule this is one of our few entry requirements - but depending on individual applications some people are accepted from outside the teaching system.

Most graduates of the 1st Year course return home (to their own schools) but a few people have gone straight into 2nd Year. After a year of teaching (or possibly more), the teaching assistant may apply for entry to the second year course - and at this stage we are looking at some form of entry level, mainly a reasonable standard of literacy, but we have no formal test. Again, the majority of the Second Year graduates return to their

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own community to teach but some are selected to continue straight into 3rd Year - this decision is reached by the group of lecturers concerned, in consultation with the student, home community and Head Teacher.

At this point, I would like to point out that the 1st and 2nd year courses are run by the Department of Education, while the 3rd Year course is run by the Darwin Community College - both groups operating in the A.T.E.C., Batchelor. Full liaison and co-operation takes place between both groups - the reason for D.C.C. involvement is for the purpose of accreditation by the National Accreditation Groups - the course being called the Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate. Additionally, at present C.T.S. only recognises the graduate as "2 year trained status" because of no formal entry requirement as a 1st Year Teaching Assistant. This will bar any person from applying for promotion until the equivalent of 3 years of full training has been undertaken. The Commissioner of the C.T.S. has said that longer inservice courses and other areas of study could be considered as relevant achievement to qualify for the further year status, to allow the teacher to apply for assessment for promotion.

Our course outline at present consists of 4 main strands of study:

- a) General Studies;
- b) Curriculum Studies;
- c) Educational Studies;
- d) Aboriginal Studies.

(Individual subjects are listed in the Appendix).

Each year is divided into two semesters, and all subjects are terminal courses, which allows some flexibility if a student can only stay at Batchelor for one semester and wishes to return for the second semester in the future.

The course is structured as years 1, 2 and 3, and the various levels are aimed eventually at allowing Aborigines to become fully trained. Our current thinking is to possibly introduce a 1 year teaching assistants course and as well have the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year stage of a full teaching course. Entry levels would need to be imposed for the latter course if it were to gain full accreditation nationally, and there would still need to be negotiation between the two bodies who operate at Batchelor as to the details of running such a course.

This year, one of our three first year groups is working with a non-structured course, with the aim of allowing the teaching assistant more freedom in picking the subject areas in which they wish to work, and find a need for personal improvement. Before formal work commenced, a period of many weeks was spent allowing the students to work out their own place within Aboriginal culture and how they looked at life and education. This approach could best be summarised as Paulo Freire methodology.

This year also we have put more emphasis on practice teaching which has both created and solved problems for individual Teaching Assistants. As well as the one month's practice at the end of Semester 1, in the student's home area, we initiated a programme of 1 day per week in the various schools in Darwin. The student was selected to work in his area of choice (pre-school, infants, primary) with the same group each week. This allowed the skills learnt in "Teaching Skills" to be used and also the observation of and participation in a school different from the one in the student's home area. (All Darwin teachers were volunteers for this scheme). For a number of students the experience was beneficial and for some it was traumatic, culminating in absenteeism on practice day. As can be guessed, social gains and experiences were beneficial to both the Teaching Assistants and the pupils and teachers in Darwin. We did include also a 1 week's block in May in the same schools. Lecturers visited each student for observation and consultation with the respective class teachers every week. The practice in home areas is largely supervised by the class teachers and Head, and at least one visit is made to every student's school.

One method which is being tried at present, to combat the problem of leaving home to go to a central training campus, is on-site teacher education. The present scheme has operated at Yirrkala since the beginning of 1976 and primarily caters for those people who can't for family reasons, or don't want to for personal reasons, come to Batchelor. The A.T.E.C. 1st Year Course is spread over two years because the respective Teaching Assistants spend only half their time on formal lectures, etc. and the balance on classroom work. A positive benefit for the school is that they don't lose a staff member, because in the present staffing situation, Teaching Assistants who go to Batchelor officially can't be replaced in the local schools, so vital programmes suffer. The lecturer at Yirrkala co-ordinates all the subjects but doesn't necessarily have to teach them - he draws on the combined resources of the school staff.

For 1978, there are possibly three further on-site courses commencing - all in the top end of the N.T. As well, a small Teacher Education Unit will be established at Ti-Tree, north of Alice Springs, where Central Australian Teaching Assistants will attend for their first year course.

Finally, our programme and curriculum is constantly under review, for improvement - and as newer staff are appointed, so the degree of specialisation is able to increase. For example, this year English Language Arts units have been prepared for all groups, as this is recognised as a major need for Teacher Training.

I hope in this brief paper the main points of Aboriginal Teacher training have been outlined, as undertaken at A.T.E.C., Batchelor, N.T.

COURSE STRUCTURE FOR 3 YEARS OF ABORIGINAL TEACHER TRAINING AT A.T.E.C.

Semester	Education Studies and Practice Teaching	Curriculum Studies	General Studies	Aboriginal Studies
1	E.S.1:Teaching Skills P.T.1:Practice Teaching (A)	C.S.1:The Teaching of Mathematics (A) C.S.2:The Teaching of Art and Craft	G.S.1:English Language Arts (A) G.S.7:Mathematics	A.S.1:Linguistics and Aboriginal Language
2	E.S.3:Teaching Skills E.S.4:Child Development and Learning P.T.2:Practice Teaching (B)	C.S.3:The Teaching of Language Arts	G.S.2:English Language Arts (B) G.S.8:Social Science G.S.9:General Science	A.S.2:Linguistics and Creative Writing
3	E.S.5:Classroom Organisation E.S.6:Programming and Planning P.T.3:Practice Teaching (C)	C.S.4:The Teaching of Social Studies	G.S.3:English Language Arts (C) G.S.10:M.A.C.O.S.	A.S.1:Linguistics and Aboriginal Language
4	P.T.4:Practice Teaching (D)	C.S.5:The Teaching of Science C.S.6:T.E.S.L.	G.S.4:English Language Arts (D) G.S.11:M.A.C.O.S. G.S.12:Art and Craft	A.S.2:Linguistics and Creative Writing
5	E.S.7:Education in Develop- ing Communities P.T.5:Practice Teaching (E)	C.S.7:The Teaching of Mathematics (B)	G.S.5:English Language Arts (E) G.S.13:The Ecology of N.T.	A.S.3:Socio-Cultural Change
	E.S.8:Development of a personal approach education P.T.6:Practice Teaching (F)	G.S.8:T.E.S.L.	G.S.6:English Language Arts (F) G.S.14:The Social Develop- ment of the N.T.	A.S.4:Creative Express- ion Workshop

## QUEENSLAND

John Budby

The employment of Aboriginal/Islander teacher aides in our schools has become a major development in the education of Aboriginal/Islander children throughout the country. At present, an estimated six hundred are employed at least one hundred and thirty in Queensland. The presence of the Aboriginal/Islander teacher aide in our schools is ensuring support for our children as they progress through the educational system which prevails in this country.

Although educational authorities generally regard the teacher aide as a key in our schools, some teachers and principals are reluctant to permit or even to encourage aide responsibility in their schools. In some cases, teachers and principals do not have enough confidence in the ability of the aides and therefore, prefer to permit aides to perform the menial tasks such as making the role, making stencils and running them off and running messages. The criteria that these people give for their attitude is that the aide has not been adequately trained to perform the duties that they are requested to perform.

A discussion I had with a teacher recently enforces this point. The teacher was complaining that the aide who had been working with him, was unable to copy material correctly from a book to a stencil. He mentioned that whenever the aide was asked to do this, that the finished product had many errors, in printing, spelling and setting out. He questioned me as to why this was the case. When questioned whether he had given precise instruction to the aide, his response was that surely since the aide had been to previous seminars, he should have been trained to do this.

In my address, I intend outlining the needs for teacher aides to have an opportunity to do training and then to discuss some of the problems involved in, with suggested solutions for, the training of aides.

There are two major needs, as I see it. Firstly, we need to produce Aboriginal/Islander teachers. Secondly, for those who prefer to remain as aides, to professionally and personally develop aides.

Throughout Australia there are a small number of qualified Aboriginal/Islander teachers. Obviously, there is a need for these numbers to be increased. In teacher aide ranks we have people who have had extensive experience in classroom situations. In Queensland some people have had up to twenty or thirty years as either a teacher and/or teacher aide. When the missions and

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*John Budby, an Advisory Teacher with the Queensland Education Department, is a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.*



Department of Native Affairs were in charge of the community, Aboriginal people actually taught. Teachers' Unions, have made it impossible for this to continue. Only qualified teachers are permitted in front of classrooms. These people who have shown sure keenness in teaching obviously enjoy being connected with children and would probably make excellent teachers, given the relevant skills. These chances of ever becoming recognised as a teacher are quickly fading away.

At this stage, the only training available for the acquiring of a teacher qualification is a minimum of three years at a recognised College of Advanced Education. Because of this, I feel a great amount of potential is wasted. Aides with families are unable to commit themselves to three years of study.

For these people, there is a need for short-term courses to be devised, so that these people can have an opportunity to improve their status in the school.

The majority of aides are older people. They have not had the same opportunity as the present generation. Therefore, these academic qualifications are not high. To commit themselves, to even twelve months of involved academic study should be disastrous. Shame because of failure would demoralise the Aborigine/Islander.

Many aides are the main salary earners in the family. They are unable to leave communities to attend colleges and live on student incomes. What provision can be made for these people? Is on-the-job training sufficient?

There is an incredible male/female imbalance in aide rate. Of the 18 teacher aides in Brisbane/Ipswich area, none are male. At Aurukun where there are 10 aides, three are male. What has caused this? I feel that the salary and the fact that there is no promotional structure for aides has meant that the male has had to find employment elsewhere. We need male Aboriginal/Islander teachers for in Aboriginal culture, the male was the teacher. How do we encourage more males to take on training when there appears to be no point in doing so.

Many aides have taken on correspondence studies to improve their knowledge but in most cases there has not been adequate support services and the aides have not been able to cope. When designing training programmes or for people attending Colleges of Advanced Education provision should be made for the provision of support services.

So even though educational authorities should tap resources within the teacher aide ranks when looking for Aboriginal/Islander teachers there seems to be many problems that need to be ironed out.

Some teacher aides however do not wish to become teachers. They prefer to remain as aides. Administrators falsely assume that any Aboriginal/Islander person working in Education should become a teacher. This is not so. What are the needs and problems associated with these people?

Maybe the major problem is that there is surely little promotional opportunity for these people. Training is the barrier that limits them. Once one has reached the top of the salary scale, there is no further progression. An aide who has achieved this, would not be interested in doing any further study.

In Queensland, due to an initiative shown by the State Aboriginal/Islander Consultative Committee to the Queensland Department of Education has resulted in the compiling of a salary structure for teacher aides. The structure takes into account years of service; academic qualifications and training. The possible structure is in four stages:

Stage 1: New and inexperienced teacher aides responsible for assisting teachers in compiling materials to be used in the classroom.

Stage 2: Experienced aides  
Have had at least two (2) years as a teacher aide  
Have permanent status and therefore, entitled to sick leave and holiday pay.

Stage 3: Senior aides  
Has specialised role responsible for training of new staff  
Overseer of other aides.

Stage 4: Training Officers  
Responsible for assisting in the planning of programmes for the training of other aides.

Progress through these stages would depend on training and experience. The more experienced aides, after training, would begin at Stages 3 & 4.

This particular structure although only being worked out would provide some incentive for teacher aides to regard their work as a profession rather than an unimportant menial job. Training workshops are being considered for training.

Training through Colleges of Advanced Education, Technical Colleges and by supported correspondence lessons are methods to be considered. These would provide immediate and adequate training for our experienced aides and as such could be evoked on as short term solutions.

When considering the training of aides, perhaps another factor to be considered is the variety of roles that the aides have in

the school. In Queensland as probably in other states, aide roles can be categorised into several different areas. These include:

1. Teacher Assistant:

Responsible for the preparation of materials e.g. making charts, drawing up stencils, marking of rolls, etc.

Has very little contact with children in the classroom. This is usually the position held by newcomers. However, many experienced aides prefer this role to the others that are to be mentioned.

2. Bilingual Teaching Assistants:

Responsible for the teaching of Aboriginal/Islander language within the bilingual schools. Many of these aides have had preliminary training at the Batchelor College in the Northern Territory.

3. Van Leer Teaching Assistants:

Responsible for providing assistance in the teaching of infant grade pupils.

4. Small Group Teaching Assistants:

Involved in teaching small groups of children. Usually take children for reading.

5. Home/School Liaison Assistants:

Principally involved in encouraging parents to participate in or take more interest in the education of their children. This aide usually visits the parents at home taking copies of the child's work and discusses his/her progress.

6. Student Education and Vocational Assistant:

Stationed at school; has informal contact with children; encourages children to discuss problems, also given advice on careers.

7. School Visitors:

Visit schools and gives lessons on either contemporary and/or cultural aboriginal life. Does not necessarily visit schools which have a high proportion of Aboriginal/Islander students, situated in urban areas.

8. Specialists Assistants/Aides:

Manual arts, home economics and library aides.

9. Cultural Aides:

Responsible for the teaching of Aboriginal/Islander culture, e.g. making of boomerangs, art and craft, usually parents who are employed for 3-4 hours per week.

10. Pre-School Aides:

Involved in assisting in pre-schools throughout the state.

