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**The *Encounters: place, situation, context* papers – the refereed proceedings of the 17th conference of the Australasian Association of Writing Programs, 2012**

### **Editorial introduction**

The refereed proceedings for the 17th annual AAWP conference, ‘Encounters: place, situation, context’, is a collection of works all brushed by an awareness that writing is above all a matter of encounters. The encounter of writing with itself is one dynamic of the production and reception of writing. Another is the encounter of writing with the world, with all of its levels and degrees of encounter, within which writing is produced and received. The more you think about it, the harder it is to find anything about writing that is not an encounter.

What saves the term ‘encounter’ from the dullness of overfamiliarity is the skill with which the writers gathered within this collection have expanded on the conference subtitle – ‘place, situation, context’ – and taken any number of routes towards the site of their own particular interest in ‘Encounters’. Those papers that seem to drive towards a cul-de-sac of encounter, and there are some, should productively be seen as provocations for discovering and analysing yet more modes of encounter. The encounter with the field of Encounters, while it has a long history within the AAWP and elsewhere, is in some sense only just beginning.

Some of the forty papers gathered here may soon occupy canonical status within a discipline in which the canon moves fast. Others may seem, in due course, to have been more important for their moment than for later times. The Encounter of these works with the future is something that, while we may influence it through our reading and further dissemination of these proceedings, will proceed in any event without us.

We encourage you to encounter these encounters and bring what they yield to you into dialogue, collaboration, confrontation and encounter with your own future encounters with writing.

**Patrick West**  
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