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Voicing Derbarl Yerrigan as a feminist anti-colonial methodology

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Abstract

The paper voices Derbarl Yerrigan, a significant river in Western Australia, through three imperfect, non-innocent, and necessary river-child stories. These stories highlight the emergence of a feminist anti-colonial methodology that is attentive to settler response-abilities to Derbarl Yerrigan through situated, relational, active, and generative research methods. Voicing Derbarl Yerrigan influences the methodological practices used as part of an ongoing river-child walking inquiry that is concerned with generating climate change pedagogies in response to the global climate crises and calls for new ways of thinking and producing knowledge. In particular, the authors found that voicing as a methodology includes listening and being responsive to Derbarl Yerrigan's invitations, paying attention to pastpresentsfutures, and forming attachments through naming. By telling lively settler river-child stories, this paper shows how voicing Derbarl Yerrigan is vital to open new possibilities for education and has implications for settler-colonial contexts, where the focus on learning shifts from learning about the world to learning to become with multispecies river worlds.

KEYWORDS

education, feminist anti-colonial methodology, settler river stories, voicing, walking methods

1 | INTRODUCTION

This paper voices Derbarl Yerrigan, a significant river, as a feminist anti-colonial methodology with a river-child collective. For us, feminist anti-colonial methodology begins with untangling the social and ecological legacies of colonialism (Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015) in everyday early childhood pedagogies we enact with young children. As researchers, we do this work together *with* Derbarl Yerrigan through employing situated, relational, active, and generative research methods and by recognising the ways that Derbarl Yerrigan takes part in our walking practice.

We pay particular attention to what it means to walk as a group of settler bodies (researchers, educators, and children) on and with unceded Aboriginal Country in Western Australia. Located on Whadjuk

Noongar Boodjar, Derbarl Yerrigan begins near Walyunga National Park and flows towards the Indian Ocean for approximately 175 km. The Noongar name Derbarl Yerrigan describes the mixing of salt and fresh waters that make up this culturally, environmentally, and historically significant river. Dutch explorers named the river Swartte Swaane Drift, meaning Black Swan River, before English settlers named it the Swan River upon settlement. We have been walking with Derbarl Yerrigan and young children for over a year as part of a project concerned with children's relations with their everyday common worlds and how these relations play a significant role towards generating climate change pedagogies. In other words, our walking project is a deliberate attempt to shift how early childhood education usually tries to teach children how to manage, save, and control their environments, towards paying attention to how the environment and children are already in relation.

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We build on the work of the Common Worlds Research Collective (CWRC) (2020) who argues that a paradigm shift from learning *about* the world to learning to *become with* the world is necessary in education if there is any hope for future survival. Like others (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind, & Kocher, 2017; Rooney, 2018; Taylor, 2020; Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2019), we believe that young children are particularly good at relating and becoming with their worlds as they have not yet been schooled in, and become obedient to, the dichotomous frame of nature versus culture, which education has a long history of implementing. The separating of worlds is done in various ways throughout education. For example, when children are asked to know about water, whether it be an expectation of curriculum frameworks or as an interest of the children, experiences are focussed on learning *about* water (its properties, its uses, water facts, etc.). This frame of learning *about* reinforces anthropocentrism. It also becomes the educator's priority and focus, as they are then required to find out what children are learning and know about water and are often expected to document this learning.

In early childhood education, this learning is recorded through what is called documentation. Documentation, as conceptualised in our Australian early childhood education context, is concerned with gathering and analysing information about what children know, can do, and understand and is used for planning future learning experiences (Australian Education and Care Quality Authority [ACECQA], 2018). As Blaise, Hamm, and Iorio (2017) discuss, documentation, as implemented in Australian early learning settings, can be problematic as the focus is usually on observing the child in a context-less manner and documents matters of fact using an 'objective' writing style. For example, traditional observation-based documentation in our project would entail noticing what children know *about* water and rivers and not their relations *with* water and Derbarl Yerrigan. Through showing the capabilities of children and all that they can do and know using pedagogical documentation, the significance of other worlds, such as water worlds, plant worlds, animal worlds, or ancestral worlds is often sidelined and erased.

