

Whose History? Whose knowledge?

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Abstract: The Australian Curriculum History, like all curriculum texts, is one version of legitimate knowledge, which has been “produced out of the cultural, political, economic conflicts, tensions and compromises that organise and disorganise a people” (Apple, 1993, p.1). This presentation highlights the ‘spaces’ and ‘places’ of the curriculum as representations of particular knowledge and identities. Whose knowledge is privileged and what places and perspectives on place are positioned as significant? How do orientations to spatial markers – local, regional, national, global – seek to organise and disorganise? This paper draws on critical theory and a detailed discourse analysis of the Australian Curriculum History and accompanying professional resources. This analysis examines the way that particular perspectives and judgements about ‘significance’ privilege and marginalise. The document analysis is complemented by a case study of school practice that positions students as key agents in legitimating local knowledge.