

Knowledge building through crisis: Researching teacher education



1. Situating the problem: building knowledge through 2020
2. Understanding crisis
3. Reading and writing historically
4. Teacher education beyond 2020?

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DP170103203: Teaching workforce development through integrated partnerships

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This project aims to understand the effects of integrated school-system-university partnerships on schools as workplaces and as learning spaces for beginning teachers.

In 2014, the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) recommended integrated partnerships with a stronger accountability regime as a means of preparing classroom-ready teachers.

The Australian government implemented these recommendations that promised quality of teaching, but the effects of these partnerships on teaching workforce development are unknown.

The project has investigated this changing environment for teacher education by collecting case reports, interview data and documents to understand partnership policy and practice through

- Relational space-times
- Complex place-based practice architectures and
- Entangled networks and narratives

The project is expected to contribute to the professional renewal of teaching and wider understandings of teaching workforce development in Australia.



Crisis is whole of life experience

‘It’s getting dark’, we wrote in our first editorial in December at what would turn out to be only the cusp of an apocalyptic fire season; and then Covid, isolation, quarantine, the tumultuous end of the neoliberal dispensation. Society turns out to exist, says Boris [Johnson], it has emerged from a coma in an abandoned soviet bunker, and slouches towards Bethlehem to be born’.

(Araluen & Dunk, 2020: 2

Crisis triggers anxiety and care

We recognise care in the experience of anxiety. In anxiety, one feels an indeterminate threat from an indeterminate source. These threats are illness and infection, worries about elderly and infirm family members, lockdown and disconnected children and youths, job loss. And for our situatedness in education – job instability in higher education, loss of funding, less value placed on theory (theory = bad). I feel despondent about my future as an educational researcher, a potential academic, a lecturer in a field that may cease to exist. We may go back to a time that I didn't even know, where there was no university for teachers. There was little recognition for the complexities of education. But we care about the project of education in the face of this anxiety.

Claire Manton, free writing

Crisis triggers science and control

Good morning, I'm Michelle, the Chief Education Officer for the Australian government. These are indeed unprecedented times and we have experienced a radical shift in understanding the way we currently educate the leaders of tomorrow.

I come to you today with hard truths and will detail our steps forward in the immediate 6-week 'education shake up' period starting midnight tomorrow.

This pandemic has demonstrated that the way we teach our learners in schools and universities is based on an insular community-model that creates hot-spots of privilege or disadvantage. We have, in the past, celebrated and denigrated these aspects through publicly displaying quantitative data derived from arbitrary tests designed to spread white middle class privileged perspectives throughout our community like this virus.

Our immediate focus will be on those responsible – school-university partnerships that prepare our teachers.

WE WILL FIRST BE REMOVING ARBITRARY BARRIERS BETWEEN OR CREATED BY SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

Make no mistake, this move will be policed by cyber patrols through random bugging of web-based communications and emails ... Schools and universities will be fined if they are found to be upholding these practices beyond Wednesday 15th July.

Michelle Ludecke, free writing

Building knowledge through crisis

My experience triggers action

I'm hollow. The image in my mind is Munch's Scream but I'm inside that brooding landscape, its swirling tonal country and wild sky. I feel my hands on my cheeks, eyes wide, mouth a perfect "O". I am that silent scream.

Terri Seddon, Free writing the morning after the US election

My question

How do we interpret experience, use data, analyse truth claims and write chapters when our lives are dislocated by crises?



Understanding 'crisis'

Crises in education and, by extension, in teacher education are a staple of educational policymaking and the media. There is nothing new in that, given the complex and contradictory historical enterprise of mass public schooling (Kostogriz, 2020)

Crises threaten disaster. They are not yet disasters, but sound warnings. Should we choose to heed them we may initiate avoidance measures and potentially change course. But such action requires judgements, direct judgements not “preformed judgements”, which maintain business as usual and court catastrophe (Arendt, 1961, pp. 174-5).

Crises are moments of awakening, when people:

... whose mentalities have swept only a series of limited orbits often come to feel as if suddenly awakened in a house with which they had only supposed themselves to be familiar. ... Older decisions that once appeared sound, now seem to them products of a mind unaccountably dense. Their capacity for astonishment is made lively again. They acquire a new way of thinking, they experience a transvaluation of values.’ (Mills, 1971: 14).