Our walking research with Derbarl Yerrigan and young children counters the all-too-common trope of placing the child at the centre of all learning and as the primary focus in education. Instead, we turn towards the everyday river-child relations that are taking place as we walk with Derbarl Yerrigan and in these moments, we choose to scale down, slow down, and attend to that which is assumed-to-be insignificant (Taylor, 2020). We use this paper as a way to voice Derbarl Yerrigan and river-child relations as feminist anti-colonial methodology. Our research, and this paper in particular, offer ways to think, walk, and write as a deliberate shift from the common 'separating out practices' (Greishaber & Blaise, 2019, p. 628) of nature versus culture that early childhood education promotes, towards pedagogical practices that bring together naturecultures.

2 | FEMINIST ANTI-COLONIAL THEORETICAL FRAMINGS

Feminist anti-colonialism guides our voicing river practice. We draw from various scholars who engage and discuss anti-colonial research

methods across diverse fields to construct our methodological underpinnings (see Civic Laboratory for Environmental Action Research [CLEAR] (2018), Donna Haraway (1988, 2016), Liboiron (2017), The Atlantic, (2019), Fixile Nxumalo (2019), and Tuck & Yang (2012)). As a feminist anti-colonial methodology, it works at shifting the desire to know about the world to becoming with the world (CWRC, 2020; Haraway, 2016). Feminist anti-colonialism is situated, relational, active, and generative. It is not about abstraction, but is grounded in everyday embodied doings with young children and Derbarl Yerrigan. In this project, the doings involve walking, listening, dialoguing, (re)situating, and being open (Blaise et al., 2017; Blaise & Hamm, 2020). These doings inform how we encounter and respond during our walks with Derbarl Yerrigan and young children. Fikile Nxumalo (2019) shows us possibilities for critically encountering and pedagogically responding. For example, critically encountering means that we make decisions about what we notice and that they happen simultaneously. That is, we do not first see, hear, and notice and then come up with a plan to then respond. Effort, care, and decisions are made in the moment and this is what makes the work pedagogical and *with* Derbarl Yerrigan. Although these encounters are never perfect, the way we respond is done with intention. Initially, river-child encounters involved paying almost exclusive attention to Derbarl Yerrigan and learning about its history, biological make up, and cultural significance. Within the context of education, this is important because usually the child, and what she is learning, is the primary focus and concern. Soon, however, we began to notice Derbarl Yerrigan's relations with birds, weather, Country, and children. These relations became more important to notice as we walked and became interested in Derbarl Yerrigan's role in forming relations with young children.

3 | EMERGING FEMINIST ANTI-COLONIAL WALKING METHODS

Our walks with Derbarl Yerrigan took place at a small, 500 m stretch of river near the child care centre we research with, on the northern side of the river, near what is today called Pelican Point. Writing this river's history is important in our effort to voice Derbarl Yerrigan as a feminist anti-colonial methodology, as it is usually erased. This history we attend to is not a move to learn *about*, nor a settler move to innocence (Tuck & Yang, 2012), but rather a way to stay active in the ongoing impacts of settler colonisation in this particular place that we walk with Derbarl Yerrigan. Prior to European invasion, Derbarl Yerrigan flowed from the hills down into many lakes around Boorloo, which today, is where the city of Perth is situated (Nannup, 2018a). Today, many of these lakes are drained and filled in with decades of infill and sit underneath skyscrapers, roadways, and homes (Chinna, 2014). In the late seventeenth century European settlers came and went off the shores of South West Western Australia in big, tall ships before the English, 'settlers who stayed', decided to make their way upriver in June 1829 (Nannup, 2018b). Noongar Elder Dr. Noel Nannup (2018b) tells the story of Noongar people hearing settlers splashing their oars in the waters of Derbarl Yerrigan as they made their way upriver before deciding to settle at Noongar leader