If such variation exists, then what sort of training programme should be devised? Is it a programme which concentrates on training to increase the competence in the common elements of teacher aide roles, or does one devise a multiplicity of programmes to provide an opportunity for the aides to obtain more expertise in the specific roles that they perform?

An important aspect is that the aide is employed to be a contact between the school and the community. However, some aides are reluctant to communicate with their teacher because of, to some degree, shyness. The teacher can be also at fault because of a lack of awareness or because of his lack of understanding of aboriginal people. How then does one train teacher aides to become more confident and prepared to provide teachers with necessary background information about the community in which they are teaching? Is training aides in this respect the answer or should one concentrate on sensitising the teachers by giving them further training?

Another problem as regards training of aides is funding. In Queensland, funding for the employment of teacher aides is provided through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Schools Commission and the state department of Education, the majority being provided by the state. Funding arrangements vary from state to state, but what needs to be considered is who to provide funds for training. If large amounts of money is spent on training, then maybe one is limiting the number of aides that can be employed.

Another situation that has arisen and has to be taken into account is that if a training programme was developed for Aboriginal/Islander aides, what is to happen with the non-Aboriginal/Islander aides? In urban centres where both people are employed, some conflict has occurred. Non-Aboriginal/Islander aides question why so much money is being spent on Aborigines and Islander. This is a reality that has to be faced.

During this address, I have attempted to outline some of the needs and problems associated with the training of Aboriginal/Islander aides. Training programmes are essential but need to be well planned and prepared for them to achieve the desired effect. I hope this conference can provide some of the answers.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Colin Mounsey

I will preface my paper with two remarks which will, I believe, set the parameters of the topic under review:

Firstly, although I have been asked to speak on the training of Aboriginal Teacher Aides in Western Australia, I will be using, as my example, the programme which has been initiated within the Education Department of Western Australia.

The location of schools in which we employ Aboriginal Teacher Aides and the ideological variations which are discernable between the Catholic Education Commission and the Education Department prevents me from drawing a direct parallel between the two school authorities which employ Aboriginal Aides in primary schools. I am also sufficiently ignorant of the programme which has been initiated by the Pre-School Education Board to refrain from drawing examples from their training programme.

Secondly, if we are to be consistent in our terminology then we should not confuse the issue of Aide Training with Aide Education. To me the former is related to the development of competency in discharging a function, i.e. the development of skills to perform a specified role within a school and in a community.

Aide Education on the other hand should refer to the development of personal skills which will increase the potential of an Aide to become a fully trained teacher. It is this form of development to which the Aboriginal Consultative Committee referred in its report - Education for Aborigines (3) -

"Comprehensive training schemes which will lead to full teacher qualifications should be organized for those who are capable of and desire to be teachers, but do not possess normal academic qualifications".

Aide training is primarily the responsibility of the employing authority. The aim of a training programme is to improve the Aide's on-the-job performance. It will be seen later that each aide programme is unique, although there are some universals which may be introduced in a group situation.

By comparison the responsibility for Aide Education rightfully belongs to post-secondary education institutions:

Universities, Colleges of Advanced Education, Institutes of Technology and technical schools. These institutions already

offer fully accredited courses for Aborigines or they possess the facilities and the organization to mount courses through which Aboriginal Aides may acquire skills which will enable them to proceed to full professional status.

#### Objectives of the Teacher Aide Programme

Lengthy debate on the question of long-term aims and immediate objectives, preceded the introduction of the Teacher Aide programme. It is both desirable and logical to employ Aboriginal people to teach Aborigines, and to teach about Aborigines.

The Education Department supports the principal of developing programmes which aim to prepare Aborigines to enter the teaching profession. We would particularly support moves which would provide fully qualified Aboriginal people for teaching responsibilities in remote communities.

A number of models were used to assist in the formulation of our Objectives. Two interesting examples of contemporary North American policy were noted:

1. A statement, "Classroom Aides, Philadelphia, U.S.A., Guidelines (1) which lists the objectives of the programme as:

(a) To improve the quality of instruction by:

- (i) Assisting teachers in non-instructional functions.
- (ii) Providing for individual pupil and small group supervision and assistance.
- (iii) Improving the utilization of audio-visual aids and other instructional materials.

(b) To provide for greater flexibility of staff utilization through individualized instruction.

(c) To reduce pupil - adult relationships by building wholesome adult - child or peer group relationships.

2. The programme introduced in British Columbia (2).

In this Canadian province, the aim of the Native "Paraprofessionals" programme is, to:

(a) Enhance the communication potential between native children and the rest of the school.

(b) Increase involvement of the native community in school affairs.

(c) Act as a "kind of culture broker" to interpret cultural subtleties for the teacher and the children in the school.

(d) To extend an awareness of school expectations and intentions through the broader native community.

Neither of these two models is compatible with the rationale underlying the Education Department Aide programme, although we agree with sections of the British Columbian model. If what we required was a person to assist in routine school activities then it is reasonable to assume that this would be performed more effectively by a person who was more familiar with the school's learning programme and school administration. Few Aboriginal people would match the skill of a non-Aboriginal person in performing such a role in the school. However, if the development of competence and self-confidence amongst Aboriginal students is to be emphasised, then it will only be accomplished if teachers are fully aware of the difficulties which confront Aboriginal students. Teacher awareness of such difficulties can be established through the use of Aboriginal teachers or through interaction between a non-Aboriginal teacher and an Aboriginal assistant. The objectives which we hope to develop through our Aide programme are to:

1. Act as a communications facilitator between students and teachers, teachers and parents, the school and the community.
2. Provide an ethnic presence in the school and by so doing providing an example of Aboriginality which is not synonymous with the stereotype which pervades the non-Aboriginal community.
3. Assist teachers to understand general and specific learning and attitudinal problems which exist for Aboriginal students.
4. Establish within schools, people who have developed a set of skills which are of particular relevance to Aboriginal students.

#### Selection of Aides

Selection of suitable Aides is considered to be a vital element in the programme. Principals of schools in areas where the need for supportive staff has been established, are provided with a set of criterion to assist him/or her in making a suitable selection.

Selection specifics which must be adhered to include:

Potential Aides must -

- be Aboriginal people;
- be representative of the Aboriginal community in which the school is located;

- either be a nominee of the Aboriginal community or be acceptable to the people who comprise the Aboriginal community;
- be able to communicate readily with the students, the teacher and parents of students. In areas where the Aboriginal vernacular language is the first language of the community, the Aide must be bi-lingual;
- have acquired English literacy and numeracy skills above the level of those demonstrated by the pupils with whom the Aide is to interact;
- have demonstrated a desire to become a Teacher Aide.

School Principals would also be conscious of a whole range of personal characteristics which may be relevant to the success potential of the Aide. He must also consider staff attitudes and relationships and factors which would maximize or inhibit the success potential of an Aide.

#### The Location of Aides currently employed by the Education Department

The number of Aides employed at any one time is dependent upon the major variables:

- (a) the pool of people who aspire to the position;
- (b) the degree to which school principals and staff consider the need for the appointment of an Aide;
- (c) the amount of money available to employ para-professional support staff.

The third variable imposes considerable constraints on the programme.

I believe that schools which have demonstrated a high priority of need for additional Aboriginal support staff are those schools where -

- (a) children do not speak English as a first language, or who use a dialectic form of English as a first language;
- (b) where traditional Aboriginal community organization and authority prevails;
- (c) where school-based curriculum development, or standard curriculum modification is essential to the educational satisfaction of students and parents;
- (d) where the majority, or a significant minority of the students are Aboriginal.

Currently Aides are employed at -



Balgo Hills  
Broome  
Carnarvon and East Carnarvon (3)  
Camballin  
Cue  
Cundeelee (3)  
Derby  
Fitzroy Crossing (3)  
Gnowangerup  
Gogo  
Halls Creek (3)  
Jigalong (2)  
Kellerberrin  
Kununurra (2)  
Kalumburu  
Laverton  
La Grange (2)  
Lombadina  
Marble Bar  
Meekatharra  
Mt. Margaret  
Mullewa (2)  
One Arm Point (2)  
Onslow (2)  
Quairading  
Roebourne (2)  
South Hedland  
Tardun  
Warburton (3)  
Wiluna  
Wittenoom  
Wyndham (2)  
Yandeyarra

and in the Central Reserve -

Jamieson (3)  
Wingkelinna (3)

An emphasis has been placed on appointing Aides in more remote schools.

### Training of Aides

At present there is no opportunity to provide Aides with pre-service training. Induction and orientation of Aides to their task is of necessity a school-based operation. It is my responsibility to provide a training format as a guide to teachers. The structuring of an adequate training programme which is appropriate to all Aides is not possible. The disparity which is discernable in the age, sex, academic, social and experiential background of Aides and the geographic, demographic and social variations of the centres of employment

would mitigate against any attempt at producing a uniform training format. Other variables which must be considered are too numerous to list. However, some important aspects would include:

- a) the size of the school;
- b) the section of the school in which the Aide will be involved;
- c) the competence of the school principals and teachers to implement a training programme;
- d) the racial composition of the school.

Training is seen as a pre-requisite if the job efficiency of the Aide is to be achieved and job satisfaction is to be realized by the Aide.

In this regard the role of each school in training its own aides is paramount. Only teachers can be really aware of the day-to-day requirements of teaching in the particular environment and hence should be best suited to planning relevant task-related training experiences. Such training would be of maximum benefit because of its "homegrown" or "tailor-made" nature". (3)

Although it is more appropriate to develop a school-based training programme for Aides, a school staff thus involved is confronted with a great number of difficulties. These would include:

What are the role specifications?

What are appropriate levels of competence and progression?

What emphasis of development should be highlighted?

What are the expectations of the Aide, the pupils, the community?

How can an effective team approach to training be accomplished?

What resources are required to assist in the programme?

The Education Department has endeavoured to overcome these problems in three ways:

1. Through the development of a training matrix, which can be used as a guide by the school training team. This format can be used to identify functions in the school which would be appropriate to the role specification of an Aide and indicating sequential levels of competence within the variables.

2. By involving members of the training team in courses which are designed to improve the members' awareness of :

- a) the role specification and dimension of the Aide programme;
- b) the role of the training team;

- c) the importance of a whole school involvement in the training programme;
- d) the individuality of the Aide in terms of background experiences and levels of attainment;
- e) the expectations of the community, students, the school and the employing authority;
- f) the relative responsibilities in the school of the professional and paraprofessional.

3. By conducting short-term intensive courses for Aides. Course programmes include sections which -

- a) are designed to improve the Aides' understanding of the community and social institutions which function within the community;
- b) assist Aides' to understand stages of child development and skills acquisition;
- c) permit Aides to pursue areas of interest or develop a specific skill;
- d) encourage social interaction between Aides from differing geographic locations, Aides and the residents of a large community and the Aides and staff involved in the training programme.

#### The Relationship between Aide Training and Aide Education

There is a natural bridge between programmes which are designed to increase job efficiency and courses through which Aides will become fully trained professionals.

The demonstration of practical competence is a pre-requisite for the confirmment of a teaching qualification. This principal is supported in the current proposal to offer an Associate Diploma in Community Service, which will offer Aboriginal Aides their first opportunity to acquire a professional qualification as an external study course. The practical elements of the course will be accredited on the basis of the Aides' performance of their role in the school. Each of the authorities which employs Aboriginal Aides, who will participate in the course, are to be responsible for the development of the Applied Study Units which are applicable to that organization. The competence developed through an Aide training programme will thus become transferable to meet the requirements of an education programme.

### Conclusions

Teacher Aides are primarily employed to assist students with their learning programme. Their effectiveness is likely to be in direct proportion to their ability to perform a supportive role to the teacher within the classroom. The principal role is one of communication.

Student ↔ teacher,          teacher ↔ parent,

School ↔ Community

With the development of more effective communications it is possible for students to gain a greater understanding of the learning programme. Conversely, through effective communication with their Aides teachers develop a greater understanding of the difficulties and constraints which confront Aboriginal students in our schools. Improved communications between the parent and the school should facilitate an exchange of expectations and aspirations and thus reduce the level of misunderstanding which does occur.

The very presence of an efficient, effective and sympathetic Aboriginal Aide provides tremendous intangible benefits to the pupils in general and to the whole tone of the school.

An effective Aide training programme is of inestimable benefit to the pupils, teachers, school, parents and the community.

## THE INTERACTION BETWEEN AIDE TRAINING AND AIDE DEVELOPMENT

		TRAINED TEACHER				
		AIDE TRAINING		Applied Study Units		AIDE EDUCATION
		LEVEL I		1 2 3 4	Practical units associated with Tertiary studies - Accredited by the Employing Authority	TERTIARY EDUCATION including teacher education
In-Service Programmes for Principals Teachers Supported by Superintendents Advisory Staff	Training Programmes on site by Principals Teachers Visiting Advisory Staff Superintendents	Continuing development in performance, skills, liaison role within training programme on site.				Bridging Courses where desirable, on site, part-time, correspondence, tutoring, possibly full-time in rare cases on request.
		LEVEL II				
		Continuing development in performance, skills, liaison role within training programme on site. Selection for Level I				
		LEVEL III				
		Probation, school adjustment, development of performance, skills, liaison role within training programme on site Selection for Levels II and I.				
Candidates		SELECTION Self, Community, Principals.		Candidates		

References

1. Classroom Aides, Philadelphia, U.S.A. Guidelines, p.1 an unpublished document from the School District of Philadelphia.
2. A.R. King. "The Native Indian 'Paraprofessionals' in British Columbia" in The Northern Vol. 11. No. 3, 1975.
3. "Education for Aborigines" - Report to the Schools Commission by the Aboriginal Consultative Group, June 1975, p.19.
4. W. Dyer. "Involving Indigenous Classroom Assistants in Primary Schools", Department of Education, Queensland, 1974, p.27.