Crisis rupture established forms of living, but:

‘Whether people grasp the changing conditions and construct new forms [depends upon] practical politics. The forms of the old society are obstacles and, at the same time, shelters for the individual ... It is this entanglement, the protecting character of the fetters and the fettering character of the protections which can make liberation a catastrophe. (Haug, 1984: 79)

Approaching integrated partnerships: the project and book

Partnerships as entangled space-times of education

- World Yearbook of Education series – surfaced network ontologies, travelling policies and local effects as a way of reading space-time politics of globalization and Europeanisation.
- WYB 2018 – used a historicising methodology to analyse ‘uneven space-times of education’ as places and practices of embedded knowledge building (McLeod, et al, 2018) that unfold through ‘analytic borderlands’ (Barbousas & Seddon, 2018)
- Adult education and workplace learning – investigated entangled historical sociologies of adult education workplaces and effects of entanglements on political rationalities (Seddon, 2017).

Professionals as place-based knowledge builders whose:

- **Seeing** comes before words and sets up the reflexive dialogue of personal knowledge building. (Berger, 2009)
- **Knowing** is an active extension of seeing. It recognises the agency of the ‘looker’ and how they are socially embedded in a place and its times, and through its gaze: where the ‘look’:
 - Is a particular way of looking at, back or forward to something that excites curiosity, interest, admiration or respect
 - Reaches into someone else’s eyes to express friendship, solidarity, or love. The mutuality of the look invents the other and claims autonomy, not individualism or voyeurism, but political subjectivity and collectivity: ‘the right to look’. (Mirzoeff, 2011: 473).
- **Acting** rests on work and learning situated and steered by a ‘lived-in-world’ (Seddon, forthcoming) and realises cultural material formations through material sayings doings and relating that are oriented by cultural practices, which tie seeing, knowing and acting together (Kemmis, et al, .

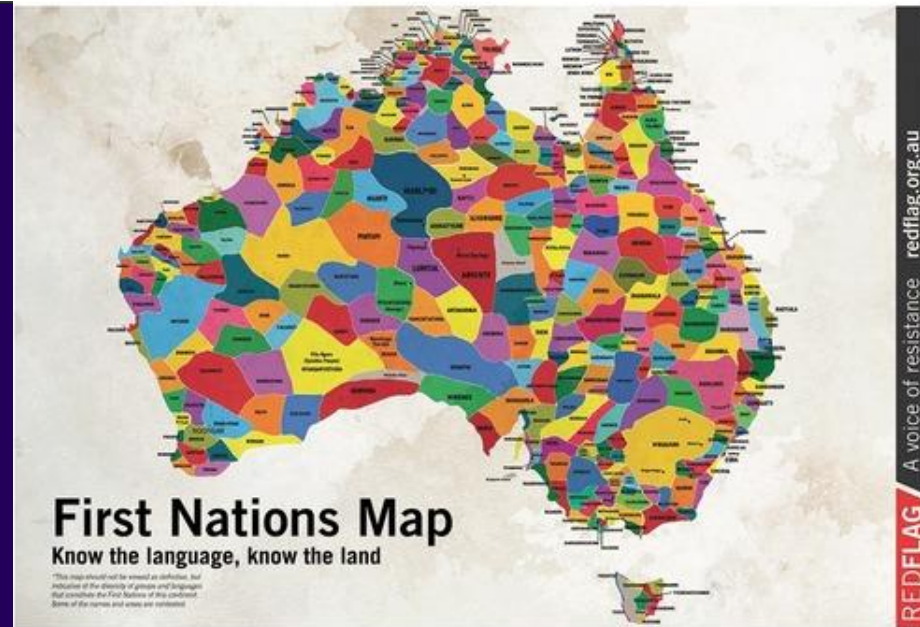
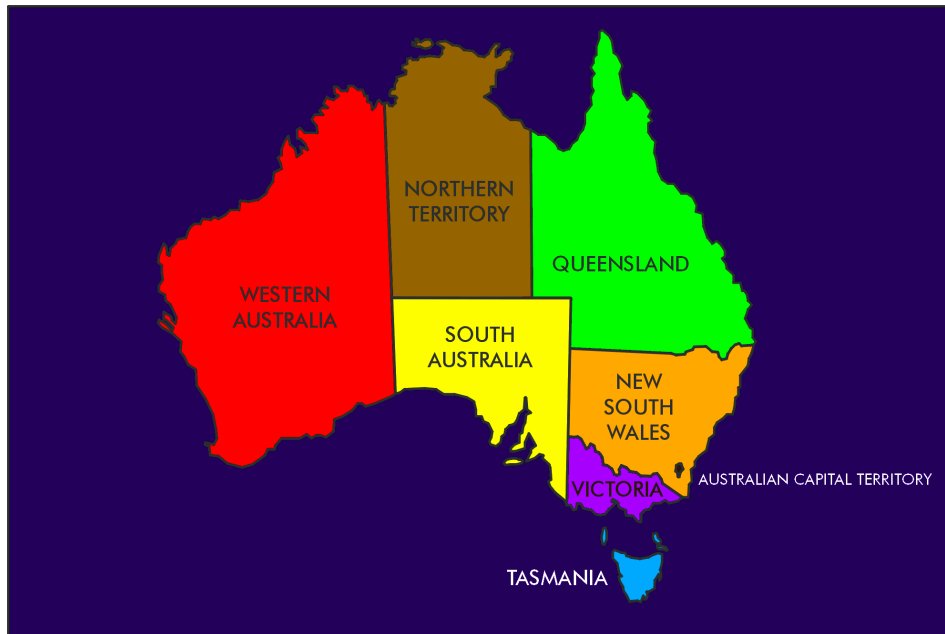
Historicising place-based partnerships, professionals and events permits history writing that re-reads 2018-9 data from the perspective of 2020 experiences, shifting expectations and dialogue (Spiegel, 2007, Seddon, 2020) .