Yellagonga's campsite, on the Northern side of the river. The campsite and bay where they docked begins at the far end of the 500 m stretch of Derbarl Yerrigan that we walk with in this project. This place was offered to Captain James Stirling and his people by Yellagonga, but soon their inhabitation became problematic as Songlines, an Aboriginal knowledge system where the land, sea, and skies hold stories to be learned and passed on (Neale & Kelly, 2020), were disrupted by the construction of fencing, local animals were slaughtered in great numbers, and Aboriginal people were forced to move to places where the land could not sustain them, and hence, where they struggled to stay alive. This time in Western Australia's history, called invasion, marks the beginning of ongoing tensions between settlers and Aboriginal people that permeates into many of today's injustices imposed on Aboriginal people (Nannup, 2018b).

We undertake our walking research in the middle of these entangled pastpresent histories and in this paper, we voice three river-child encounters that come from a year-long multispecies ethnographic research project that we conducted with preschool children and educators at a child care centre in Perth, Australia. This project is part of a wider international collaboration to develop climate change pedagogies with young children across eight research sites in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Peru. Our project, and others in the study, are documented using blogs, which can be found on the Climate Action Childhood Network website (<http://www.waterways.climateactionchildhood.net/>). We use walking as a way of attuning to Derbarl Yerrigan and document our walks through a mix of listening, storytelling, photography, audio and video recording, notetaking, memoing, and drawing. This kind of walking and research practice requires that we, as settlers, resist notions of 'moving on', or moving forward towards 'decolonised futures' that are common in education. We take seriously what Tuck and Yang (2012) caution against in relation to decolonisation being taken up in schooling and educational research as an all too easy metaphor—a recentering of whiteness, attempts to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and entertaining a settler future. In other words, instead of hoping and dreaming for a different future for the young children that we walk with, our work is in the present, in what we encounter, in how we respond, and in how we then make river-child relations public. We make these relations public through voicing Derbarl Yerrigan, which is a form of 'storying'. Storying is part of our methodology and is an act of meaning-making, sharing, and connecting (Phillips & Bunda, 2018). The settler river-child stories that we create draw from observational field notes, photographic documentation, audio and video recordings, researcher debriefs, and conventional library research. Creative writing techniques, including poetics and performative writing are used to enable new connections with others, and in this case with Derbarl Yerrigan, to be formed. Voicing Derbarl Yerrigan recognises that these river stories are imperfect, non-innocent, and necessary settler river-child stories to be told across various public platforms, including a blog, pedagogical documentation at the child care centre, a forthcoming art exhibition, and this publication. These stories are imperfect, meaning they surface and confront problems, and are sometimes the problem themselves.

Voicing is very unlike how most stories are told in education, where there are tidy beginnings, middles, and ends. For us, stories that voice Derbarl Yerrigan have no resolutions, fixes, or answers. Instead, these stories generate questions of concern rather than matters of fact (Stengers, 2018) and voice multiple perspectives in 'embodied and embedded middle grounds' (Braidotti, 2019, p. 110). They are non-innocent stories, where we hold ourselves to account for our settler gaze and know that we are only ever telling very particular stories that are not to be taken as universal and all-knowing (Haraway, 1988). We also avoid the all too common notion of the innocent child in early childhood education— a child ready to be filled with knowledge, ever so impressionable, and one who must be protected from the realities of living in the 21st century. Finally, these stories that voice Derbarl Yerrigan and river-child relations are necessary because they open new possibilities for education, in particular for our settler-colonial context, in times of planetary instability, uncertain futures, hope, and radical shifts. We now share three river-child encounters that voice Derbarl Yerrigan in various ways. The first river-child encounter voices Derbarl Yerrigan's invitations as we walk with this body of water. The second voices pastspresentsfutures of Derbarl Yerrigan, and the third river-child encounter voices river shell collections.