# 8.CURRICULUM CHANGE

# THE ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIAN IN NORTH EASTERN ARNHAM LAND

## A Social Science Unit for Upper Primary/Lower Secondary Students

D. Williams and A.C. Fidock\*

In 1975, the Curriculum Development Centre made a substantial grant to the Evatt Primary School in the A.C.T. for the development of a social science unit - The Aboriginal Australian in North Eastern Arnhem Land.\*\* The initial curriculum materials were developed at the Evatt School. The final materials will be trialled in all Australian states and territories in term I, 1978. The Curriculum Development Centre will then publish the materials, making them available to schools throughout Australia. The materials in this curriculum unit, which is a case study of a particular people, should complement the comprehensive set of general materials on Aborigines being developed by the Curriculum Development Centre.

### Aims and Rationale

In primary and secondary schools throughout Australia at present there is a need for resource materials on the Australian Aborigines. The existing materials are not only inadequate but also inaccurate and racist in some cases. Some attempts are

\* The project directors are Dr. Don Williams, a Principal Lecturer in Curriculum Studies at the Canberra College of Advanced Education, and Mr. Alan Fidock, formerly Principal of Evatt Primary School, now Co-ordinator (Aboriginal Education), Curriculum Development Centre. They formerly lived in Arnhem Land for many years where they carried out research. When developing the curriculum unit they worked in close association with the local town councils and Aboriginal leaders, and, lately, the National Aboriginal Education Committee.

\*\* In the anthropological literature the Aborigines of the area are referred to as the Murngin, the Wulamba or the Miwuyt. It is debatable whether these names have clear denotations in common parlance; the people do not have a clearly identifiable general word to describe themselves as a group.



being made to produce materials for use at the sub-tertiary and tertiary levels but little is being accomplished at the primary level. The success of the Aboriginal Studies program supervised by Margaret Simpson in the Cronulla District of N.S.W. suggests that Aboriginal Studies can form a vital part of a primary school social science program.

The aims of the project are as follows:

- (a) to produce a set of resource materials on the Aboriginal Australians in North Eastern Arnhem Land;
- (b) to involve children in the selection, generation and evaluation of the materials as part of a development and research program;
- (c) to organize and present the materials in such a way that pupils who use them may select and pursue their own learning activities with minimum intervention by teachers;
- (d) to present the materials as a social science unit which may be used as part of a school's basic social science program;
- (e) to ensure that the materials cover a broad range of educational objectives such that any children who follow the curriculum may:

understand themselves, North Eastern Arnhem Land Aborigines and other peoples with greater insight;

develop academic and social skills through the methods and processes employed to study the materials;

acquire tolerance and empathy towards ethnic groups whose skin colours, personalities, social structures and cultures are different from their own.

#### Description and Plan of Project

##### (a) Age Level of Materials

The materials will be designed for children in their final years of primary schooling, or early years of secondary schooling, that is children who are approximately 11-14 years of age.

##### (b) Duration of Project

The development and evaluation of materials will take three years:-

1976 Initial development at the Evatt Primary School.

1977 Towards the end of 1977 the curriculum unit should be at the prototype stage ready for production and wider distribution throughout Australia.

1978 Trialling and evaluation of the materials in selected schools in all Australian states and territories.

(c) Correlation with Social Science Programs

The project materials may be used throughout the course of a year to generate approximately two hours per week of learning activities for the average pupil. Alternatively, they may be used for shorter or longer periods to fit in with other social science programs. This curriculum synthesises, in the form of a case study, all key social science concepts developed during the children's primary schooling and, hence, should help the children integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines.

(d) Objectives

Specific objectives were worked out with children as the initial materials were produced. Even when the project has proceeded to a stage when the resource materials are produced on a large scale for use in other schools, behavioural objectives will not be specified. The materials are so written that pupils are encouraged to specify their own goals and discuss their programs with their teachers. Special study guides will be provided for this purpose. (In the Teachers Handbook, which will form part of the kit, guidance will be given to teachers on how to develop goals with their pupils).

(e) Selection of Content

Two basic questions were asked when selecting the content of the project. Firstly, small samples of North Eastern Arnhem Land Aborigines were asked: What should white people in Australia know about you? Secondly, people living in Evatt, particularly members of the School Board and children in the senior primary school, were asked: What would you like to know about Aborigines? The data yielded from these two approaches was checked against the content of a variety of modern social science curricula to ensure that the materials dealt adequately with an elementary introduction to the disciplines which contribute to social science.

(f) Organization of Content

While it is impossible at this stage to specify the nature and scope of the content of the final program, the following is an outline of the contents and organization of the draft materials. The materials concentrate on a particular group of Aborigines rather than Aborigines in general. It is felt that this is the best approach for upper primary/lower secondary school children.

**Level 1. Setting the Scene (Preliminary Focus) (Orange)**

The initial and central focus will be on a fictitious family in N.E. Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. Pupils will get to know the members of the family through photographs, posters and written accounts of how they spend their time and where they live.

Arnhem Land Panorama (slides/tape)  
People and Places (photographs/posters)  
A Week in the Life of John Djanda (booklet)  
A Week in the Life of Lorraine Lambu (booklet)  
Arnhem Land People (slides/tape)  
Study Guide (booklet)

**Level 2. Looking at the Lifestyle (Analysing Major Activities) (Blue)**

As a result of studying the waking-time activities of various members of the family, pupils will compile a list of the major activities undertaken. They will be introduced to the wide range of materials which explore the activities. Individual pupils and/or small groups will be free to select topics from the range of materials, presented as booklets and/or slides/tapes.

Bark Painting	Art and Craft
Dhapi Ceremony	Bukulup Ceremony
Major ceremonies	Schools and Education
Children's Games	Health
Hunting and Shopping	Fishing
Agriculture	Housing, Building, Services
Towns and Homeland Centres	Mining
Transport and Communications	Church and Religion

**Level 3. Understanding the Society (Organizing Information) (Yellow)**

A range of more abstract studies will emerge out of a study of activities which can be readily observed. For example, a study of corroborees will raise questions about moieties and clans while a study of mining will raise questions about geography, economics, and the clan ownership of land.

Level 3 materials will be basically organised around the disciplines which constitute the social sciences. They have been termed abstract studies in that they seek deeper and more general understandings than those which will derive from level 2 materials. However, the materials will not be presented in abstract terms. To meet the needs of school children, concrete materials and illustrations will be used as a basis for making generalizations. The materials at this level will be presented in booklets.

History	Ecology
Life Cycle	Religion
Economy	Politics
Art in Society	Kinship and Social Organization - An Introduction

Level 4. Kinship and Social Organization (Extending Knowledge)  
(Green)

These materials will extend, even the gifted, children who want to pursue the study of kinship introduced in level 3 in greater depth. (The same materials will be beneficial to teachers in Aboriginal schools who have little knowledge of Aboriginal kinship systems).

Symbols	Mothers and Fathers
Grandmothers & Grandfathers	Marriage
Clans	Moieties and sub-sections
Culture Contact	

Language Studies (Purple)

A special set of materials on Gupapuynu, one of the dialects in N.E. Arnhem Land, will be prepared to achieve the following aims:

1. To show that Aboriginal languages are viable and complex means of communication.
2. To demonstrate that Aboriginal languages (and other languages) have meaningful sounds which do not occur in English.
3. To discover that Aboriginal thought forms may differ from English thought forms.
4. To introduce the concept of dialect.
5. To discover the significance of sign language.
6. To appreciate the fact that languages which have never been written may be reduced to writing.

In order to achieve the aims it will be necessary for children to learn a limited number of conversational sentences, using a basic vocabulary of 100 words, and attempt to pronounce a few sounds that do not occur in English.

Booklets on spoken and sign language will be prepared to go with audiotapes.

Teacher's Handbook	(booklet)
Learning About Language	(booklet)
Gupapuynu - Lessons 1 - 10	(booklet/cassette)

Gupapuynu - Lessons 11 - 20	(booklet/cassette)
Lessons 21 - 30	(booklet/cassette)
Lessons 31 - 40	(booklet/cassette)
Literature of North Eastern Arnhem Land	(booklet)

(g) Nature of Learning Activities

The subject matter for learning activities has been set out in the previous sub-sections. Because many important learning outcomes are not simply based on subject matter alone, the processes used to study the materials in the kit will receive special attention. To a certain extent, the processes pupils use will be influenced by the teaching strategies adopted by teachers. A teachers' manual will therefore be produced to help teachers as they plan learning activities. For example, stages in scientific thinking will be explained to teachers and several suggestions will be given for translating these into meaningful learning activities for children. However, effective use of the kit will not rely too heavily on the use of the manual by teachers. It would seem more appropriate to write the materials in such a way that both teachers and pupils are exposed to a variety of learning approaches through the materials themselves. The following are some of the ways in which the materials will provide a guide to learning activities.

1. The booklets will be colour coded to indicate degrees of difficulty and abstraction.
2. A study guide will be available to help children select their own programmes. Typical questions on an assignment sheet in the study guide will be as follows:
  - a) What do I want to find out this week?
  - b) What materials will I need?
  - c) Would it be better to work by myself or work with others?
  - d) How will I study and record information?
3. The booklets will include a wide variety of activities from which children can select or generate their own activities, and self-administered tests (language and kinship booklets) to give pupils feedback on their progress and provide reinforcement and encouragement.
4. A variety of media will provide alternative ways of looking at a particular problem. Poor readers, for example, will find materials which they can handle.

5. Materials will be cross referenced. For example, a pupil who is reading through the booklet on the Mining Industry will be confronted with the Aborigines' claims for land rights and mineral rights. In order to understand the basis for Aborigines' claims, pupils will be directed to the level 3 materials where clan-ownership and totemism are discussed.

Space is not available here to discuss other dimensions of learning activities. For example, the project directors plan to introduce role playing as a strategy and explore the effectiveness of gaming and simulation approaches.

### Evaluation

During the developmental stage of the programme in 1976/77 no rigorous evaluation will be made. It is the project directors' firm belief that a large number of "soft" measures should be used to provide immediate feedback to the producers of the materials. For example, the following are some of the questions which teachers, pupils and parents will be asked as a section of the kit is developed.

- a) What did the pupils want to discover?
- b) How interested were they in the topic?
- c) Was the content manageable?
- d) What learning processes were preferred?
- e) How did the topic relate to previous learnings and how will it relate to future learnings?
- f) What emotions did pupils display?
- g) Were reading and other difficulties encountered?
- h) Did the teacher have to provide much guidance?

During the developmental stage the project directors plan to ask an outside educational consultant panel with Aboriginal membership to review the program. It is felt that outside criticism could reveal weaknesses which the directors have not yet detected because of their close involvement in the project.

In 1978 the project directors plan to try out the materials in selected schools around Australia, using other selected schools as a control group. Although detailed plans for the evaluation have not been prepared, the directors feel that there are two important issues which call for rigorous examination.

First, there would appear to be grounds for hypothesizing that white Australian children who use the kit will develop more favourable attitudes towards Aborigines. This is a somewhat tenuous prediction which will present many problems as it is operationalized in a research design.

Second, it could be claimed that social science program which involves a detailed study of Aborigines will enable pupils to

understand other people from other cultures with a greater degree of insight than a social science program which did not study another cultural group in depth. In other words, pupils who use the kit should develop a better facility in cross-cultural understanding. Some modern social science programs include a detailed study of another culture. It is important to know whether such a study produces understandings which extend beyond those produced by a traditional program.

### Conclusion

This paper has discussed the design of a school-based curriculum unit. In this regard it is illustrative of a developing trend in Australian education to maximize the contributions of pupils and their teachers in the development of curricula. Although it is school-based, it does not preclude the vital contributions from people outside the school.

The project directors are aware of the need to co-ordinate the production of curriculum materials about Aborigines. They are also aware of the absolute need to consult with and involve Aborigines in the production of curriculum materials. This consultation has been done with the Aborigines about whom the materials are being written and full support for the project has been given by them. However, it is recognised that official Aboriginal bodies, such as the National Aboriginal Education Committee, also want and need to be involved in the production of curriculum materials about Aborigines. The project directors of The Aboriginal Australian in North-Eastern Arnhem Land and the people about whom the materials are being prepared are willing to have discussion with and arrange examination of these curriculum materials by authoritative Aboriginal bodies in the field of education and curriculum development. Hopefully, it presents a balanced approach to curriculum decision-making.

## CURRICULUM CHANGE FOR TEACHING ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

Laurie Craddock

What I want to say to you is largely a personal statement based upon some ten odd years in N.S.W.'s school with the biggest Aboriginal enrolment. Those ten years have seen some profound social and educational changes in Walgett. Essentially these years have made me optimistic about the future, though there are many bedeviling problems remaining which temper the optimism.

Writings on Aboriginal education, and conference themes over the past decade, have featured the need for curriculum reform. The teaching profession as a whole has accepted that a curriculum designed for white middle-class Australia, and especially the part of that social grouping which actively supports schooling, is often not relevant for disadvantaged groups, and in particular Aboriginal children.

