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Dr Richard Letts
Director, Australian Music Centre
3 Smail Street
BROADWAY SYDNEY 2007

Dear Dick,

First, I must apologise for the delay I know I must have caused to the progress of the Aboriginal music section of your project for secondary schools. As Caroline Josephs will have told you, I have found it necessary to make contact with several people who are involved in preparing Aboriginal material for use in schools. This occurred as a sequel to a conference I attended in Canberra recently, where many of the speakers were of Aboriginal descent, some of them directly involved in education.

As you know, it is now eight years since I prepared the "kit" known as "Classroom Studies in Aboriginal Music and Dance" at the request of the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra. Since that time many Aboriginal people have been able to acquaint themselves with the school kits of various kinds and to develop their own views in this area of education. In recent discussions I have had with Joann Schmider of the Department of Education in Queensland, it appears that there are certain "principles" in Aboriginal education to be followed and advice is given as to preferred "terminology". Joann has looked at my manuscript and after a few hours perusal she was kind enough to prepare a brief, informal report for me. I think you should see it. I reproduce here the comments as she wrote them (I have numbered them):

- "1. Needs, in the title, a reference that shows it (the 'kit') focuses on traditional music and dance, even perhaps, the geographical areas you base this material on.
2. I would like to assist by reading the material and suggesting changes (e.g. terminology - Aboriginal Australian rather than Australian Aboriginal) to bring the material in line with current Aboriginal education "principles".
3. While, through this reading, I may be able to suggest alternative/more appropriate structure/activities etc. according to educational curriculum development theory and principles, I also think you should get hold of a curriculum "specialist" to

have a look at it especially in regard to making the whole package "user friendly" (to use a computer term), e.g. teachers are notorious for not wanting to "do" extensive cross-referencing.

4. I feel that sections A1, A2, A3 are aimed at different school levels (A3 being fairly specialised). This is not a problem, however, as structural organisation of the package can take advantage of that. I guess I'm saying that while I would see the package as aimed at lower and middle secondary it should be able to provide for more specialised interests (e.g. tertiary) and I like how it can be adapted to upper primary.
5. I believe the educational needs/interests exist - there is nothing much available, and I believe this (the original version) can provide a good resource"

Joann Schmider
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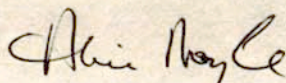
I have since talked to Kay Price of the Aboriginal Education Unit, New South Wales Department of Education. She is agreeable to looking at the Kit (or package) and to giving us her opinion of it. She would be prepared to come to the Australian Music Centre to see the copy you have, if you have no objections to this. She knows Joann Schmider well. They appear to be in regular contact.

Although neither of these Aboriginal education officers are able to comment on Aboriginal music, so far as I know, at least their checking of the material, in the light of the current attitudes of their respective education units, would be an important form of "clearance". As regards the owners of the songs and dances in my collections I foresee no difficulties at all. All my examples were very carefully chosen in the first instance. Some of them have been distributed on my own discs of Aboriginal music over a period of many years. In fact, the best users of these discs and cassettes appear to be among the Aboriginal people themselves.

Kay Price has expressed a wish to see the kit before any changes have been made to it. If you think this is feasible perhaps a time could be arranged for me to come to Sydney and for Kay to accompany me on a visit to the AMC.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Alice Moyle (DR)
Honorary Fellow