4 | VOICING DERBARL YERRIGAN'S INVITATIONS

Derbarl Yerrigan invites children to wade out deep into cool and crisp waters on days when wind is gentle. Water sloshes around our boots as we walk the shore and wet sand invites us to make footprints and drag the edge of our boots to create other marks. Calm, clear waters invite us to edge further and further in, until suddenly we feel rushing cool water slip into our boots, down to our toes, making our feet heavy and socks soggy. Derbarl Yerrigan's persistence sees us sitting down along the beach working to pull off our wet boots and drenched socks and roll up our leggings and maybe even our shirt sleeves. Meanwhile, Derbarl Yerrigan is making gentle little lapping sounds up against the beach and river shells. These sounds call us away from the dry sand towards the water. Derbarl Yerrigan takes over our bodies again; sand wedging into toenails, seagrass sticking to shirts and shorts, musky fishy smells filling nostrils, and skin beginning to cool. Then, Derbarl Yerrigan shows us what lies below, something that is not always possible when wind is whirling and algae are blooming. We wade out further and further as Derbarl Yerrigan keeps things clear for us (Figure 1). Derbarl Yerrigan reminds us to move slowly if we want to keep seeing what lies below by showing us how the sand kicked up from our walking feet will settle if we are patient and still. Once all has settled again, we check back towards the beach, as we have not been out this far before. Derbarl Yerrigan reassures us that we are safe by remaining still and calm. This is the perfect depth for our young bodies. We trust Derbarl Yerrigan and begin dipping ourselves deeper and deeper, becoming closer to and with water. The temperature is startling to the dry parts of our bodies and creates a game between us, to see who can



FIGURE 1 Derbarl Yerrigan inviting children to become closer [Color figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com)]

submerge themselves the deepest. Giggles erupt as we bend our knees and Derbarl Yerrigan washes over our clothes and seeps through to our hidden skin. Our hats fall off from the jerky movements we make when rushing to resurface to escape the cooler river depths and Derbarl Yerrigan once again reminds us to slow down and be still. We gaze at each other and our now soaking wet bodies as water, sand, and heartbeats settle. Activity begins again, this time with our hats being used as buckets to reach down low towards the sandy river bed to scoop and pour water down our bodies.

Derbarl Yerrigan's invitations to come in; be deep; stay still; and to become closer, are the openings for anti-colonial river-child and water-child relations. Paying attention to Derbarl Yerrigan's invitations are openings for educators to generate pedagogical practices that bring naturecultures together and alter what counts as learning in early childhood education. But, we too are asking questions of these invitations and our capacity to listen and respond to them as settlers. Noongar people have a deep connection to Derbarl Yerrigan and its historical, ecological, and cultural significance. In particular, the rivers are always talking to Noongar people. The Noongar phrase *Ni! Bilyada Waanginy* means 'Listen! The rivers are talking' and the great Waugul is at work (Nannup, 2020). Rivers have been a part of Noongar knowledge systems and wisdom for many years and are part of the primary language system for Noongar people (Walley, 2020). Waterways carry vast knowledge and are great energy systems for Aboriginal people (Walley, 2020), which is out of reach to settlers in the way that the First People connect with and live with Country. The river-child stories that we are voicing, and the invitations from Derbarl Yerrigan that we listen and respond to, are constrained as we are settler migrants to Australia without deep and long-standing connections to this Country. Voicing these settler river-child stories are done while holding this understanding together with deep respect to Noongar Elders past and present and for Noongar knowledge systems.