Indeed real educational progress was only achieved in Walgett when significant curriculum reform took place. Before exploring the implications of the Walgett experience one needs to consider a fundamental dilemma that confronts educators. What should we do in schools today to respond to the legitimate expectations of our clients, the latter being our pupils and their parents in the context of their community?

### Responding to the Community

Obviously we cannot respond to every request or demand, but if we consult regularly with the community as a whole, and this means in Walgett's case the parents of some two hundred and fifty plus Aboriginal children, then we shall be in a position to make a legitimate and practical response. The interaction of these consultation sessions can be very productive. A mediation of the school's and parents' aspirations and needs can, and should occur.

In Walgett, while school/community interaction leaves a lot to be desired, it has occurred regularly over the past several years. From these meetings the message has come through loud and clear that the majority of our Aboriginal parents want the same for their children in our school as do other parents. Several have specifically stated that they want their children to be 'competitive' with others so that they can eventually 'compete' for jobs in the labour market. This is, of course, indicative of a fundamental change in the social mores of the Aboriginal community. One hopes that the change is free of the evil aspects of competition which rack our material western culture.

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It has been our responsibility therefore, to modify the curriculum in such ways as necessary for Aboriginal children to succeed in the discrete subjects taught in western tradition orientated schools. Specifically, Aboriginal children have to be literate and numerate in the full meaning of the words, culturally aware and educated, competent in the psychomotor area, and emotionally adjusted to their life style with its irresistible pressures from the material culture. No mean task and certainly a long way from full achievement yet, but positive progress has been made. One must express some reservations about the value of some of the discrete subjects referred to, but this is subject matter for the broader issues of curriculum relevance. At first I wish to concentrate on the problems of the school whose Aboriginal community asks for a western education for its children. The vast majority of N.S.W. schools are in this position.

One could chronicle the changes in curriculum that have seen illiteracy at Year 6 level reduced from thirty-five to four percent, or has seen only two pupils above Year 10 turned into six graduate or trainee teachers, and a host of other success stories. However, I believe it would be more profitable here to examine the underlying principles that have governed the changes which seem to be most important. Basically they have been discovered by trial and error. All elements are present in successful programs, and a key element(s) has been missing in the failures.

#### Applied Principles Leading to Success.

Teaching is an interaction. While learning often occurs when the relationship between the teacher and learner is not empathic, usually because the enculturation process has preset the pupil to learn regardless of personality factors, it rarely occurs if the pupil is from an educationally disadvantaged group. As teachers who have worked with Aborigines for some time can attest, the establishment of an empathic relationship between teacher and learner is fundamental for success. The same people also know that an empathic relationship does not in itself ensure success. Pupils have to be motivated, and this is often difficult.

When dealing with Aboriginal children two categories of special considerations have to be accommodated. There are factors of Aboriginality which in five or six significant ways affect the teaching task. There are also often factors of psychosocial deprivation commonly found in disadvantaged groups. In particular teachers need to be cognizant of the role of anxiety, stigma, various attitudes and beliefs, and acceptance/rejection on self-esteem. Likewise they need to examine the factors involved in the development of achievement dispositions, and even the development of imaginative capacity as a defence against anxiety.

These special considerations have implication for curriculum, and most especially for teacher behaviour. To explore the Walgett successes, and failures, in terms of the above is a fascinating study, but beyond the scope of this exercise. It must suffice to sum up the experience by saying,

the teaching-learning process is dominated by the interaction between the teacher and the learner. If the interaction is empathic, significant learning can occur. Significant learning will occur if the curriculum is relevant.

In other words first get the teacher-learning relationship right, then present relevant material; a trite, but nonetheless valid statement.

#### Determining What is Relevant

One major question emerges from the above. What is relevant? I believe the time has come when we should consider more closely what we mean by 'relevant' and 'relevance', words used with increasing frequency by educators.

A simple psychological proposition is that organisms respond to what they perceive to be relevant stimuli. In the case of the normal children who comprise the vast bulk of the school population it is quite simple to find what is relevant.

As I see it if we need to concern ourselves with two levels of relevance when considering the content of curriculum. There are activities which when planned with reference to the model I shall present below will be immediately perceived by the child as relevant, and therefore an immediate response will be evoked. This is primary level relevance, which establishes the relevance base for the pupils in question. All initial teaching should be at this level.

Inevitably encountered in the educative process will be learnings necessary for adaptation to the total environment, both physical and cultural, which will have no basic relevance to the pupils. In these circumstances secondary level relevance will have to be established. The key to this is the 'relevance base'.

Ideally we cater for all children as individuals in our schools. But at Walgett, as in most schools, while individual attention is possible and given in many cases, most teaching is directed at groups of children. We have found it a reasonably straight forward exercise to establish a 'relevance base' for a group and to develop effective group teaching from it. Of course the smaller the group (e.g. 6, 4, 3) the more specific the 'relevance base' can be.

Finding the 'relevance base' for a group of children involves getting to know what goes on inside the corporate skin of the group, and also the skin of each individual member. It means finding out what interests and motivates the group, what it responds to as relevant stimuli. Individuals differ, but there is a commonality about many stimuli evoking responses. For example, almost without exception our Aboriginal children are fascinated by the supernatural. We have, as a consequence, used the supernatural in numerous ways in our teaching. (A word of caution: with this particular stimulus, as with others, it is important to know what is taboo).

### The Relevance Model

The model for establishing basic relevance has three focuses. Each focus requires basic research by the teacher, but it is not at all difficult at primary relevance level. The following are the three focuses with some simple illustrations.

Basic drives: this refers to primary and secondary psychological drives common to the human species. We all respond to the sight and smell of food when we are hungry. We have an appreciation of different foods. Several readers will appreciate red wine made from a blend of Hermitage and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. Most children enjoy lemon meringue pie. Several of our teachers have capitalised on children's interest in food, and Keri Negline developed a splendid teaching strategy embracing literacy, numeracy, social studies, natural science and affective development around the stimulus of food.

Context: this is the situation in which the stimulus arises. If you were viewing slides of towns around Australia, familiar ones would evoke a different response from those that you had never visited, and, of course, one of the old home town would produce another response again. The word 'butcher' on the awning of Reeve's shop in Walgett is far more relevant than the same word in a primer. Environmental, or experiential reading/language schemes are successful largely because of the context factor, though the other two categories can, and should be incorporated in properly planned schemes.

Enculturation Process: this refers to all the experiences of the individual which in sum establish his particular way of life with its social mores, special interests and antipathies, forms of enjoyment, etc. Sir John Kerr when viewed on television evokes, supportive feelings from some, hostility from others, and no response from many. The differing responses can be traced to the enculturation processes of the people concerned. A much simpler example at school level - Walgett's Aboriginal boys all love Rugby League football. This fact has been well used.

There are other ways of approaching relevance, but the above has proved very useful indeed. Overlapping of categories sometimes occurs, but this is hardly the point. The principal objective is to know the children so that their motivational systems can be adequately tapped, and the model covers the significant areas.

It is obviously of concern to the ordinary classroom teacher just how to use the information once it is gathered. Quite simply stated any teaching material/program/lesson will have to feature at least one category of relevance. The more factors that can be incorporated from each category (if possible) the greater the chances of success.

The following will expand the above a little and illustrate. Areas for teacher research in the focus categories: the products have been found to be readily usable.

Basic drives: hunger and thirst and variations such as the enjoyment of some foods; need for shelter and physical comfort, more intense in specific circumstances; rest and recreation; health and physical well being; emotional security and succour - stable family relationships; acceptance by peer groups and significant others; affection, love, esteem (self and others); some of the joy of living; companionship; emotional expression; physical expression and activity; masculinity, femininity, and, ultimately sexuality; with many, establishment of identity; curiosity.

Context focuses: home environments; school environments; home town or well known town environments; friends and identifiable members of groups; (above can be extended to racial groups in some circumstances); immediate and grand extended environment explored on excursions; familiar settings (e.g. Gerard Kennedy known for role in "Division 4" is recognized in "Rush") - everyday equivalents (identifiable group fishing at well known bend of river); interior of shops, offices, etc.

Enculturation focuses: transmitted cultural factors such as time orientation, work ethic, sharing ethic; interests in e.g. football, bingo, swimming, ghost stories and the supernatural, commercial and free entertainments available in the district; certain hero models from the above; relative values of e.g. possessions; special forms of role play; personality factors (e.g. happy-go-lucky).

An experiential reading programme could make use of the need for food (cooking as a stimulus), plus curiosity; the reading sentences would feature the group (familiar) and sharing of the food. Each of the above categories are represented. All teaching material can be selected with reference to one, two or all three of the categories.

To expand and develop knowledge in the three categories/focuses, observations of the children in all settings is necessary, as is discussions with them. The best use should be made of playground

duty, escort on sporting trips and excursions, and the other contrived, informal situations in which children reveal themselves and the source of their group identity.

One should add before leaving the relevance model that application of the basic principles at Walgett High School has proven just as successful as at the primary. A breakthrough in science teaching occurred when the science teachers moved out of the laboratory into the 'context' of the familiar exterior environment. The Art Design course (in this case a Walgett special) has proved to be a very effective medium for the development of literacy.

### Inadequacy of Existing Curriculum

As I mentioned in the first part of the paper, I have considerable doubts about the adequacy of existing curricula to give Aboriginal children the learnings necessary to have complete mastery of their own destinies, or as much as the ordinary citizen can realistically achieve. The problem stems from the effects of fitting the children to the curricular subjects, rather than selecting from the possible curricula those, and aspects of them, which will realise the legitimate aspirations of our clientele. An exciting development took place in N.S.A. in 1973 when a move towards school based curriculum documents was initiated. This change clearly had the potential to line up community aspirations with the total curriculum. The move has tended to bog down through the inability of the profession to capitalise on the innovation. N.S.W. C.A.E.'s need to change radically the emphasis they give to curriculum studies, but this will not at first overcome the problem. With seventy-five percent of teachers under the age of twenty-seven, our profession lacks the depth that comes from experience and maturity. This is no criticism of young teachers, whom I admire tremendously, but an acknowledgement that there is no short term answer to the difficulty.

In reflection, the 1971 Walgett decision to lift the functional intelligence of the experimental groups, rather than teach them to read, write and count, was both correct and very significant. The groups did learn to do these latter things quite dramatically well, but they were by-products of the pursuit of the superordinate goal. A great deal was learnt about language and its role in functional intelligence, and the profound relationships between cognitive and affective domains. We also learnt how insidious the affects of boredom arising from environmental factors can be, and more importantly that they can be overcome.

### In Summation

If Walgett has something to say about the total curriculum, it is probably this. Full and meaningful interaction needs to take place between the school and the community. That part of the educative process that takes place in schools ought to be a mediation of the

of the desires of parents and the professional expertise of the teachers. Once goals are established they ought to be refined into clear concepts of a number of individuals, i.e. the components of an egalitarian, positively oriented towards social progress, society. One or two superordinate goals seem valuable. Then the full range of curriculum options need to be considered and selections made from them that will contribute to the achievement of the goals. Curricular subjects are possible means to ends, not ends in themselves. If they are inadequate in the achievement of goals, new curricula have to be devised. Once teachers can be revived from their liberal arts hangovers, and this includes the young ones, new curricula are surprisingly easy to develop. Finally, far more attention than is usually found in schools, needs to be given to the psychomotor domain in early education, and the affective domain at all stages. A genuine 'affective' curriculum constantly implemented is a must.

So, modify the curriculum that exists, develop new aspects pertinent to the needs of the clients, make sure the interaction between teacher and learner is empathic, and present all learnings in a relevant frame of reference, and success is assured. Most readers would predict this would be so. In Walgett we have established that it is so, though it will probably take yet another decade to make it a complete reality. Some may feel that my references to the interaction of the teaching-learning process were outside my curriculum brief. Where Aboriginal children are concerned I do not believe that we can discuss one without reference to the other. Perhaps this may be so of education as a whole.

## APPENDIX A

The following samples of work arose from modified approaches and illustrate what can be achieved when factors of relevance are considered thoroughly at the planning stage.

....."Scientists have not been able to work out how the dolphin is able to 'run backwards on top of the water' the way it does. The muscles used in this manoeuvre theoretically do not have the strength to sustain the action".... Excerpt from a reading exercise for Yr. 6 pupils. All the group could handle this exercise. Each word concept was encoded during an excursion to the Coffs Harbour 'Porpoise Pool'. Language was but one aspect of a total learning experience. The whole excursion was deliberately planned to be high on the three focuses of relevance in the model.

"Along the way we followed the sign, AIRPORT. First we looked at the Cessna aeroplanes of the Walgett Aero Club. Jimmy sat inside with Mr. Stone who started the motor. Shortly afterwards we saw the Fokker Friendship flying in from Coonamble. It landed into the wind and taxied along the runway to the terminal building"... (Excerpt from a similar exercise for Yr.3).

The same group had encoded in science "The brick pier was fractured by lateral pressure". Tested two years later eight of the group had total recall of each word, i.e. its spelling. pronunciation and meaning including perfect understanding of the concept of lateral pressure.

There are published versions of the specific methodology used to obtain the above results which can be obtained from Walgett Public School. In very brief summary the methodology would be, plan the language to be encoded (on a development needs basis); give the pupils the language experience; record the experience with polaroid camera, 8mm film or preferably video-tape; back in the classroom decode the experience and encode the language in aural and written form; and, afford as many opportunities as possible for the genuine practice of the encoded concepts.

