



# ABST202

## Culture, Creation and Characters: Indigenous Australian Literature

S1 External 2015

*Dept of Indigenous Studies - Warawara*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff  
Alice Te Punga Somerville  
[alice.tepungasomerville@mq.edu.au](mailto:alice.tepungasomerville@mq.edu.au)  
W3A 307  
Weds 2-4pm or by appointment

Credit points  
3

Prerequisites  
12cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will examine the writing of Indigenous Australians to explore Indigenous perspectives of culture and continuity. Students will be introduced to a variety of written work, including biography, and the growing and rich array of fiction and poetry. We will consider the range of reasons Indigenous Australians write, from resistance to celebration, as well as the political motivations for publication. Students will also examine the impact of Indigenous literature on national identity and understandings of Indigenous Australia.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Discuss key features of Indigenous Australian literature (written creative texts produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders).

Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.

Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.

Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above

understandings.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#"><u>Four short pieces</u></a>	40%	20/05/2015
<a href="#"><u>Close reading of a poem</u></a>	15%	01/04/2015
<a href="#"><u>Final project on one book</u></a>	30%	07/06/2015
<a href="#"><u>Participation and engagement</u></a>	15%	03/06/2015

### Four short pieces

Due: **20/05/2015**

Weighting: **40%**

These four short pieces are designed to provide you with opportunities to engage with the major themes of our class. Please note their individual due dates below. Please note these short pieces do NOT require any research; they are designed to give you a chance to explore your own thoughts about each topic.

#### SHORT PIECE ONE

In the phrase “Indigenous Australian Literature,” what is “Indigenous Australian”? In the phrase “Indigenous Australian Literature,” what is “Literature”?

Approx 400 words; send to me via Turnitin before 10am on FRIDAY 27 Feb.

#### SHORT PIECE TWO

Find ONE example of non-Indigenous representation of Indigenous peoples this week. You might consider a media item, an advertisement, a text, an image, or something similar. Write about the example, noting how it fits with our readings, lecture and discussion from our session this week.

Approx 400 words; upload to iLearn before 10am on Friday 13 March. INT \*and\* EXT students contribute to discussion board about this topic on iLearn (at least two responses).

#### SHORT PIECE THREE

Taking it to the people. Decide on a public venue for your insights into Indigenous Australian Literature: Wikipedia; an amazon.com review; a ‘comments’ section or a blog or website; a poster or handout; a facebook quiz; a contribution to a church or school newsletter; or come up

with another idea (run it past me first – and keep it legal!).

Document this somehow (upload a copy of what you did/ provide photographs or other evidence/ etc) and upload to iLearn before 10am on 29 April. INT \*and\* EXT students contribute to discussion board about this topic on iLearn (at least two responses).

We will discuss the expectation of this assignment in depth before the semester break.

## SHORT PIECE FOUR

Pick one character from *Butterfly Song* and imagine you are going to go and meet them for lunch. Choose ONE text (poem, short story, essay) from our course which you would like take along to recommend to that character; explain why.

Approx 400 words; upload to iLearn before 10am on 20 May. INT \*and\* EXT students contribute to discussion board about this topic on iLearn (at least two responses).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

## Close reading of a poem

Due: **01/04/2015**

Weighting: **15%**

Write a 1000 word close reading of one poem from the Macquarie anthology. We will discuss the expectations of this assignment in more detail in class.

This isn't a long formal essay: it's a close reading. You are not required to do any research although if you would like to look up specific terms in dictionaries or other reference works, or look for a bit more contextual information to understand the poem, that's fine.

Submit a copy of your text, with all of your annotations and notes scrawled over it, along with your 1000 word close reading via Turnitin by 10am on 1 April. (If you are not comfortable with scanning and uploading, feel free to bring the annotated copy of your text to class.)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Discuss key features of Indigenous Australian literature (written creative texts produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders).

- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

## Final project on one book

Due: **07/06/2015**

Weighting: **30%**

Write a 2500 word essay about ONE book (novel, collection of short fiction or poetry, play) by an Indigenous Australian writer. Drawing on critical work we have read in class, and our classroom and tutorial discussions, focus on ONE aspect of this book. We will spend time preparing for this in class, including selection of a book and possible aspects you could choose for your specific focus.

Submit the essay via turnitin by 10am on 7 June 2015.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Discuss key features of Indigenous Australian literature (written creative texts produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders).
- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

## Participation and engagement

Due: **03/06/2015**

Weighting: **15%**

In this unit, 15% of your final grade will be made up of your active participation (5%) and engagement (10%).

Active **participation** looks like this:

- \* Attend all weekly classes (if you are an INT student) OR participate in all weekly online tutorial discussions (if you are an EXT student).
- \* Turn in all assessment on time.

Active **engagement** looks like this:

\* Actively engage in all of these sessions: come prepared (having read all required readings for that week); have a question or idea about the readings to share with classmates; be an active member of the class (either face to face or on iLearn); read beyond the required readings; inform me ahead of time if you are unable to participate during a specific period of time and suggest a way to make up for your non-participation. Please note that talking without listening \*is not\* engagement; listening to classmates and responding to their ideas and questions \*is\* engagement.

If there is any reason you are not able to participate or engage at any time throughout the semester, please let me know by email or come and see me during my office hours (Weds 2-4pm). It is always better, where possible, to let me know ahead of time if you are unable to participate or engage.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

## Delivery and Resources

Required books will be available through the campus bookshop (Coop) or can be accessed from libraries or other booksellers. Some books will not be available from the beginning of semester. You **MUST** access all required readings in order to read them; but you are more than welcome to borrow books if you are trying to keep costs down. All required readings will be available in the MQ library.

\* Anita Heiss & Peter Minter *Macquarie PEN anthology of Aboriginal Literature*

\* Kim Scott *Benang*

\* Terri Janke *Butterfly Song*

We will also read some critical pieces throughout semester. Information on how to access these will be on iLearn.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy

applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## **Graduate Capabilities**

### **Creative and Innovative**

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### **Learning outcomes**

- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

#### **Assessment tasks**

- Four short pieces
- Close reading of a poem
- Final project on one book

### **Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative**

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### **Learning outcomes**

- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

#### **Assessment tasks**

- Four short pieces
- Final project on one book
- Participation and engagement



## Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.

### Assessment tasks

- Four short pieces
- Participation and engagement

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Discuss key features of Indigenous Australian literature (written creative texts produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders).
- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

## Assessment tasks

- Four short pieces
- Close reading of a poem
- Final project on one book

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Discuss key features of Indigenous Australian literature (written creative texts produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders).
- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

## Assessment tasks

- Close reading of a poem
- Final project on one book

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.

- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Close reading of a poem
- Final project on one book

## **Effective Communication**

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Close reading of a poem
- Final project on one book
- Participation and engagement

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction

colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.

- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Four short pieces
- Final project on one book
- Participation and engagement

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Articulate the place of Indigenous Australian literature in relation to Indigenous Studies, Australian literature, and comparative Indigenous literary studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary traditions, histories of interaction colonisation and nationalism, various creative art forms, and the politics of publication and anthologising in Australia.
- Critically consider specific texts by Indigenous Australian people in the light of the above understandings.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Four short pieces
- Final project on one book