5 | VOICING PASTSPRESENTSFUTURES

Many things are in relation with Derbarl Yerrigan some obvious, some easily overlooked. Walking repetitively at the same 500 m stretch of river over the past year has encouraged us to engage in different ways of noticing these relations. Where we walk, Derbarl Yerrigan is in relation with limestone walls, history, young children, wind, Djenark (Silver Gull), storm water drains, science, feathers, Blowfish, rubbish, *Batillaria australis* shells, algae, Maali (Black Swan), seagrass, dogs, boats, sunscreen, us, and the list goes on and on. Derbarl Yerrigan is more than a body of water that we simply walk with as a place for our research. This river is an assemblage, that we consider ourselves to be a part of that includes human, more-than-human, and multiple pastspresentsfutures. Similar to our use of the concept pastspresentsfutures, is what Woollorton, Collard, and Horwitz (2015) describe as 'the long now'. The long now is an Indigenous concept, which brings the 'past, present, and future together into a continuing present' (Poelina et al., 2020) and is a non-linear conceptualisation of time. Our next river-child story draws on the work of Hayman, James, and Wedge (2018) who call for water narratives to be put into conversation with the Anthropocene as a means to imagine different potential futures. As our project was concerned with generating climate change pedagogies with young children and water, we found their work helpful when considering how to voice river-child stories in ways that depart from human exceptionalism, a common feature of land biased narratives, so that the voice of Derbarl Yerrigan, and all of its pastspresentsfutures, tells this story.

Derbarl Yerrigan's rough waters from a windy night leave traces along the shore of the tiny beach that is revealed by the retreating tide as the morning sun begins to warm the air, sand, and our bodies. We notice water pocked sand, ratty damp feathers, clumps of tangled seagrass, and shells forced into a compact line. Derbarl Yerrigan is helping us to look at these traces by being calm and further away from shore than usual. Djenark feathers are whirling in the warm wind as they make their way down the shore before becoming swept up and tangled in the rushes down at the far end of the big beach. Some of us follow the dancing feathers and a feather collection begins. Others notice the gentle water movements in the shallows by the storm water drains where large rocks have been revealed overnight.

By Derbarl Yerrigan retreating, small river puddles and river collections are created. An assortment of water, foam, shell fragments, sun, feathers, sand, cigarette butt, and seagrass (Figure 2) tell a story that catches one of the children's attention. As she bends down, looking closely, while staying with this collection we begin wondering together with this more-than-human assemblage and how it is inviting us to be in relation.

How long do you think shells have been with Derbarl Yerrigan?

Why do you think Derbarl Yerrigan makes foam?

How might Derbarl Yerrigan invite feather to play?

Is Derbarl Yerrigan enjoying being warmed by the sun?



FIGURE 2 Living together with Derbarl Yerrigan [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

But, we can only imagine. Crouched with a nearby river puddle, I remember when the tide was out and Derbarl Yerrigan's smell was so strong, and someone yelled, 'Yuck!'. Instead of ignoring that comment, I quietly said to no one in particular, but to Derbarl Yerrigan, 'Oh, it's warming up' and my mind lingers back to those summers long ago spent as a child with the Mississippi River. Although there was no salt in the air, it was thick, heavy, full of swamp, and stayed on my skin and is part of me now. This kind of remembering becomes a practice of linking across time and places by thinking with Derbarl Yerrigan. Back to the early 1970s, on Bayou Goula in Southern Louisiana, with cousins, sisters, aunts, uncles, and grandparents, I cannot help but wonder, 'What are Derbarl Yerrigan's memories? What does Derbarl Yerrigan carry? How are our relations with Derbarl Yerrigan being carried by this river? How does thinking with Derbarl Yerrigan invite new river-child relations, while also holding past river-child relations and opening new river-child relations?'

6 | VOICING RIVER SHELL COLLECTIONS

Derbarl Yerrigan is in relation with *Batillaria australis* shells, or what our river walking collective has come to call 'river shells'. River shells are the home for Australian mud whelks, a species endemic to Eastern Australia, and were introduced to Derbarl Yerrigan by humans post settlement. Derbarl Yerrigan rolls, buries, and groups river shells along its river bed and shores. We are invited to pay attention to and become a part of these relations as we walk together each week. Sometimes, these relations hurt. Derbarl Yerrigan often encourages us to take off our shoes and socks and walk barefoot. Together, Derbarl Yerrigan and river shells work to hide just beneath the surface of sand causing a surprise poke underfoot as we tread along the beach. In the winter months, our soft skin is surprised by the sharp ridges and pointy end of river shells as they press into flesh. Over time, we began to see these relations as attachments, and are



FIGURE 3 River shell collections [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

choosing to trouble this developmental terminology all too familiar in early childhood.