The most recent success was with mathematics. A remedial Yr. 5 working at early Yr. 4 in basic operations, and at the most elementary level in problems, were given an experimental calculator program. Staggering progress immediately occurred especially in problem solving. When the calculators were withdrawn the group fell back from advanced Yr. 6 level to advanced Yr.5. A more controlled experiment directed by a C.A.E. lecturer doing masters work was to occur this year but unfortunately illness prevented it from going ahead. It is certain, however, that the identifiable elements of relevance which the initial project contained were responsible for the striking success. A controlled experiment will now go ahead in 1978.

APPENDIX B.

Alternative curricula tried at Walgett suggests that there should be,

- a) a total psychomotor curriculum which has a strong relevant component of work skill and perceptual development;
- b) an affective curriculum which not only deals with positive self concepts, but actively attacks the problem of inadequately developed prosocial values;
- c) a curriculum devoted to through pattern training with components of lateral thinking;
- d) a curriculum developing the skill of learning through listening (a skill often taken for granted);
- e) a curriculum for the development of paralanguage;
- f) depending to some extent on the local environment, a curriculum that aims at extracting more stimulation from the environment to combat the pathological/psychological problems of boredom;
- g) curricula to meet special needs, e.g. mothercraft programs for girls regularly handling babies (siblings) and feeding them;
- h) a comprehensive health curriculum; and
- i) an expanded mental horizons in relation to place of living and work options, curriculum.

Many of the above are encompassed in existing curricular areas, but the trouble is they tend to be buried and largely ignored. The only real solution seems to be to tease out the priorities and build a special curriculum around them. c above supposes that western modes of thought in relation to management of, and adaptation to the environment are important. If this is so, then it almost certainly needs a curriculum for reasons of primary focus.



## **9. POLICIES IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION: SUCCESSES, FAILURES, EXPENDITURE.**

## AN EVALUATION OF SOME POLICIES IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION: SUCSESSES, FAILURES & EXPENDITURE

Ian Mitchell

Earlier this month I had the privilege of paying a flying trip to Warburton Range, where I began my serious involvement in Aboriginal Affairs exactly twenty years before. As you can imagine, the visit was soaked in nostalgia as I walked through the roughly hewn stone walls which are all that remain of the school. I was accompanied by one of my former pupils who now has his own children attending the more recently built school. I revelled in the glory of being acknowledged by the community's leaders as a yamatji or friend, but the egotistical bubble burst when my guide recounted one of his vivid recollections as a boy. His teacher had sent him to me to fetch some chalk (my room contained the school's only cupboard) and he was too frightened to complete the errand. He took to the bush. Later, when the truth was out, I reprimanded him.

He now re-tells the incident as an anecdote and of course I shared the joke when he told me. But really I was hurt. To him I was a white authority figure which he could not understand, and he was too fearful to try. I had committed the cardinal error in race relations in that I had projected an ethnocentrism which discouraged trust. I thought I was a good teacher, a humanitarian, a crash-hot administrator, an interpreter of Aboriginal needs, but the people had little confidence.

In addressing the topic "AN EVALUATION OF SOME POLICIES IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION: SUCSESSES, FAILURES AND EXPENDITURE" I have sub-divided it into four - expenditure, evaluation, examples and extrapolation. The underlying theme, however, is understanding. All the professionalism, all the finance, all the policy, and all the anthropology, will be of no avail if students suspect our motives or are wary of our attitude. True, the lesson is axiomatic for all teaching situations but doubly critical in a cross-cultural situation. Most Aborigines seek education, but they are not particularly enthusiastic about white educators. They will respond to people who are primarily interested in Aboriginality; not to those who want to teach.

### The Role of Department of Aboriginal Affairs

The rationale for the existence of a Department of Aboriginal Affairs is four-fold.

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1.   Aboriginals, as the indigenous people of Australia, are the particular responsibility of the Australian people and hence the Commonwealth Government. It is a sad commentary on black-white relations that a special department is needed two hundred years after contact, but in the light of existing conditions, it is essential.
2.   Economically, socially, and medically, Aboriginals are the most poverty-stricken group in Australia. Whatever aspect of living is considered, Aboriginals as a collective average are well below acceptable standards. Educationally we produce few professionals in the Western sense and we do not sufficiently acknowledge tribal scholarship.
3.   Aboriginals' disadvantage has arisen because of the intervention of an alien society which has dominated the indigenes, dispersed them from traditional territory, and dispossessed them of the most precious possessions, namely, their land and their ethos.
4.   These disadvantages have been perpetuated by adverse discrimination, neglect, and inappropriate education.

From these assumptions the Department's policies and programs are derived.

- (a)   It seeks to play advocate by representing Aboriginal needs to appropriate agencies.
- (b)   It promotes Aboriginal self-management.
- (c)   It encourages the perpetuation of Aboriginal cultures.
- (d)   It attempts to bring consistency of approach by all Australians toward the indigenous population.

Thus the key of the Department's work is enrichment.

In practice this means that the Department is not expert in education, for example, but it gingers education authorities and agencies into appreciating Aboriginal need. Thus:

- tribal elders now are accepted as qualified instructors and paid to teach bark painting and traditional weaving in some Northern Territory schools.
- classes with predominantly Aboriginal students have a lower staff-student ratio than otherwise would be the case.
- some tertiary colleges admit Aboriginals apart from the quota system; or in spite of their lack of formal qualifications.

- extra funds are provided for special educational programs for Aborigines.

### Misconceptions

This awakening in the last few years has not been without struggle. A very common criticism throughout Australia is that Aborigines get too much. The throw-away lines such as "they only drink it", or "why should they get so much money from the Government?" demonstrates a total misunderstanding of the position.

The fact is that Aborigines, as Australian citizens, are entitled to the same rights and responsibilities as any people in Australia:

They apply for unemployment benefits like anybody else.

They receive the same amount in family allowances, no more, no less.

They apply for widow, invalid and other pensions which they receive in the same way as other Australians.

If we have some doubts as to how the recipients will spend this income, why direct our ire at the Aborigines? They represent only 1% of the population. If we insist on the right of Australians to spend their money as they wish, then we must allow the same rights for Aborigines. In short, the Aboriginal is treated as any other citizen.

The assertion that Aborigines are heavily subsidized to engage in a perpetual spree of leisure and pleasure is simply not true. On the contrary, as intimated earlier, the rationale for a Department of Aboriginal Affairs includes the assumption of Aborigines' poverty.

Notwithstanding the equal rights of indigines, the present Government policy recognizes the problems suffered from the past dispossession and dispersal of the Aboriginal people and the Australian community's resulting responsibility. Accordingly, groups are financed in order to enhance Aboriginality or to ensure that Aborigines work towards the social equality that we believe is their right.

In the schools, therefore, we fund programs that will assist Aborigines to restore some of their dignity.

1. Aborigines attend their own pre-schools, which reflect subcultural values;
2. Aborigines are employed as teacher-aides in schools

around Australia;

3. Bilingual education is introduced so that the traditional culture is recognized.

In administering such programs, the Department must avoid a handout mentality, yet ensure that basic needs are satisfied. Assistance prompted by pity is a stop-gap which wrecks development and creates continued dependence. On the other hand, there is a strong moral requirement that the Government accept responsibility for the position in which Aboriginals now find themselves.

#### Finance

Most of the money from the annual Federal Budget appropriated to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is directed to the benefit of Aboriginals through two sources:

1. Direct grants are made to Aboriginal organizations - especially community-based groups - for the conduct of programs which benefit the indigenes. In the education realm, for example, all Aboriginal pre-schools are constructed and operated, or research into reading difficulties is conducted.
2. State grants is the name given to an annual grant to each State Education Department. The Commonwealth Government has no wish to compete in this function: it is clearly a State responsibility. However, for specifically Aboriginal programs the Commonwealth will supplement the State. For example, many of the State Superintendents of Aboriginal Education are paid from the Commonwealth grant. Remedial materials and compensatory staff are other items.

A third and generous slice of the Aboriginal budget goes to Statutory bodies, companies, or external-to-Government bodies. The National Aboriginal Education Committee, which advises the Commonwealth Minister for Education, and is paid for by his appropriation, is such a body. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the National Aboriginal Conference are other examples.

#### EXPENDITURE

In summary then, we must dispel the misconception that Aboriginals are receiving large handouts. It is simply not true. Aboriginals receive entitlements provided to all Australians but Aboriginal communities and State Governments receive finance to launch Aboriginal-oriented programs.

## EVALUATION

Stories of ogres who live in white castles on far away hills, but who periodically invade the peaceful valley of the good fairies are inappropriate to Aborigines but the mad, bad and dangerous giant is a reasonably accurate portrayal of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs' image.

Unhappily, it is all but impossible to balance the financial needs of the clientele with the requirement that public funds be accounted for rigorously. Given Treasury regulations, though, what do we look for in financing a project?

### What do we look for in funding?

When a program is presented to departmental officers there are a number of objective criteria, and I suppose some subjective, by which we evaluate its worth.

1. Is it Aboriginal inspired? We delude ourselves if we imagine that a good white idea will be necessarily hailed by Aborigines. Be on the lookout for Aboriginal suggestions. If you manage some inspiration, try it first on the community leaders. Involve them. Should you have an "open day" at school? Should you take the school to the city? Ask the community.
2. Does it seek to meet an expressed Aboriginal need?
3. Does it accord with the principles of the Government's policy? By and large the written policies of the major Government and the alternative Government are not too different. Governments issue policy documents prior to elections and, after being elected to office, begin to implement them. Along the corner-stones of the present Government's policies are:
  - (a) self-management;
  - (b) self-sufficiency;
  - (c) land rights; and
  - (d) Aboriginality.

Projects we finance should reflect these.

4. Does it allow for Aboriginal involvement?
  - (a) The Department would prefer to fund an Aboriginal body;
  - (b) It wants to know if Aborigines are involved in the management of the project;

- (c) Preference is given to Aboriginals being employed in the project; and
- (d) Aboriginals should be involved in evaluating the project and modifying it after review.

5. Does it relate to or reinforce the communities' objectives in the fields of housing, health, employment, welfare, justice, and so on?

You will notice that these criteria are not:

- Is it professionally acceptable?
- Is it good teaching practice?
- Does it help Black people to become more like White people?

Some teachers have the idea that their training equips them to better understand Aboriginals, whereas it really is directed at improving communication skills. The basic needs of a people can only be determined by the people. I remind you of my opening illustration. Professional competence must take second place to understanding.

#### Localization

Since the Department emphasises the importance of the community in Aboriginal life it has decentralized its administration - probably more than any other Commonwealth department. This is not only a geographic distribution of staff, but a delegation of responsibility and decision-making in relation to recommending program sponsorship.

For this reason, any proposal should be negotiated, in the first instance, between the local community and the Department's field staff. There is little to be gained by writing directly to the head of the Department in Canberra in the hope that it will short-circuit the system. He will return it to the local officer for assessment.

The role of programming conferences is also receiving increasing attention. Budget allocations are discussed both at the "bid" stage, and in the post-budget analysis stage, by Aboriginals from communities and organizations who meet with staff from the Department, and often staff of other departments, on a regional basis. Relative priorities of the monies allocated from the budget are considered, and the Aboriginal contribution to the discussion is decisive. This process has been refined more in some areas than others, but for all its deficiencies, it is the most sophisticated mechanism that any Commonwealth Department has developed with its clientele. State Education Department

allocations and direct grants to educationally-based voluntary organizations are to be subject more and more to this process.

### EXAMPLES

In the same way as one cannot identify a teacher or a lesson as only good or only bad, it is difficult to categorize Aboriginal education programs as "successes" or "failures". How wet is wet, or how dark must it be, to be called dark? How much impact did your last lesson make on the pupils? Would you, then, consider it as a success or a failure?

One of the programs which seems to have met with an abnormally encouraging response, however, is the pre-trade training program conducted in New South Wales. It can be regarded as tending toward the successful pole of the continuum from our point of view in that it satisfies the funding criteria we set. (But, then, that is our view - white, bureaucratic removed.)

It is Aboriginal inspired. Leaders pointed to the New Zealand Trade Training project and suggested that it be copied in Australia. Aboriginals were conscious of the similarity of standards, students, and service, and they firmly recommended its introduction here.

Secondly, it met an expressed Aboriginal need. The New South Wales Aboriginal Advisory Council, among others, identified the need and sought its gratification.

Third, it accorded with the Government's policy.

Fourth, it allowed for Aboriginal involvement - in the recruitment, on the staff.

Fifth, it related to other aspects of living, especially employment.

Among other so-called successes, one can also list programs related to alternative education, rehabilitative education, and bridging education.

1. Alternative education: in some places there are community schools which Aboriginals conduct. The Black Community School at Townsville and the bush school at Strelley are examples. To some Europeans these are considered disorganized and unbalanced, but to the Aboriginals they represent a major achievement in self-management.
2. Rehabilitative education: the Aboriginal Community College, an annexe of the Torrens College of Advanced



Education, typifies programs funded by Department of Aboriginal Affairs to assist Aboriginals to restore a sense of self-confidence. You will learn more of the College during this Seminar.