Reading and writing historically: my chapter

Historical writing ... is performed through and by means of a constant paradoxical movement between absence and presence—the presence of the present place from which the past has been excluded by the defining gesture of rupture [with the past] that constitutes it, and the site from which the past will be recreated.

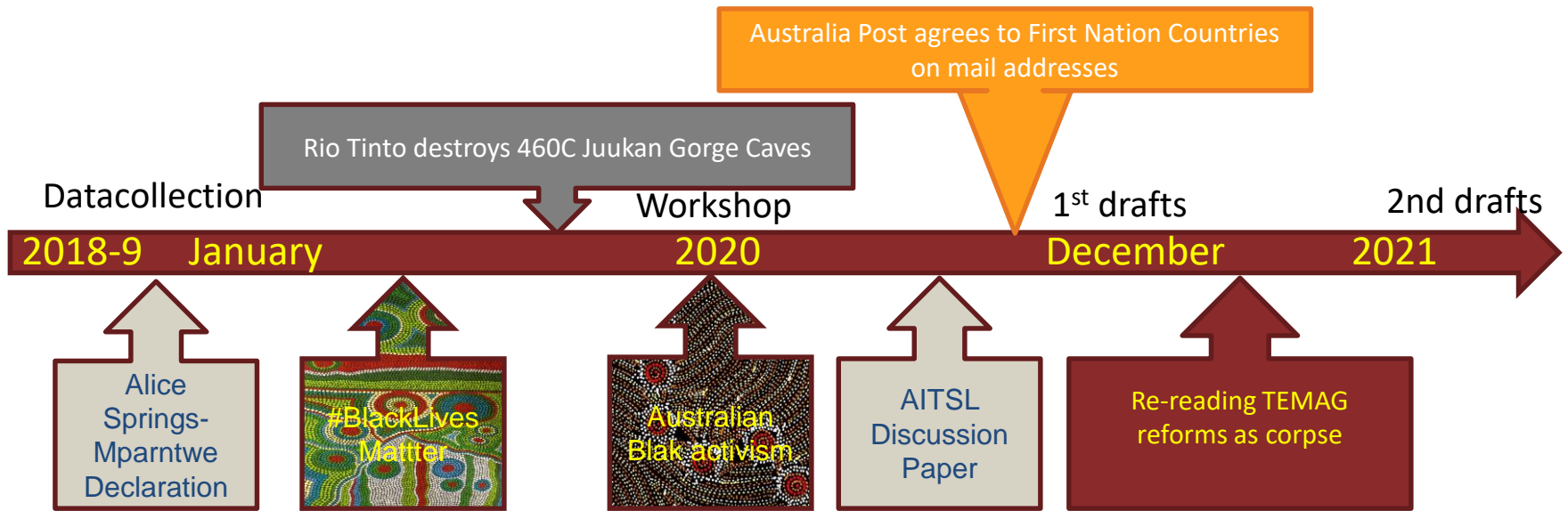
Inherent in this double movement between past and present, absence and presence, is the constant rewriting of the past in the terms of the present. (Spiegel, 2007: 5)

To illustrate this approach, ask yourself, which map shows Australia now?



