



MEDIA KIT

Carl Merrison & Hakea Hustler



BOOKS

- 'My Deadly Boots' (Lothian 2022) [[print](#) | [ebook](#)]
- 'Backyard Footy' (Lothian 2023) and 'Backyard Tennis' (Lothian 2024) [[print](#) | [ebook](#)]
- 'Black Cockatoo' (Magabala 2022) & 'Durrarr' (Magabala 2023) [[print](#) | [ebook](#) | [audiobook](#) | large font]
- 'Kimberley Kickers: Jy goes for Gold' (Harper Collins 2024), 'Kimberley Kickers: Krstel Petrevski' (Harper Collins 2025), 'Kimberley Kickers: Ash Johnson' (Harper Collins 2025) [[print](#) | [ebook](#)]

Full list of books with awards and reviews: <https://carlandhakea.com.au/our-books/>

Full list of supports and teacher notes: www.carlandhakea.com.au/extras/teachers-and-librarians

APPEARANCES

Carl Merrison and Hakea Hustler are available for media appearances in Northern Rivers New South Wales (NSW), South East Queensland (SE QLD). They can be available for media appearances via online meetings.



ACCOUNTS AND CONTACTS

Website: www.carlandhakea.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/carlandhakeaauthors

Agent: Alex Adsett agent@alexadsett.com.au

Email: author@hakeahustler.com.au

Instagram: www.instagram.com/carlandhakeaauthors

Appearances: sandie@speakers-ink.com.au

CARL MERRISON

AUTHOR, EDUCATOR, COACH



SHORT BIO

Carl Merrison is a Jaru/Gija author and educator from Halls Creek in the Kimberley Western Australia. Carl believes in the power of sport, education and literacy to empower individuals and communities. And he has dedicated his life to those areas to improve outcomes for remote Aboriginal children and teens. Carl was awarded State Finalist of the Australian of the Year Award- Local Hero for Western Australia in 2016 for his work as an Aboriginal Education Officer, lifeguard, football coach, and youth mentor. Carl was the 2020 Black&Write Fellowship recipient for his series of picture books: Backyard Sports. He was a shortlisted author for the Western Australian Writing Fellowship. Carl loves spending time out bush with his family; fishing, hunting and swimming in waterholes. He loves AFL- he is a Level 3 coach!

LONG BIO

Carl Merrison is a Jaru/Gija Aboriginal author and educator from Halls Creek in the Kimberley Western Australia. Carl believes in the power of sport, education and literacy to empower individuals and communities. And he has dedicated his life to those areas to improve outcomes for remote Aboriginal children and teens. Carl was awarded State Finalist of the Australian of the Year Award- Local Hero for Western Australia in 2016 for his work as an Aboriginal Education Officer, lifeguard, football coach, and youth mentor.

Carl loves spending time out bush with his family; fishing, hunting and swimming in waterholes. He loves AFL- he is a Level 3 coach!

Carl is an accomplished and award-winning author of:

- CBCA Honour Book '*Black Cockatoo*' (Magabala 2018) and the Daisy Utemorrah award-winning sequel '*Dirrarn*' (Magabala 2023). Both texts were shortlisted for a range of other awards.
- '*My Deadly Boots*' (Lothian 2022) shortlisted for the Queensland Literary Awards and the Speech Therapy Book of the Year Award.
- Daisy Utemorrah shortlisted '*Tracks of the Missing*' (Magabala 2022)
- Carl was the 2020 Black&Write Fellowship recipient for his series of picture books: Backyard Sports including '*Backyard Footy*' (Lothian 2023) and '*Backyard Tennis*' (Lothian 2024). '*Backyard Footy*' has the names of Carl's remote outback First Nations nieces and nephews who are in the AFL and AFLW.
- 'Kimberley Kickers' series including '*Jy goes for Gold: Kimberley Kickers*' (Harper Collins 2024), '*Krstel Petrevski: Kimberley Kickers*' (Harper Collins 2025), '*Ash Johnson: Kimberley Kickers*' (Harper Collins 2025). These are all outback First Nations AFL and AFLW players and role models- and Carl's relatives.