3. Bridging education: some programs are established, at Aboriginal request, to assist Aboriginals enter the European education system while not discarding their Aboriginality. The teacher-aide training course conducted at the University of Sydney is one example of this type. People with little more than a primary education are put through an extensive specialist course to achieve sixth form high-school qualification, yet simultaneously have their importance as Aboriginals underscored.

One could also regard the teacher-aide scheme as less than successful in that the training and career structure for aides with experience does not enable them to graduate as fully certificated teachers. Consequently while they may appear fully accepted teachers to the pupils, they are, in fact, locked into a low-status immobile and powerless position.

Another unsatisfactory situation is teachers' preoccupation with professionalism. I believe that, until very recently, this has inhibited Aboriginal involvement and failed to develop a satisfactory curricula which are relevant to Aboriginal needs, interests and experience.

#### EXTRAPOLATION

For the teacher what does this all mean? On the theoretical side it means that persons appointed to teach in Aboriginal schools must appreciate that their specialist training is in communication, and not in Aboriginal affairs. As a result they must expect to misunderstand and be misunderstood, to suffer culture shock, to find that they will be criticised. The lesson to be learnt is not just that Aboriginals have specific subcultures that require adaptive curricula, but that interchange with Aboriginal community leaders is imperative if education is to be appropriate for the specialist needs of the people. Impeccable pedagogic methodology is secondary.

On a practical note it means that innovations in the Aboriginal school may be funded. If teachers believe that a program will assist their Aboriginal students and they require finance for it, there is a procedure.

1. Contact the Education Department's Superintendent of Aboriginal Education. It is possible that the program has a precedent and that there are established means of achieving the objective.

2. Consider all possible sources of funding. In this respect, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is not the sole body for financing Aboriginal programs. The Office of Child Care, the Schools Commission, and voluntary organizations among others, may help.
3. If assistance is needed from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs:
  - (a) discuss with the local community;
  - (b) check that it accords with the guidelines;
  - (c) contact the local departmental officer;
  - (d) file an application either through the State Education Department (for a State Grant), or through a local Aboriginal organization (for direct funding).

Not wishing to finish on a mercenary note, I'll revert to anecdotes, and apologize for plagiarism.

A keen young teacher volunteered to serve in an Aboriginal school in a tribal area. In excited anticipation he revised all his best classroom techniques and re-read his child psychology texts. By the time he arrived at Cundelee he was prepared for any eventuality - until a tribal elder gave him some unsolicited but sobering philosophy. "The last white man who came here was a painter: we liked him, and he became our friend. The one before was an anthropologist: we didn't like him, so we ate him. Now we have you."

DIRECT COMMONWEALTH EXPENDITURE ON ABORIGINALS

	ESTIMATE <u>1977-78</u> (\$ ,000)
<u>Health</u>	
Grants to the States	12,607
Grants in Aid	3,231
Aboriginal Health Services in the N.T.	7,510
	<hr/> 23,348
<u>Education</u>	
Grants to the State	6,334
Grants in Aid	2,824
Aboriginal Secondary Grants	11,984
Aboriginal Study Grants	3,260
Overseas Study Grants	67
Aboriginal Education Services in the N.T.	18,790
	<hr/> 43,259
<u>Employment</u>	
Grants to the States	1,106
Grants in Aid	5,625
Employment Training	185
Dept. of Employment and Industrial Relations - Share of employment strategy	461
	<hr/> 7,377
<u>Housing</u>	
Grants to the States	10,430
Grants in Aid	13,740
Aboriginal Housing & Personal Loans Fund	5,000
Aboriginal Hostels	5,300
Missions (N.T.)	668
R.A.I.A. Housing Panel	154
Other	310
	<hr/> 35,602
<u>Town Management &amp; Public Utilities</u>	
Grants to the States	650
Grants in Aid	18,974
Settlements (N.T.)	11,540

Missions (N.T.)	3,606
Other	15
	<hr/>
	34,785
 <u>Legal Aid</u>	
Grants in Aid	3,800
 <u>Cultural, Recreational &amp; Sporting Activities</u>	
Grants in Aid	775
 <u>Enterprises</u>	
Grants in Aid	4,000
Aboriginal Land Fund	750
Ecological Projects	1,050
Other	185
	<hr/>
	5,985
 <u>Welfare</u>	
Grants to the States	1,314
Grants in Aid	1,718
	<hr/>
	3,032
 <u>General</u>	
Administration	14,517
National Aboriginal Consultative Committee	206
National Aboriginal Conference	987
Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies	1,950
Other	390
	<hr/>
	18,050
 Grant Total	 176,013
	<hr/>

EXPENDITURE BY DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

	ESTIMATE <u>1977-78</u> (\$,000)
<u>Health</u>	
Grants to the States	12,607
Grants in Aid	3,231
	<hr/> 15,838
<u>Education</u>	
Grants to the States	6,334
Grants in Aid	2,824
Missions (N.T.)	14
	<hr/> 9,172
<u>Employment</u>	
Grants to the States	1,106
Grants in Aid	5,625
Employment Training	185
	<hr/> 6,916
<u>Housing</u>	
Grants to the States	10,430
Grants in Aid	13,740
Aboriginal Housing & Personal Loans Fund	5,000
Aboriginal Hostels	5,300
Missions (N.T.)	668
R.A.I.A. Housing Panel	154
	<hr/> 35,292
<u>Town Management &amp; Public Utilities</u>	
Grants to the States	650
Grants in Aid	18,974
Settlements (N.T.)	2,547
Missions (N.T.)	3,606
Other	15
	<hr/> 25,792
<u>Legal Aid</u>	
Grants in Aid	3,800

Cultural, Recreational & Sporting Activities

Grants in Aid	775
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Enterprises

Grants in Aid	4,000
Aboriginal Land Fund	750
Ecological Projects	1,050
Other	185
	<hr/>
	5,985

Welfare

Grants to the States	1,314
Grants in Aid	1,718
	<hr/>
	3,032

General

Administration	13,744
National Aboriginal Consultative Committee	206
National Aboriginal Conference	987
Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies	1,950
Other	390
	<hr/>
	17,177

Total	123,879
	<hr/> <hr/>

APPROPRIATION (NO. 1) 1977-78

DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

	\$ 1977-78
Division 120 - Administrative	
1. Salaries and Payments in the nature of Salary -	
01 Salaries and allowances	10,736,000
02 Overtime	207,000
	<hr/>
	10,943,000
	<hr/>
2. Administrative Expenses	
01 Travelling and subsistence	857,000
02 Office requisites and equipment, stationery and printing	232,000
03 Postage, telegrams and telephone services	640,000
04 Office services	41,000
05 Advertising	8,000
06 Freight and cartage	135,000
07 Information and public relations	150,000
08 Computer services	6,000
09 Motor vehicles - Hire, maintenance and running expenses	600,000
10 Consultants - Fees	10,000
11 Incidental and other expenditure	54,000
	<hr/>
	2,733,000
	<hr/>
3. Other Services	
01 Conferences, meetings and consultations - expenses	190,000
02 Investigations and research	200,000
03 Support of Aborigines at Government settlements	2,439,000
04 Assistance to missions	4,288,000
05 National Aboriginal Conference - Election expenses	475,000
06 Vocational training and adjustment	185,000
07 Support for ecological projects	1,050,000
08 Architectural services for Aboriginal housing	154,000
09 Support for Aboriginal hostels (including payments to Aboriginal Hostels Limited)	5,300,000
10 Northern Territory Land Commission - Operating expenses	100,000
11 Aboriginal Loans Commission - Fees for services	85,000

12	National Aboriginal Consultative Committee -	
	Incidental expenses	3,000
	Repairs and maintenance on settlements	.....
	Support for Aboriginal Land Councils	.....
		<hr/>
		14,469,000
		<hr/>
4.	Grants-in-Aid	
01	Housing	13,740,000
02	Health	3,231,000
03	Education	2,824,000
04	Employment	5,625,000
05	Welfare	1,718,000
06	Enterprises	4,000,000
07	Town management and public utilities	18,974,000
08	Cultural, recreational and sporting activities	775,000
09	Legal aid	3,800,000
		<hr/>
		54,687,000
		<hr/>
5.	National Aboriginal Conference	
01	Meeting expenses	30,000
02	Provision of services	46,000
03	Secretariat operating expenses	166,000
		<hr/>
		242,000
		<hr/>
6.	Aboriginal Loans Commission	
01	Aboriginal housing and personal loans (for payment to the Aboriginal Housing and Personal Loans Fund)	5,000,000
		<hr/>
7.	Aboriginal Land Fund Commission -	
01	Land acquisition (for payment to the Aboriginal Land Fund)	750,000
		<hr/>
		88,824,000
		<hr/>

Division 125 - Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies

1.	For expenditure under the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies Act - Running expenses	1,950,000
		<hr/>
		90,774,000
		<hr/>



APPROPRIATION (NO.2) 1977-78

DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Division 811 - Capital Works and Services

Buildings and Works -

General services

.....

2. Plant and Equipment -

01 General services

123,000

Total: Division 811

123,000

Division 813 - Payments to or for the States

1. For the purpose of the States Grants

(Aboriginal Assistance) Act -

01 Housing

10,430,000

02 Health

12,607,000

03 Education

6,334,000

04 Employment

1,106,000

05 Welfare

1,314,000

06 Town management and public utilities

650,000

Total: Division 813

32,441,000

Total Department of Aboriginal Affairs

32,564,000

DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS - GRANTS IN AID & STATES GRANTS 1977-78 ESTIMATE

		HOUSING (\$,000)	HEALTH (\$,000)	EDUCATION (\$,000)	EMPLOYMENT (\$,000)	WELFARE (\$,000)	ENTERPRISES (\$,000)	TOWN MANAGEMENT (\$,000)	RECREATION (\$,000)	LEGAL AID (\$,000)	TOTAL (\$,000)
<u>N.S.W.</u>	States Grants	2,590	1,786	1,013	201	139	-	-	-	-	5,729
	Grants-in-Aid	3,260	587	718	800	395	135	1,145	80	840	7,940
	TOTAL N.S.W.	5,850	2,353	1,731	1,001	534	135	1,145	80	840	13,669
<u>VIC.</u>	States Grants	400	334	614	250	115	-	-	-	-	1,713
	Grants-in-Aid	280	365	75	300	175	125	150	100	420	1,990
	TOTAL VIC.	680	699	689	550	290	125	150	100	420	3,703
<u>QLD.</u>	States Grants	1,965	1,936	946	230	-	-	550	-	-	6,627
	Grants-in-Aid	3,000	675	212	900	123	138	980	60	880	6,968
	TOTAL QLD.	4,965	3,611	1,158	1,130	123	138	1,530	60	880	13,595
<u>S.A.</u>	States Grants	1,600	1,200	1,500	35	400	-	100	-	-	4,835
	Grants-in-Aid	900	314	741	753	285	321	1,899	30	410	5,653
	TOTAL S.A.	2,500	1,514	2,241	788	685	321	1,999	30	410	10,488
<u>W.A.</u>	States Grants	3,700	6,335	2,225	390	645	-	-	-	-	13,295
	Grants-in-Aid	1,000	270	715	1,000	375	846	1,800	135	640	6,781
	TOTAL W.A.	4,700	6,605	2,940	1,390	1,020	846	1,800	135	640	20,076
<u>TAS.</u>	States Grants	175	16	36	-	15	-	-	-	-	242
<u>N.T.</u>	Grants-in-Aid	5,300	440	254	450	340	1,590	13,000	245	560	22,179
<u>NATIONAL</u>	Grants-in-Aid	-	600	109	1,422	25	845	-	125	50	3,176
<u>TOTAL</u>	States Grants	10,430	12,607	6,334	1,106	1,314	-	650	-	-	32,441
	Grants-in-Aid	13,740	3,231	2,824	5,625	1,718	4,000	18,974	775	3,800	54,687
	TOTAL	24,170	15,838	9,158	6,731	3,032	4,000	19,624	775	3,800	87,128

# **10. ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

## SAUNDERS STREET PERTH

Ruth Kickett

I am the mother of five children and I have three grandchildren. I still have a lot to learn. But I'm looking to the future. I have never come forward before and asked for government assistance and I have never received any grants from the government in order to help the interests of my people. I have just taken the opportunity of being a voluntary leader.

I've had a taste of living in state housing under temporary conditions. But that's the white man's way of life and not a black man's way. The white man is able to have the way of life where he can lead his family into a nice, sound permanent future. I'm just an Aboriginal woman standing here with nothing. We've got some land on the outskirts of Perth, some tents, our children and ourselves. We've spent two winters in these conditions now and the time is getting near where I and my brother, Robert Bropho will ask the government for a grant - but not before we can see where we are going.

I know that certain money has been granted to our people in the past, but most of our people have not benefitted from it. I have lived all my life in the metropolitan area and I've seen the changes and the destruction that have happened to my people and I think it is time for the government to wake up to the fact that we Aboriginals must be given more opportunities to help ourselves. As far as I can see, Aboriginal people are sitting down by the trees waiting - waiting for something. And that something is a debt that has to be paid to the original inhabitants of this country - the Aboriginals. We are not going to beg any more for this debt to be paid in full. We must be given a chance of planning our own destiny and the government must back us up on this and help us out financially.