Which present do you write from?

Australian education after 2019: Re-reading TEMAG reforms as corpse



The Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership open their September 2020 discussion paper with a statement about the challenge of an inclusive approach to Australian education:

Australian education systems were never designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ... The legacy of colonisation has undermined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' access to their cultures, identities, histories, and languages. As a result, they have largely not had access to a complete, relevant, and responsive education. Australia's education system must respectfully embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural identities and provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with safe learning environments (AITSL, 2020, references removed).

(AITSL, 2020)

Crisis as situated seeing, knowing and acting

Situatedness references a 'now', a relational space-time with particular space and time boundaries. Each 'now' is fluid, being constantly narrated, interpreted through subjective experiences, and translated into actions that fit life projects as well as workplace demands.

The lived-in-world unfolds through entanglements; the meeting place between multiple narratives that reference, remember and imagine specific historical (from 'once' to 'here') and scalar (global, national, individual) contexts.

'Bare facts', like 'bare expectations' are artefacts generated through these gatherings as their seeing and not seeing affects and encourages abstract knowing and acting (Latour, 2004).



The place of partnership: seeing after 2020



This partnership between Northern University and Southern Cross Primary School grew on country that once sustained great grasslands north and west from the Birrarung-Yarra: the river flowing through Naarm-Melbourne. The Woiworung, Wathaurong, Gulidjan, Djabwarung and Gunditjmara peoples had permanent settlements and farmed eels across these volcanic plains. The people still live there despite sea level rises and the Ice Age; they became harder to see after British settlement.

Pictures from Southern Cross Primary School in 2019 show people still working and learning through this land but Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were almost never mentioned in any of our interviews for this partnership project. They are not seen, not known; education has not been actioned with First People's heritage or contemporary contributions in mind. The great western plains grasslands have become an endangered habitat, buried under a settler society's asphalt and buildings, the school's green oval surrounded by little red-brick houses.

(Seddon & Quiddop-Winton, 2020)

Narrating the partnership:

A teacher educator's point of view

Step 1: Preparing a 'classroom-ready teacher' (Documenting TEMAG's corpse)

Using images, interview data and the teacher educator's commentary to document her way of:

- Seeing partnership learning
- Knowing partnership work
- Navigating partnership governance

Step 2: Teacher education after 2020 (Re-reading the past)

Using end of 2020 curriculum reviews to surface discussions about integrated partnership in 2021.

- Learning from 2020
- Commitments to knowledge building
- Imagining an emergent space for teacher learning

Step 3: What is a 'classroom-ready teacher 'now'? (Re-writing the future)

Using discussions about the Alice Springs-Mparntwe Declaration to recontextualise TEMAG's corpse.

- What is 'quality' teacher education in a post-pandemic world?
- Why have partnerships?

Illustrating Step 2: Re-reading the past

Using end of 2020 curriculum reviews to surface discussions about integrated partnership in 2021.

The teacher educator reflected on the probable and possible consequences of 2020

... the fear of being physically close to those who are not your family and how long it would last? The rapid shifts with school closures and openings meant PSTs were left in the dust. Those trying to finish their degrees are left in limbo because they couldn't do placements, which meant they couldn't graduate.

But the truly amazing work of teachers world-wide to radically re-engineer their teaching and learning will have lasting impacts. The principal was focused on 'core instructional time', but what is now judged essential and what has been abandoned in the shift to remote learning?

Teacher education partnerships are obviously not considered core business for schools, even though most young people entering teaching could have been of benefit to schools navigating the shift to digital teaching.

Yet the upwelling of appreciation for teachers' professionalism, dedication and innovation has dramatically spotlighted a different set of teacher strengths to those usually visible through teaching standards. Changes like the digital teaching landscape are now being considered for PSTs by our teacher registration organisations.

Illustrating Step 3: Re-writing the future

What is 'quality' teacher education in 2021?

