

# Editorial Statement

*David Delgado Shorter, UCLA*

The *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* began as a publication at the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1974. As a product of the American Indian Cultural Program at UCLA, the journal's name was born in a particular space at a particular time. Dennis Banks, John Trudell, Russell Means, Clyde Bellecourt, and Vernon Bellecourt approached the then assistant director of the American Indian Studies Center, Kogee Thomas, and asked for a professional space that served Indigenous people and their cultures. The language at the time was "American Indian," and their concern was clearly about cultural vitality, broadly conceived.

The impact of many Native students, members of the faculty and staff, and their allies cannot be overestimated when considering the trajectory of our journal since the early seventies. We were the first academic peer-reviewed journal that published essays about North American Indigenous scholarship as well as about cultural issues that did not rise to the awareness of scholarly attention. We were the first academic journal to include scholarly attention to the environmental degradation, health concerns, and poverty levels across Indian Country. We have been mostly Indigenous led, from our publications committee to our editorial boards to our editors in chief, for more than five decades. Without being connected to a particular academic discipline, our issues have traversed wide areas of research, providing readers with a literature that resembles the broadest sense of Indigenous studies, that of a lived life being connected and valuable in relation. We have much to be thankful for as a journal because we have survived so many changes in the scholarly world. And this year marks a particular turning point.

We have arrived at this first open-access issue of *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. What has long been a problem to solve (how to make our content more accessible while remaining self-supporting) is now a reality. With so many of our authors writing from and about places that are prevented from participating in scholarly knowledge-sharing practices by structural inequalities such as paywalls, we have been working toward this goal for at least a decade. And we could not be happier

to have such a momentous special issue as this one on the incomparable life and work of Dr. Haunani-Kay Trask.

We are riding this big wave of change to ask how else we can move with the times. In the last year we have updated our bylaws to reflect our desire to indigenize AICRJ's editorial board and bring more focus to the Indigenous communities and scholars from Southern California. We are excited to have three new Indigenous editorial board members. We welcome Dr. Theresa Ambo (Gabrieliño-Tongva), Dr. Theresa Gregor (Kumeyaay/Yoéme), and Michael Connolly Miskwish (Kumeyaay) to our board.

This issue provides us an opportunity to introduce our new logo design and journal cover layout. We now have a presence ("AICRJJournal") on Twitter, Instagram, and Meta, in order to share both past and current essays, and to help our authors and readers engage each other. And our move to eScholarship has facilitated an update to our submission processes, now centrally located on one webpage. For our subscribers and valued librarians, please note that we are skipping from issue 45, no. 2 (2021) to this volume of issue 46, no. 1 (2023). We are also transitioning from publishing four issues per year to three per year, one roughly every four months.

We acknowledge that transitioning to an entirely new publication model and platform is only possible with the dedication of many people. We would not be here without the help of Catherine Mitchell, Charlotte Roh, and Justin Gonder from eScholarship. Sharla Lair, at Lyrasis, has been instrumental in securing financial contributions from libraries and institutions that understand our value to scholarship, most substantially from the University of California Libraries via their Shared Content Leadership Group. The UCLA Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research has also made, and continues to make, substantial financial contributions to the effort. Tom Nguyen has been working diligently for quite a while on the literal digitization and delivery of data to the new system. We also want to thank David Chiu, Sydney Flamm, and Miranda Claxton, who respectively helped our transition. Cal Nez and William Morosi provided design support for the journal. At UCLA Libraries, the support of Virginia Steel and Alison Scott has been immeasurable. Over the years, multiple faculty members at UCLA were involved in the discussions and decisions leading to this moment: Drs. Randall Akee, Jessica Cattelino, Mishuana Goeman, Paul Kroskivity, Angela Riley, and Shannon Speed, to name a few. Due to their deep knowledge, Joy Holland and Jennifer Chan at UCLA were tremendous resources over the years. And perhaps most central has been the diligence and commitment of Dr. Pamela Grieman. Dr. Grieman has been the assistant director, the editor in chief, and most recently the managing editor. She has truly been one of the most consistent of all forces in the journal's success in the last decade. While faculty can often be on leave or befuddled in one way or another, Pamela for years has been the point person for authors, publishers, librarians, students, and subscribers.

Thank you to our readers, our authors, our book reviewers, and the libraries and other institutions that have supported us over the last forty years. As we approach the fiftieth year of our existence, we are proud of our continuous commitment to publishing peer-reviewed scholarship about, for, with, and by Indigenous peoples.