University of Southern Queensland

Exploring the intentions behind the inclusion of the cross-curriculum priority 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures' in the *Australian Curriculum*

A Dissertation submitted by

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ABSTRACT

The authors of the *Australian Curriculum* have been required to simultaneously work toward the realisation of economic and reputational goals that are in the national interest whilst also appearing to cater for groups who have traditionally been disenfranchised by such interests. This study explores the explicit and implicit intentions behind the inclusion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority in the curriculum, and ways in which those intentions are interpreted. Final year pre-service teachers surveyed and interviewed as part of the study shared a widespread belief that the cross-curriculum priority was developed as the result of converging interests, with those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples appearing to converge with those of the broader community. Numerous documentary data sources were collected and analysed according to a *bricolage* approach, in order to study apparent intentions and uncover those that were less evident in the *Australian Curriculum* when read in isolation. Finally, a racial realist interpretation of Critical Race Theory principles was deployed to synthesise the answers to three major questions.

CERTIFICATION PAGE

CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

_____ _____

Signature of Candidate Date

ENDORSEMENT

_____ _____

Signature of Supervisor Date

_____ _____

Signature of Supervisor Date

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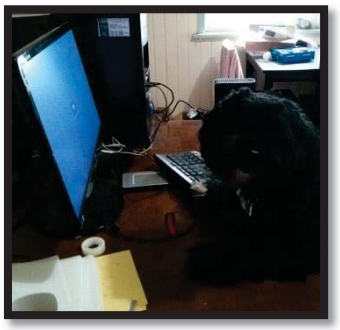

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
APY	Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara
C2C	Curriculum into the Classroom
CAF	Council for the Australian Federation
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CRT	Critical Race Theory
EAL/D	English as an Additional Language or Dialect
EQ	Education Queensland
ESA	Education Services Australia
F-10	Foundation to Year 10
FOI	Freedom of Information
IECB	Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies
KLA	Key Learning Area
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NCB	National Curriculum Board
NCP	National Competition Policy
NMA	National Museum of Australia
NRA	National Reform Agenda
NRI	National Reform Initiative
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PD	Professional Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SAE	Standard Australian English