Gloria doesn't mention the new goals or their symbolic bilingual affirmation of Australia's post-2019 systems of education

But she has read Kevin Nagata (2017), Professor of Australian Indigenous Education, who cautions that cultural competency training can backfire when students and professionals are compelled to attend. She knows from her own experience that that simple information and skills do not address complex cultural interfaces.

'Learning together' means navigating the 'contested space between Indigenous people, non-Indigenous people, and that body of knowledge on Australia's Indigenous people that establishes the order of things' and creates 'ways we can and cannot understand each other' (Nakata, 2011: 2).

Why have partnerships?

Gloria's partnership work is already one step towards necessary problem-solving.

The partnership cannot yet address the Alice Springs-Mparntwe Declaration that recontextualises the post-pandemic education world, but it is already a place where learning and working together is recognised and respected.

There are already basic skills and a willingness to engage in inter professional learning and inter discursive work entangled by different space-time horizons.

But this work depends on inter-partner agreements: rules of the game—a treaty about who speaks and negotiates, how the work of diplomacy can unfold and who pays, organises and resources this work.

Crisis and knowledge building

Reality is not defined by matters of fact. Matters of fact are not all that is given in experience. Matters of fact are only very partial and, I would argue, very polemical renderings of matters of concern and only a subset of what could also be called *states of affairs*. (Latour, 2004: 232)

A thing is, in one sense, an object out there and, in another sense, an *issue* very much *in* here, [in] a gathering. (Latour, 2004: 233)

On this basis, there is a case for professional education that is ‘stubbornly realist’ and attends to evidence, but focuses on ‘matters of concern’, the ‘gatherings’ that anchor and why those gatherings generate ‘matters of fact.’

By implication, a ‘classroom-ready teacher’ should be a knowledge-building critic:

... not the one who debunks, but the one who assembles. The critic is not the one who lifts the rug from under the feet of naïve believers, but the one who offers participants arenas in which to gather. The critic is not the one who alternates haphazardly between antifetishism and positivism like the drunk iconoclast drawn by Goya, but the one for who, if something is constructed, then it means it is fragile and thus in great need of care and caution.

(Latour, 2004: 246)



Teacher Education Through Uncertainty and Crisis: Towards Sustainable Futures.

Book Section 1: The policy-practice space of uncertainty

TEMAG reform processes between 2014 and 2019 institutionalised integrated partnerships and the accountability regime that defined 'classroom-ready teachers'. These normalised arrangements meant business as usual teacher education had become largely taken-for-granted.

Yet in 2020, all those things, those seemingly coherent objects of 2014 to 2019 teacher education, started to fall apart. It began with school closures, requiring students to learn online from home. The crunch came with the impossibility of teacher education placements

Chapters (draft titles)

- Navigating uncertainties and new thought leadership
- The benefits of integrated partnerships for pre-service teachers
- TEMAG reforms and teacher education global governance

Book Section 2: The place of doubt in professional's partnership work

Four case studies of school-university integrated partnerships show how school- and university-based professionals form, maintain and sustain partnership practices as they work and learn through workplace-based experiences in-between partner schools and universities.

Refusing to read the hyphen in school-university partnerships as a simple borderline, we show how professionals navigate institutional relations through practice architectures that construct the boundary zone and also negotiate partnership work through different points of view as they engage each partnership's analytic borderlands.

Chapters (draft titles)

- Partnerships in times of crisis: Affective atmosphere and the relational ethics of teacher educators
- Inside the black box: schools, universities and the precarious placement machine
- Negotiating working life: Reframing self and other through school-university partnerships,

Book Section 3: Re-making teacher education

Partnerships are dialogical borderlands where interprofessional ‘otherness’ is almost endemic. Inclusion and exclusion arise because the familiar status quo and its horizons of expectation presume and privilege particular points of view, creating certain patterns of seeing, unseeing and re-seeing in dominant and marginalised gatherings.

Reading and writing crisis historically shows how year 2020 disrupted teacher education practices of seeing and narrating that sustained blindness, confirmed privilege, and limited collaboration and knowledge sharing. Surfacing these limitations is an opportunity to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing, to support participants to join in, speak up, be active and to recognise how their practice contributes to a common cause that remakes history.

Chapters (draft titles)

- Curating space for democratic practices: university governance and teacher education partnerships:
- TEMAG reform’s seen, unseen and re-seen Australia: time horizons, trends and treaty beyond 2020

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