Curiously, pedagogy and more specifically teaching and learning, seem peripheral to its interests and do not even feature in the index. Further, the text-focused nature of English doesn’t align well with its approach to ‘documents’. Discourse analysis is limited to a couple of pages and approached quite reductively; notions of subjectivity and its complexities are naïve; and issues of power and its circulation are only fleetingly addressed.

The training in the humanities that most English teachers begin with is an awkward fit with the social scientific orientation of texts like this that are coming to dominate educational research and define what is recognisable (or not) as research. The ‘evidence-based’ rhetoric of social science does not reflect the breadth and richness of research in English education.

Why does this matter? Most immediately, each time members of our Editorial Board consider an article for publication, they must consider the extent of the research contribution that it might make to our field. Fortunately, our reviewers are highly experienced, generous and curious about the diversity of research that is possible in English education. If curriculum and pedagogy are the key focus areas of English in Australia, and – as I am suggesting – these areas are poorly served by generic approaches to educational research, then where do we look for what might be possible? Obviously, English in Australia – the conversations in its pages and the literature that is drawn upon – will be the first place to look.

However our notion of curriculum might be too limited. Bill Green suggests that curriculum theorising in Australia ‘remains by and large pragmatic and instrumental in its focus’ (2003, p. 126) and predominantly of a ‘bureaucratic and administrative character’ (2003, p. 127). What gets lost when we keep our sights within narrow parameters and bureaucratic horizons is the capacity to reconceptualise what curriculum might enable in a larger sense – what sort of ‘lifeworlds’ and ‘human subjects’ do we want education to produce, what sorts.
of democracies do we want to build, how might we take up the courage to move towards ‘creative and radical re-imaginings of what curriculum and schooling must now become, in a new age of digital culture, global networks, hybrid identities, and transnational imaginaries’ (2003, p. 138), and what is the particular contribution of English to these questions?

In this issue of *English in Australia*, several answers are apparent. Obviously, there is an explicit attention to the breadth of concerns of English and how these manifest in curriculum design. Mary Macken-Horarik revisits ‘four models’ of English and traces these through a unit that equips girls to critique conventional discourses of romance. Dave Kelman and Jane Rafe elaborate a series of planned activities that allowed children to reframe gender through the witches in *Macbeth*. Deborah Henderson and Dominique Fitzgerald centre a unit of work on refugee stories, inviting students to think beyond the hostility of current dominant discourses. Kristina Love, Carmel Sandiford, Mary Macken-Horarik and Len Unsworth develop a model that attends explicitly to language, enabling teachers to develop students’ persuasive writing and their own professional knowledge. At the university level, Andrew Miller and Samantha Shulz present a multiliteracies framework to address the particular literacy needs of first year students. Amanda Gutierrez contrasts teachers’ views of critical literacy in two states and considers these in relation to variations in state-mandated curriculum. Joanne Dargusch examines feedback on student writing in senior English. All of these papers contribute to curriculum and pedagogy: the design of classroom learning, the opportunities and challenges that are afforded to young learners, the ongoing professional learning and practices of educators. They underscore the crucial and creative work that teachers do as they plan classroom experiences that maximise learning. Most of them are explicit in naming the elements of current mandated curriculum that their arguments address. Most of them could be considered case studies, though they are delimited in different ways (e.g. single case, comparative cases). Several contributions focus on the subjectivities of particular teachers. SAETA President Alison Robertson’s evocative farewell to our 50th year, held over from our previous issue, fits into this category. Sarah Truman takes a reflexive and literary turn that might be called (in research method parlance) ‘autoethnographic’ to trace the becoming of a teacher-writer-researcher through narrative vignettes. In passing she mentions William Pinar, the Canadian curriculum theorist, who defines curriculum theory in the broadest sense as ‘the interdisciplinary study of educational experience’, which he argues has particular resonance with the humanities and the arts (rather than the sciences) (2004). Pinar argues that our work requires ongoing reflection on our implication in educational spaces, and suggests that we aim to ‘slow down, to remember, even re-enter the past’ to ‘understand more fully, with more complexity and subtlety, [our] submergence in the present’ (2004, p. 4). The call to attend to histories – personal, public, and institutional and their entanglements and complex temporalities – resonates with Bill Green’s curriculum genealogy, and with Brenton Doecke’s extended review essay of *English teachers in a postwar democracy: Emerging choice in London Schools 1945–1965* (Medway, Hardcastle, Brewis & Cook, 2014) featured in this issue.

Sadly, this was the final book by Peter Medway, an influential English curriculum scholar and theorist who recently passed away. Empirically, in terms of research design the book is ambitious and robust – bringing together archive materials, documents, interviews, and photographs that capture the ‘convoluted’ relationships of teachers, students, bodies of knowledge, and the everyday materialities of classrooms. It opens with a quotation from an Orkney Island poet and positions the research as ‘rescue archaeology’. Though it can be described as a comparative case study of three schools at a particular place and time, in fact it is a grand, evocative, provocative, and beautifully written analysis of teachers’ work and the emergence and refinement of curriculum theory in sites of practice. While Peter Medway’s death has saddened many in our scholarly community, this work reminds us how we might draw on all our traditions and capacities as we design and undertake research in English.

Notes

1 See also *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, English in Education, Research in the Teaching of English, English Education* and *Changing English*.

References