I've seen the discrimination in the schools that my children went to. My children are fine teenagers now and three of my boys are without any achievement whatsoever. Instead of being in the school room learning what they should learn, what they go to school for, they were put out into the garden to do the gardening for the school. Now I don't think that that was right. But we didn't have the right to stand up for ourselves. And we still haven't got the right to stand up for ourselves. There is the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and all its officers to cater for us. But they don't help us. We've got Mr Viner. But Mr Viner isn't always around when there are problems, important problems. We are not animals. We are human beings, like everyone else.

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*Ruth Kickett is involved in establishing an all-Aboriginal Community on the outskirts of Perth.*

I've got my grandson with me here now and I wonder what sort of future he will have if we don't get through to the people in authority today. What future will any Aboriginal children have if we don't get through? We need a kindergarten out there on our land at Saunders Street. At present, if anyone came out there and said, 'Where is your kindergarten?', I would point out a green patch of grass in the sunshine or a little bit of yellow sand. If it rains there is no place to play. And as for the children who should be at primary school, they're afraid to go because they've left so many times because they feel they don't fit in with white children. You must agree that some white children can be racist. It's handed down from generation to generation.

We are still waiting for our opportunities to do things for ourselves. It hasn't come yet. We are expected to be master-minds, do what we're told to do and some people are sick and tired of it. You have only got to get on a train or go down to the nearest park to see where some of the fathers and mothers with big families end up - drunk, no responsibility, no homes, just living out in the open. Some of you are lucky to have a home. A home is very important when you are sending children to school. Children don't want to go to school dirty and grubby and sit next to children from comfortable homes who are neat and clean. They pretend to go to school but they go to the bush and hide till school is over and then come home and their parents ask, 'Have you been to school?', and they answer 'Yes, Mum'. They feel very guilty and not very proud of themselves. I've seen this happen many times. And I've seen it happen where the law is concerned. The police come along and take them out of the classrooms to question them about things they haven't done. And the mother waits at home and wonders why they are home early and then the police come around asking more questions. And they know that it was white children who did it, but the police blame the black kids first.

But let's get back to Saunders Street where we want to start our own community with our own school and other amenities. We haven't got any finance yet and we won't go ahead until we know we've got some real backing. I want it to be successful. Not a failure. There are failures everywhere and I think one of the reasons is that people don't understand the Aboriginal himself - what's in his heart and what's in the hearts of mothers. They don't understand. They think they do well by us. But they don't. It's the rightful mothers and fathers who carry their children's destinies in the palms of their hands.

A lot of you people have taken away our children to go into your ways of life, and that is wrong. We want to be the ones who find the future for them. We love them. You can take my daughter away, but when trouble comes she runs straight back to me. And I take her back and accept her completely. I think, myself, that

the mothers and fathers should educate their own children to the best of their own ability. They should bring them forward and make them proud of where they came from, proud of their mothers and fathers and then go forward and take the opportunities to travel and meet the needs of other Aboriginal people.

Now I think I've said a mouthful, but I don't like beating about the bush. I believe that the possibilities are there for us to build and make our own school. We want to build houses and other things, bring in friends and get help from others outside our own Aboriginal organizations. We need people to come in and show us. But we don't want them to take us away and put us in some place we don't want to be in. And the same applies to our children. Let us have the freedom of choice wherever you may find us - just a few people trying to build a future.

I think I have said enough now.

## STREILEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

John Bucknall

As an organization recognized and approved by the appropriate authorities Streiley Community School is in its infancy, being only eighteen months old. As an idea it has existed since the Group came together during those momentous days in '48 when the Marxngu of the North-West had the courage to challenge the authority of the European dominated social and economic order. However this is not the occasion and I certainly have not the time to do justice to the origins of the Nomads Group which is perhaps better known to some of you as McLeod's Mob. Let it suffice to say that they are a group who have played and continue to play a vital role in the history of Aboriginal Affairs in this State and that they have always vowed to retain and develop their economic independence and cultural integrity separate from white-dominated institutions.

With these circumstances in mind the school was established with the aim of further developing the Community's capacity to successfully adjust this commitment to the realities of the twentieth century in the Pilbara Region of W.A. When this aim is examined in the context of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs' policy of self-management it can hardly be described as revolutionary. I think it would be reasonable to say that for a number of years there has been a growing desire expressed by a wide range of educators to provide the Marxngu child with an ability to make a choice in terms of his future place in society. The policy of the Streiley School does not challenge this philosophy but it does very seriously question its implementation by other groups in other places. It is the opinion of the Streiley Community that it is still the main stream culture that determines the framework within which a choice will be made in other so-called Aboriginal schools. It is still the European controlled school that sets the major parameters for learning and, as such, conditions to a disproportionate extent future decision-making by their Aboriginal clients. Genuine choice only occurs when the process is entirely in the hands of the clients.

So much for the underlying rationale, now I would like to describe how it works.

The Community, through an incorporated body, the Nomads Charitable and Education Foundation, employs eight European teachers on a full-time basis and another four on a part-time basis. The teachers sign a contract with the Community which

commits the teacher to an undertaking whereby he or she recognizes the Group's integrity (law and life style) and agrees to abide by certain rules of behaviour required of all members of the Community, white or black. These teachers are involved in a number of programmes ranging from pre-school activities through to adult classes, some formal in structure and content, others entirely informal in approach and duration.

There are three pre-school groups conducted in each of the three main camps which are located geographically, and to a certain extent culturally, in separate locations. A number of mothers are involved in each of the groups using one of the European teachers as a resource person in terms of ideas, preparation of materials and most importantly, determining the meaning and aims of the total experience. The success of this particular programme is one of the most obvious examples of how seriously the Community regards their involvement in the more formalized aspects of the educative process.

Six Europeans and nine Marrngu are involved in a school age basic literacy and numeracy programme which is also located in each of the three camps. It's all very open - open to aunts and uncles, mothers and fathers and grannies, especially grannies. It means that nothing is done without the full knowledge though not necessarily consent of the Community. When consent is not forthcoming it is the responsibility of the School Board to draw the attention of the teachers to this fact and recommend alternative approaches or procedures. The Community directly asked for a number of vocationally and recreationally oriented programmes for its adult members. Hence the development of dress-making, crafts, mechanics, typing and other European oriented activities.

Possibly the most exciting and potentially the most far reaching development to date has been the progress of the Nyangumarta programme. To date there has been an active full-time involvement by three Marrngu men in the preparation and production of Nyangumarta materials (both print and non-print). Two of these men have recently returned from a working visit to Milingimbi where they were involved in that community's bilingual programme. 1978 should see the commencement of preliminary work in Manyiljarra as there has developed a desire among the speakers of this and associated languages for a literacy programme similar to the one commenced in Nyangumarta.

A relatively sophisticated production centre has been established to facilitate the production of both English and Marrngu language materials. Due to the inadequacies contained in most English language materials, especially in the various reading schemes, a determined effort is being made to produce locally written and illustrated materials based on local language concepts and experiences.



There is more, much more that I could say about the adult literacy class, the continuing development of the School Board's ability to communicate its ideas and wishes to its employees, the overall lack of absentees and associated problems but I hope that what has been said and illustrated is sufficient to convey the idea.

I must in conclusion comment on the extent to which I feel the Europeans by the very fact of their presence and the constant expression of their value systems influence, perhaps even manipulate, the Community in all sort of ways and in all sorts of directions. The difference between Strelley and other situations is the conscious and deliberate attempt to neutralize this influence by keeping the decision-making process firmly in the hands of the people.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The term 'Marrngu' is a widespread term used throughout the NW of Western Australia. It means people or mankind and I intend to use the term throughout this talk as being more appropriate and meaningful than the term 'Aborigine' or 'Aboriginal'.

# II. RECOMMENDATIONS

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations, apart from those marked (\*), were passed at plenary sessions of the Conference. Because of lack of time, those recommendations marked (\*) were referred to the Planning Committee and subsequently passed.

### PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

#### 1. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

We recommend that recommendation 5.7 of the National Conference on Aboriginal Education 1976 be adopted, strongly endorsed and implemented immediately, inter alia

'That training institutions incorporate Aboriginal Studies in all teacher education programmes as a fully integrated core element. That a working committee be established to examine the strategies involved.'

We also recommend that lecturers and other staff involved in and associated with courses of Aboriginal and Intercultural Education actively seek to promote a positive and informed direction in all related courses of study, to the extent that community education in relation to Aboriginals is encouraged, diversified and made available more widely. And that such educational staff are made aware of the grave problems inherent in Ethno-centric attitudes.

#### 2. *To: All Education Departments and all teacher education institutions*

For students who propose teaching largely in Aboriginal areas, practical teaching periods, where at all possible be extended and should take place largely in schools where there are significant numbers of Aboriginal students.

#### 3. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

We recommend that Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities ensure that units and courses recognize the multi-cultural aspects of society;  
With respect to -

- (a) course content and structure
- (b) student selection policies

Such changes will require co-operation between all departments within the institution.

4. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

Given the multi-cultural nature of Australian society we recommend that Teaching English as a Second Language should be a core unit for pre-service teacher education, with due emphasis on the influence of cultural background on language usage.

\* 5. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education*

That Colleges of Advanced Education admitting significant numbers of Aboriginal students to their courses should:

- (a) offer units that are Aboriginal in purpose, style and content,
- (b) invite Aboriginal representatives to advise and participate in the construction of these units.

\* 6. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

That the curriculum studies courses at teacher training institutions prepare teachers to accept community involvement in developing school based programs and in formulating school policies.

IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

7. *To: All Public Service Boards and Statutory Authorities*

We recommend that all government departments and authorities exercising service functions should incorporate as an integral part of induction and in-service training, courses specifically designed to educate staff in more positive and empathetic approaches to dealing with Aboriginal and other cultural groups.

ABORIGINAL TEACHERS

8. *To: National Aboriginal Education Committee*

This conference, bearing in mind the great diversity of Aboriginal situations in Australia invites the National Aboriginal Education Committee to initiate as a research project an investigation into the variety of ways in which Aboriginal schools and schools with a significant Aboriginal population, can move towards Aboriginalization i.e. towards a greater degree of involvement by Aboriginals in the teaching process.

9. To: *All Teacher Organizations, Education Departments, Colleges of Advanced Education, Public Service Boards and the Schools Commission.*

As an alternative to 3 year continuous campus teacher training Aboriginal Teaching Assistants/Aides may gain a Diploma of Teaching by stages, through a flexible combination of:

- (1) Performance of their present teaching duties
  - (2) The unique Aboriginal contribution (language, personal skills, culture, teaching method) they make to their community education programmes.
  - (3) Block release periods for teacher training at institutions or in the field.
  - (4) External study units
- \* 10. To: *All Teacher Organizations, Education Departments, Colleges of Advanced Education, Public Service Boards and the Schools Commission.*

That, as a corollary of recommendation ( 9 ) a progressive salary scale be tied to the training stages reached by Aboriginal Teaching Assistants and the extent of their experience as para-professionals in schools.

#### ABORIGINAL SCHOOLS

11. To: *National Aboriginal Education Committee, Department of Aboriginal Affairs and all Education Departments*

This conference, recognizing the movement of Aboriginal people towards self management of their own communities and affairs, supports the parallel movements towards Aboriginalization of predominantly Aboriginal schools and towards a greater degree of control over those schools by their own communities.

12. To: *National Aboriginal Education Committee*

This conference invites the National Aboriginal Education Committee to investigate and report on the feasibility of government funded autonomous community schools as models for Aboriginal schools.

- \* 13. To: *All Education Departments and the Schools Commission*
- Community based Education should be available for Aboriginals.

- \* 14. *To: All Education Departments and the Schools Commission*

It is recommended that teachers and administrators determine the means within their own situations to communicate more effectively with Aboriginal families and community leaders so that a positive education policy may be produced through this interaction.

- \* 15. *To: All Education Departments and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs*

Money allocated to schools for special programs involving Aborigines should be investigated critically and monitored to ensure that Aboriginal people receive the benefits.

#### ADULT EDUCATION

16. *To: Committees on Research and Development in Education and Research Schools in Universities and elsewhere*

That this conference recognizes the desire of Aboriginal communities for the mounting of a literacy programme for adult Aborigines at the immediate community level be given the highest priority, and that:

- (a) the curriculum should wherever possible be generated from the client group's own linguistic world and experience.
  - (b) the possibility of using existing primary and secondary teachers for this task be investigated.
  - (c) the implications for teacher pre-service and in-service training be given urgent consideration.
- \* 17. *To: The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Commonwealth Department of Education*

The Tutor system already in operation as a secondary Grant Scheme should be extended to include all levels of primary school.

#### TEACHING METHODS AND THE CURRICULUM

18. *To: National Aboriginal Education Committee, all Education Departments and Teacher Education Authorities*

That the viability of traditional Aboriginal learning techniques be recognized and that these be fully researched with a view to incorporating them into teaching strategies for Aboriginal children, to make the style of education input from both home and school more homogeneous.

19. *To: Australian Council and Curriculum Development Centre*

We recommend that Aboriginal groups which are interested in producing material designed to enhance community knowledge of Aboriginal culture, life-style and contemporary thought, should be allocated funds to enable this production to proceed.

Material suitable for funding should include audio, audio-visual, film, written and other media methods.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- \* 20. *To: Federal Government and all State Governments, Commissioner for Community Relations, all Education Authorities*

That the State and Commonwealth Governments be asked to increase their support for a programming that would encourage employing bodies, trade unions and the media to develop positive attitudes and empathy towards ethnic groups whose personalities, social structures and cultures are different from those of the Australian mainstream population.