IMAGES

[Carl and Hakea together image](#)

[Carl with children and book](#)

[Carl in the outback](#)

HAKEA HUSTLER

AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR



SHORT BIO

Hakea Hustler is an award-winning author, and experienced rural and remote English teacher. She is a passionate adventurer who has lived and worked all over Australia. Hakea is an avid reader, nature lover, and vege eater. She loves to spend time imagining and daydreaming on long drives, in baths and around the garden. Hakea believes in the power of education and literacy to empower young people. Hakea holds her Bachelor of Education (P-12 English and Humanities), Graduate Certificate of Special Needs and is a facilitator of Trauma Informed Teaching and Classroom Management Skills (CMS).

LONG BIO

Hakea Hustler is an award-winning author, and experienced rural and remote English teacher. She is a passionate adventurer who has lived and worked all over Australia including around the Surf Coast Victoria, Northern Rivers NSW, South West Western Australia, and Kimberley WA. Hakea is an avid reader, nature lover, and vege eater. She loves to spend time imagining and daydreaming on long drives, in baths and around the garden. Hakea believes in the power of education and literacy to empower young people. Through this passion she has published a range of books, and runs The Remote Teacher Australia.

Hakea is an accomplished and award-winning co-author of:

- CBCA Honour Book *'Black Cockatoo'* (Magabala 2018) and the Daisy Utemorra award-winning sequel *'Dirrarn'* (Magabala 2023). Both texts were shortlisted for a range of other awards.
- *'My Deadly Boots'* (Lothian 2022) shortlisted for the Queensland Literary Awards and the Speech Therapy Book of the Year Award.
- Daisy Utemorra shortlisted *'Tracks of the Missing'* (Magabala 2022)
- 'Kimberley Kickers' series including *'Jy goes for Gold: Kimberley Kickers'* (Harper Collins 2024), *'Krstel Petrevski: Kimberley Kickers'* (Harper Collins 2025), *'Ash Johnson: Kimberley Kickers'* (Harper Collins 2025). These are all outback First Nations AFL and AFLW players and role models- and Carl's relatives.
- A chapter in the *'Teacher Teacher Anthology'* edited by Megan Daley by Affirm Press.

IMAGES

[Hakea and children](#)



MEDIA KIT

Carl Merrison & Hakea Hustler



INTERVIEW QUESTION IDEAS

- What is your background? How have your intergenerational strengths and traumas shaped you and the stories you tell?
- What was your childhood like? How has this shaped your books?
- How did your writing collaboration begin? What is it like working together as friends, and across cultures?
- What is your proudest achievement to date? What impact have you seen your books have?
- What other projects do you have in the future? What books can we look forward to?
- What does it mean to diversify and decolonise your bookshelf? Why is this important?
- Sports are a consistent theme through many of your books. Why?
- How do you think your influences are woven into your co-written books?
- There is a growing space in publishing for First Nations stories. Where do you think your books fit and why are they important?
- Your books often explore complex issues that affect First Nations people. What are some of the issues and challenges that are close to your heart? What do you hope people will understand about them through reading your books?
- Your books often focus on the strengths of First Nations peoples. What do you want people to learn about First Nations peoples, cultures, diversity, language and Country?

MEDIA ANGLES

- Carl Merrison was born and raised as a remote outback First Nations Jaru / Gija man in Halls Creek in the Kimberley, Western Australia. Carl is part of a minority- outback First Nations Australia- he is sharing his lived experience of outback Australia to the mainstream. He is raising the strengths and challenges that First Nations peoples in the outback face. And highlighting the diversity of First Nations peoples and experiences.
- Carl's grandmother was a member of the Stolen Generation. His mother, June, was born under a tree on Limbunya Station on Gurindji Country.
- Carl worked as a mentor, Aboriginal Education Officer and AFL coach in Halls Creek for 15 years. During which time he mentored and coached many of the AFL and AFLW players from the Kimberley.
- Carl has felt the impact of intergenerational trauma (suicides, illiteracy, racism, lack of opportunities etc) and intergenerational strengths (culture, language, connection to Country, strong role models, truth telling etc).