

Editorial



This is the second journal for 1998. The focus has very much reverted to education issues, with an interesting examination of ethnomathematics and homework centres by John Maratos. This offers a new and stimulating perspective on work being undertaken in Australia. Douglas Moran and Malcolm Slade spell out the issues at tertiary level, highlighting implications for teacher education. Sue Jude, who is becoming quite a regular, looks at secondary school education. Liz Mackinlay's work on her course content is outlined here as she cites the methodology she uses to address issues in the class. Practitioners themselves are writing about their experiences in the system as part of their workplace, as do John Budby and Dennis Foley and myself once as a student teacher.

As Indigenous educators we play a pivotal role in the delivery and content of courses. The challenge to have the right blend of skill and educational attainment can sometimes appear quite daunting. An Aboriginal pedagogy remains to be reviewed as a unique position of learning and teaching and valued as such. How we inscribe this into a knowledge base content is still being worked out.

The practicalities for enabling Indigenous students to achieve in tertiary studies are entrenched in the historical legacies of the history of this country. In real terms it has only been a little over thirty years since the 1967 Referendum that Indigenous Australians have had full educational rights. In our parents' generation the right to full participation and access was denied. There has been much improvement in the educational sphere since then. There is, however, a long way to go.

In the present social and political climate the need to reassure and the continued importance of our children gaining educational qualifications cannot be stressed too much. Retention rates at schools differ, as does the quality of teaching and learning. One can only surmise that the cuts in Abstudy will alter the face of Indigenous student outcomes.

For those of us who have a genuine commitment to Indigenous education the struggle continues as we press the edges of realism and practicality. It hopefully makes us more determined to know that the work we do is vital and valued by those within our profession and in the wider community. Each day brings another quest to close the gap that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in this country. We can rest assured though that our students will be the first ones to gain the accolades in their endeavours to pursue an education.

Jackie Huggins