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**Audacious Leadership:**

**One school's journey to achieve educational equality for Indigenous students**

**Thesis submitted by**

**Eleanor Louise Wilkinson**

**B. Ed. (Art)**

**In November, 2005**

**For the degree of Masters by Research**

**In the School of Indigenous Australian Studies**

**James Cook University**

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## Abstract

The core issue of achieving educational equality for Indigenous Australian students is examined through a critique of the policy and practice of one very large urban state secondary school in North Queensland. Uniquely motivated by a discourse of success, the study determines what school based factors have contributed to the progress and achievements of its Indigenous students.

The thesis is an instrumental case study that is written from the worldview of a non-Indigenous feminist insider-researcher, using the philosophical paradigm of critical theory. Significant Indigenous education literature is explored in themes of time, progress and inequality with an emphasis on schooling in Queensland. This is followed by a detailed description of the context of the school community setting and the broader social and political background. Multiple data sources of: observation; interviews and physical/documentary evidence are used to identify different ways the core issue is addressed in the school and analysis and interpretation is derived from a synthesis of the literature and school review findings.

The term, '*audacious leadership*' is coined to describe the most significant intrinsic variable or school-based factor found to be contributing to the success of educational outcomes for Indigenous students in the school studied. The thesis concludes with implications of this for educational leaders in the wider context of the Queensland education system.

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