This program should be implemented only after full consultation with representatives of ethnic groups and with their active participation.

FUTURE CONFERENCE PLANNING

- \* 21. *To: Northern Territory Division of the Australian Department of Education, Northern Territory Teachers Association, National Aboriginal Education Committee*

We recommend that the 1978 conference be held in the Northern Territory, and that

- (a) notification of the conference be given to all States and schools by April 30th, 1978 (or four months before the conference.
- (b) The majority of the delegates should be classroom teachers and teaching assistants, where the conference emphasis is on classroom procedures.
- (c) Aboriginal representation be as high as possible.
- (d) the 1978 conference to be workshop oriented with a few keynote speakers.
- (e) the National Aboriginal Education Committee be invited to convene future national conferences on Aboriginal Education.

## Stephen Albert

I am grateful for this opportunity to make some concluding remarks on behalf of the National Aboriginal Education Committee about what went on at this conference. My first remarks concern the numbers and types of people who attended and took part. We have made up a rough draft of figures of people who have attended from the official lists. According to our calculations, the proportion of teachers was about 33%, lecturers made up 20%, education officers 10%, administrators 13%, principals 7% and Aboriginal people about 7%. It is this last figure that causes us most concern and we think that, for a conference of this kind, it is not good enough. We feel that there should have been far more Aboriginal involvement.

The N.A.E.C. is very keen to have a national conference where delegates are all Aboriginal - so that we can decide what we want. Everybody has said this during the conference - that Aboriginals can rise and choose their own destiny. But, unless we are involved more in conferences of this kind, we don't really have the chance to make our feelings and hopes known.

The N.A.E.C. is also keen for Aboriginal education consultant groups to be set up in all states and territories in Australia and we would like your support for these groups to come into being. We have already stressed this point to the different departments in the different states and also, at the federal level.

Coming back to the conference, we thought that the original idea was for teachers to meet and work on ideas for their schools. This didn't really happen, though teachers did participate to some extent at least. We think that future conferences of this kind should have the following representation: 35% teachers, 35% teaching assistants, 10% resource people, 10% students and the last 10% influential administrators. It is absolutely essential that funds be made available for conferences of this type. One of the reasons for the lack of attendance of Aboriginal people might be that funds were not available for transport and accommodation.

Another thing that the N.A.E.C. is interested in is in knowing about any research into our people. We would appreciate it if you could provide us with any information that you already have and also, to let us know about projects that are planned for the future.

We were disappointed in the lack of directness in the matter of Aboriginal studies being a part of every teacher's training, or,

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*Stephen Albert is Chairman of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.*



at the very least, cross-cultural studies with an Aboriginal emphasis as a major part of teacher training courses. Our reason for wanting this is that our people make up 99% of this country's history and we feel that we should be given due recognition or at least some consideration in this regard. We had hoped that you people who work with us would have had more sympathy with this point of view and made some more definite recommendation or recommendations concerning it.

I hope that you will keep what I have said in mind and thank you again for the opportunity of being here.

Paul Hughes

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you at this conference. Conferences are always very exciting things to attend. Of course, how you get excited depends on what you do! But it has been good to meet new people and to renew old friendships and to hear reports of what has happened during the past twelve months - and what hasn't happened.

Following Stephen really puts me in the role of devil's advocate and I'd like to raise a few points that might, perhaps, give you some food for thought - particularly with regard to what this conference has or hasn't achieved. In my opinion, there has been a little too much of people standing up here and talking and not really enough of people working and discussing together at workshops. I am quite amazed at some of the recommendations that have been made, especially when one considers the relative lack of time that has been spent in their consideration. Then again, this may be a reflection of the capabilities of the participants in individual workshop sessions.

Late last night I took a long look at the recommendations that were made at the conference in Adelaide last year. 49 recommendations were made at that conference and, as far as I am aware, only 14 of those have been acted on in any significant way by more than two or three states. Some states have acted on another three to some extent and that leaves 32 that have not been acted on at all. I would have hoped that this conference would have used this as a starting point - to consider which recommendations had been acted on and to discuss why others had been left lying. May I express the hope here that the next conference planned for the Northern Territory will consider the recommendations from past conferences, especially those that have not been implemented, and use that as a starting point.

Conferences of teachers and educators generally follow a similar pattern. Teachers, (and I am one, or have been one), are often criticized for the fact that they have really only moved from one side of a desk to another in their lives and they haven't seen much more than that. The system is, to a very large extent, an incestuous one and it is difficult to engineer any really radical changes. The underlying assumption seems to be that the system itself is all right and that all is needed is time and a little polishing of the edges or whatever for the system or systems to be refined and/or expanded. As far as the children are concerned, the system is right, the children are the ones who are wrong. They have to be moulded to fit the system and not vice versa.

I don't buy this type of thinking at all and I don't think we have really opened our minds to the many options that are

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*Paul Hughes is a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.*

available. We seem to be concerned with the maintenance, or at the most, very minor adjustments to the status quo rather than becoming somewhat more dynamic and open-minded in our approach to the issues at hand. I wonder if it is possible for us to reject our traditional bases and to search for totally new ways of tackling the many problems in Aboriginal education. It is not an easy thing to do, I know, and I'm not totally sure that whatever we would come up with would be viable or worthwhile. But, we must all agree that the present approaches have not been totally successful. Sure, there has been some progress in some areas. But this is not enough.

And there are viable alternatives. I was really excited to hear about what has been happening at the Strelley Community School near Port Hedland. The people there have decided just what kind of education they want and are working towards it. More to the point, they are exerting their own control over it. I get tired of people who seem more concerned with what happens to Aboriginal children when they get to secondary school age and so on. Aboriginal people have to try things for themselves - to establish their own systems. Mistakes will be made and adjustments and modifications implemented in order to meet objectives. But this is all part of development. The important thing is that the Aboriginal people themselves must be involved in and responsible for the education of their children. They must be given the chance to do things for themselves.

And this applies, as Stephen said, to conferences like this one. People like Stephen, John and myself do have a lot of contact with Aboriginal communities in many areas and we can, I suppose, present some of their hopes and feelings on their behalf. But it is the people themselves who should be doing this. They are the ones who live in the communities and on the reserves day in and day out and they know what they want. They themselves should have the opportunity to present their ideas and desires to interested people like those of us who have participated here this week.

It is absolutely urgent for more Aboriginal people to be trained as teachers to teach their own people. We also need to make far more use of other Aboriginal resource people who are working in schools already. I'd like to comment here on the use of the term 'teacher aide'. They are not 'aides', they are 'teaching assistants' and they should not be in schools merely to 'hold the teacher's hand' or run off bits of paper or collect work or that sort of thing. They should be involved more in the educational process itself. I would have hoped that a national conference of this kind would have given far more consideration to this - to consider ways of training Aboriginal people to play a much bigger role in actually teaching Aboriginal children.

This relates too, to what I was saying earlier about the maintenance of the status quo. As things go now, the informal training that Aboriginal teaching assistants get (in most places) ensures that things will change slowly, if at all. Surely it follows that with more involvement of Aboriginal people in the education of their children, and with greater responsibility, there will be a better chance of worthwhile change taking place. Just the fact that these people bring a whole new outlook and different perspectives and dimensions means that some change will occur and it must be change for the better because it is related directly to the Aboriginal situation.

At every conference I've been to in the past few years people have talked about involving Aboriginal people more and more within the system and there have been some welcome developments. But there seems to be a 'wait and see' attitude of just letting things float along with only minor changes taking place. There is no 'game plan' as it were - no definite timetable for change. Dr. Eedle in his address talked about an African country where everyone predicted that it would be the year 2000 before the nationals of that country could run things for themselves. But it took only 11 years and not the 48 years that everyone had expected - mainly because the people were involved and given the power and responsibility to work things out for themselves.

We must also bear in mind that no non-Aboriginal person is going to be able to give an Aboriginal child all the things that he needs. It doesn't matter whether the child is an A1 or a Z25 student. In any case, it is probably the Z25 child who needs an Aboriginal teacher most of all.

When I speak of Aboriginal involvement I don't only mean involvement at the classroom and consultation levels. There is an urgent need for Aboriginals to be involved at the administration level. What about Aboriginal Advisory Teachers, Principal Education Officers and Superintendents? The only state that has made any positive move in this regard is Queensland. By 1983 Queensland will have four senior Aboriginal executive people involved in educational administration. We can argue about the time involved and the small number of people - but at least it is a positive and concrete step in the right direction. In other states there is little or nothing being done in this regard and, more importantly, little possibility of anything being done in the immediate future. I realize that such people have to be trained and that this takes time and that you just can't pull people off the streets. But there are people who do have the basic background and training in education. All it needs is for the decision to be made, and implemented, that Aboriginal people be more involved in management and administration.

Teachers and administrators must also get far more involved in political activity. I don't mean standing up in state and federal elections and that sort of thing. I mean getting involved in the ordinary everyday processes that operates between schools and communities and the education departments and other government departments. Teachers really are the most conservative of people. The Aboriginal communities want you to do a lot for them and we can't get by without you. I don't think there will ever be the day when we can do absolutely everything by and for ourselves. But at this particular point in time there are a lot of things that can be achieved if teachers do involve themselves politically just within their own school and departmental situation. This conference has demonstrated that we don't really want to get involved in anything that is too controversial.

Teachers must decide whether they are going to be professional teachers or professional educators. To me, a professional teacher is someone who operates a classroom, who has a list of instructions and follows them, with some minor adaptations, and works really, at maintaining the status quo. A professional educator, on the other hand, looks at what he has to work with and then works with everything he has at his disposal to provide all the things that his students need - even if it means working outside the system.

And there's one of the major problems. Is it possible that most of us are where we are because of the system that trained us, employs us and continues to orientate and train us and keep employing us, and so we don't challenge the system and simply close ranks because we want, unconsciously or otherwise to protect the system and never move or think outside of it?

## Neville Green

I must join with Stephen Albert, the Chairman of the N.A.E.C. in expressing disappointment at the Aboriginal involvement at this Conference and Workshops at the first meeting of the Planning Committee in March, 1977. Maximum Aboriginal involvement and Aboriginal selection of speakers were accepted as basic principles.

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

This included a member of the Aboriginal Advancement Council, nominated by the Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Mount Lawley C.A.E. Membership of the Planning Committee included representatives of the Catholic Education Commission, Education Department, and teacher training institutions.

### SELECTION OF ABORIGINAL SPEAKERS

Prior to the formation of the N.A.E.C., Mr. Eric Wilmott was asked to provide the Planning Committee with a substantial list of possible Aboriginal speakers. This was referred to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee who made recommendations. Those selected were approached. Some, such as Margaret Valadian were unavailable.

When the N.A.E.C. came into existence, they were advised of the Conference. The Chairman was invited to open the first session and a provisional program was mailed to every N.A.E.C. member. The names of Aboriginal student speakers were submitted to the College Aboriginal Advisory Committee for a final decision.

#### Provisional Program (July)

#### Final Program (August)

##### Speakers:

Aboriginal	13	11
Non-Aboriginal	15	17

##### Chairpersons:

Aboriginal	5	3	(4)
Non-Aboriginal	5	7	(6)

### SPEAKERS AT THE CONFERENCE

In the two weeks prior to the Conference, two Aboriginal speakers and two different Aboriginal chairpersons withdrew because of other commitments.

### INVITATIONS TO ABORIGINAL ORGANIZATIONS

The provisional programs and registration forms were sent to the

*Neville Green, Lecturer in Aboriginal Education at Mount Lawley C.A.E., was the organizer of the conference.*

following:

1. All N.A.E.C. members
2. One hundred and six (106) Aboriginal organizations in Western Australia
3. Twenty to each Capital city D.A.A. office with a request that the forms be sent to Aboriginal organizations in those states.
4. Every State and Federal Education Department
5. Every W.A. Government School with a predominant number (50%+) of Aboriginal children
6. Selected W.A. Government Schools in the South West where the education of Aboriginal children may not be all it should be.

#### PUBLICITY

1. Aboriginal Child at School
2. N.T. Bulletin
3. Western Teacher
4. Education Circular

Note: Eastern States response unknown.

#### C.A.E.'S AND UNIVERSITIES

Provisional programs and registration forms were sent to every C.A.E. and university in Australia offering teacher training courses. In all, more than a thousand programs were printed and distributed throughout Australia.

#### CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

No restrictions were imposed either by experience, profession or by setting a limit to participation.

Students and members of the local Aboriginal community were invited to attend some of the day sessions free of charge so that no interested Aboriginal person would be denied a voice for economic reasons.

# 13. APPENDICES

Omitted from PDF as content may be sensitive



## CONFERENCE BUDGET

The following is a statement of income and expenditure as at 6.12.77.

### INCOME:

Conference Fees	\$4730.00
Schools Commission Subsidy	2500.00
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	7230.00

### EXPENSES:

Catering/Drinks	2372.91
Printing/Photocopying	1991.68
Salaries	465.88
Payroll tax	23.28
Postage	87.49
Workers Compensation	3.48
Stationery	79.77
Telephones	75.86
Petrol/Taxi fares	14.85
Accommodation of speakers	182.36
Air fares for speakers	592.74
Typing	130.00
Expenses for paper presentation	660.00
Cleaning	25.00
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	\$6705.30
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Other anticipated expenses are:

Postage of report	\$220.00
Sundry expenses	304.70

