



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

This article was originally published in printed form. The journal began in 1973 and was titled *The Aboriginal Child at School*. In 1996 the journal was transformed to an internationally peer-reviewed publication and renamed *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*.

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Reviews

Editor's Note: The package was available from the Commonwealth Department of Employment Education and Training, Central Office, GPO Box 9880, Canberra City ACT 2601. We have been

informed however, that the video package is presently unavailable. DEET may be able to obtain funds to produce further copies if there was adequate demand.

The Darug and Their Neighbours: The Traditional Aboriginal Owners of the Sydney Region

J. Kohen

Darug Link in association with the Blacktown and District Historical Society, Blacktown, 1993, 300 pp.

Reviewed by Ian D. Clark

The Darug and Their Neighbours presents a general history of the Darug people and their immediate neighbours—the Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples of the greater Sydney region. Four families from this region are the focus of the book, in an effort to demonstrate that there are many Darug descendants still living in the Sydney area. The book has three clear parts: a general historical introduction (comprising 144 pages); descendant charts of four families (62 pages); and dictionaries of the Darug, Kuringgai and Gundungurra languages (54 pages).

The general historical introduction is arranged into eleven chapters, of which the first four are concerned with the pre-European era, covering prehistory, spatial organisation, hunting and gathering, and social organisation. Maps showing the locations of clans (listed on pp. 20-21) would have been useful, as would a general locality map showing the major places mentioned in the text. The seven chapters that are concerned with the period since the arrival of a permanent European presence in 1788 focus on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and predominantly with the latter. A detailed reconstruction of the history of the Darug people in the twentieth century will need to be the focus of a further publication, for this period is only superficially mentioned in this work.

The descendant charts present the state of genealogical knowledge for four Darug families at the time of publication. This provides a useful foundation, for there are many gaps and considerable work yet to be

done; we can only hope that this will be the focus of a future publication, that also presents biographies and photographs of key family members. In relation to the appendices on vocabulary, I note that there is no reference to Jakelin Troy's doctoral thesis on the Sydney languages, which will soon be published as part of the AIATSIS Dictionary Project. Troy has a chapter on the Sydney language in the recently published *Macquarie Aboriginal Words*.

Kohen recounts (p. 142) the commonly held view that Aboriginal peoples of the Sydney region are defunct. By confirming the existence of many families of Darug descent currently living in the Sydney area, Kohen has discredited this view, and this is his book's greatest strength.

Reference

Troy, J. (1994) 'The Sydney language', in N. Thieberger and W. McGregor (Eds), *Macquarie Aboriginal Words: A Dictionary of Words from Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages*. Sydney: The Macquarie Library, pp. 61-78.

Editor's Note: This review originally appeared in *Australian Aboriginal Studies* (1994) Number 2: 100-101. We thank *Australian Aboriginal Studies* and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for allowing us to reprint it here. □