Derbarl Yerrigan moves gently, back and forth, back and forth. Slowly we notice several shells that are caught up in these gentle waves. Listening carefully, allows us to hear how together waves and shells make sounds. One of the girls squats down low, sitting in the shallow water, with her head turned sideways, listening to the ever-so-softly swirling of river shells, water, sand, and sunshine.

While walking along the shoreline, one of the girls runs ahead. In the distance we see her sitting in the sand and scooping something (water? sand?) with both hands. As we get closer, we notice hundreds of river shells all around her. We are amazed and wonder, 'Are there usually this many river shells along the beach?'

Voicing these encounters provide different understandings of attachment in early childhood, beyond current, and longstanding human-centric theories situated in developmental psychology (see Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969). Voicing river-child-shell attachments reconfigure relationships between human and more-than-human, unlike and unlikely others, to displace humans as the primary actors in attachments (Instone, 2015).

Certain river shells have a power over many of us that causes us to pick up, gather, and keep collections (Figure 3). It is the sheer number of them along the beach and in the shallows, hundreds to thousands that demands our attention and invites us to sort and sift through to find 'just the right' shell. Our movements begin to mimic that of Derbarl Yerrigan's lapping at the shore- back and forth, in and out- as we search for shells and carry them over to a growing collection. These collections grow in hands, on the limestone wall, in a sand hole, a pant pocket, and the trolley. Much negotiation takes place towards the end of our walk on days

where large collections have accumulated. Educators ask the children whether or not they want to take these river shell collections back to the centre. A few times the answer is a fervent yes, this collection is ‘...just what the outdoor sand pit needs’ or this collection is ‘a gift for mum’. Other times, these collections are left behind, as though a visible trace of Derbarl Yerrigan’s relations with us.

Batillaria australis shells are known to be a challenge to Derbarl Yerrigan’s health. Their abundance in the river, both as living and dead shells, accumulates macroalgae, which disturbs seagrass access to light, and therefore, its ability to thrive (Thomsen & Wernberg, 2009; Thomsen, Wernberg, Tuya, & Silliman, 2010), which is the main food source for Maali or as it is also known, the Black Swan. At first, we were hesitant in taking river shell collections away from Derbarl Yerrigan, because of these relations, but perhaps together they were inviting us to do so. While eradication is unrealistic (Government of Western Australia Department of Parks and Wildlife, n.d.), a few less river shells in Derbarl Yerrigan does not seem to be harmful ecologically, and yet they seem to do something for our attachments with Derbarl Yerrigan beyond the immediacy of being in place with river. Small fists protect river shells as they travel back to the centre with us on the days where collections leave the water’s edge. The presence of river shells starts, hold, and carry conversations as we walk along the bitumen path, sit together around the sand pit, and as they are gifted at home time.

I notice a tight fist as we are walking back to the centre where peeking out between small fingers are bumpy river shells. Deciding to pay attention to this shell-child attachment, I curiously follow closely behind. There seems to be a hint of secrecy in the air in the way that shells and child are working together to remain hidden from the sight of others. A constant re-shuffling of fingers and palm keep shells tucked safely for the walk despite the use of fingers to point out Kookaburra, dip into puddle, and hold hands when crossing the road. Muffled whispers (I think) are transferred to shells when her hand reaches up to meet her mouth. I imagine what messages are being sent back and forth between them and begin to sing aloud,

‘Under, under Derbarl Yerrigan.
Under, under Derbarl Yerrigan.
Shells.
Lots and lots of river shells.
Shells.
So many river shells.’

While sand has been washed or brushed away, water has dried and photos are forgotten on digital devices, river shells remain. We continue to walk with Derbarl Yerrigan beyond the mornings we gather together at Pelican Point and our relations become something more than a brief moment in time. We draw on author, academic, and educator Tony Birch’s (2019a, 2019b, 2019c) writing on his obsession and affection for collecting pine cones to understand how river shells have come to mean something to us and how we have come to mean something to them. We are in relation with river shells by collecting in a way that is far deeper than what might be first

considered taking from Derbarl Yerrigan. Our relations are not possessive, dominating, or destructive. Instead, they are caring, mutual, and generative.

7 | VOICING AS A FEMINIST ANTI-COLONIAL METHODOLOGY

As these three stories show, voicing is more than describing river-child relations. Voicing is a feminist anti-colonial methodology because it focuses on the ‘doing’ rather than the telling, which is more aligned with the world being alive. We believe that voicing offers a way of becoming with the world while attending to ongoing and legacies of colonialism. First, voicing does this by listening and responding with the more-than-human world. The ways in which we, settlers in a settler colonial context, listen and respond are important in order to not reproduce colonial violences (Liboiron, 2017). In relation to our first story, *Voicing Derbarl Yerrigan’s invitations*, for example, we notice how children are listening and responding to Derbarl Yerrigan as they put their bodies into the river, as they splash and feel the coolness and wetness of water. However, there are also days when Derbarl Yerrigan is uninviting and we are not welcomed into the water because the water is too rough, too windy and cold, or there is an algal bloom. These stories too must be voiced and notions of romanticism about children in outdoor learning environments must be thwarted. New ways of pedagogically responding in early childhood education are needed in order to critically encounter ‘environmentally damaged places’ and ‘settler colonial legacies’ (Nxumalo, 2019, p. 1) and we suggest that voicing river-child relations is one way to actively respond while attending to our settler accountabilities and the agency of Derbarl Yerrigan.

Second, paying attention, as in our *Voicing pastspresentsfutures* story, is important to feminist anti-colonial methodology as it creates intimacy between human and more-than-human. Robin Wall Kimmerer (2003), in her writing about moss, teaches us that *how* we look at Derbarl Yerrigan matters and creates a certain type of intimacy that can bring us to different ways of seeing. For example, as we walk repeatedly with Derbarl Yerrigan, we create a familiarity with river and develop our river relations by paying attention to what is present, what is absent, and thinking speculatively and imaginatively together. None of this is possible without Derbarl Yerrigan. These encounters transport us to other times, past and future, while also attending to the here and now of what is happening pedagogically with young children and Derbarl Yerrigan. We have learned from Yazzie and Baldy (2018) the importance of balancing our relationship with Derbarl Yerrigan with our accountability to this river in voicing, which enacts an ethos of living well together. To voice paying attention is a way to shift from the individual to the multiple, including Derbarl Yerrigan, seagrass, shells, Djenark feathers, Maali, weather, and other life forces.

Finally, naming is vital to voicing and feminist anti-colonial methodology as it builds relations for new ways of thinking and producing knowledge. To tell our final story, *Voicing river shell collections*, we

think with Kimmerer (2003) in order to consider how naming builds relations between Derbarl Yerrigan and young children. She explains how naming mosses, in a way that makes sense to her, which may deviate away from scientific names, is important for recognition and acknowledgement of their individuality. We voice Derbarl Yerrigan as more than a body of water and more than scientific species (i.e., river shells), as a way to privilege river-child relations and how children know Derbarl Yerrigan and how Derbarl Yerrigan knows children. We consider this to be reparative thinking, a shift away from critical knowing and matters of fact (Gibson, Rose, & Fincher, 2015; Latour, 2004) towards ethical, responsible, and multiple ways of knowing.

Voicing Derbarl Yerrigan is how we make visible our situated, relational, active, and generative research methods in our research with Derbarl Yerrigan and young children. By voicing Derbarl Yerrigan through three imperfect, non-innocent, and necessary river-child stories in this paper, we have shown how feminist anti-colonial methodology offers a different way of learning in education, learning to become with the world, and highlights ways of remaining active in our settler accountabilities, which is necessary for responsive and response-able research.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

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