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TITLE: 'This is where I war': pre-service teachers' ethical dilemmas in remote indigenous Australia

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The oft quoted adage of 'mercenaries, missionaries and misfits' conjures colourful stereotypes of white service workers in 'development' contexts, and it captures the challenges and ethical dilemmas inherent in any attempt by members of a dominant privileged culture to improve the circumstances of those who may be marginalised or under-privileged. Such dilemmas have occupied critical sociologists of education for some decades now. In this paper I explore how such subject positions play out in particular ways in the event of non-indigenous pre-service teachers undertaking a professional placement in remote indigenous communities in the Northern Territory of Australia. Drawing on interviews conducted with 19 pre-service teachers while they were undertaking a placement in 2012 I conceptualise the research interview as a space where participants' narratives desire to construct an ethical teacher self that is intelligible. I explore three key ways in which they seek recognition as ethical teacher subjects: as portfolio subject, benevolent subject, and antiracist subject. These subjectivities might be considered a re-framing of 'mercenaries, missionaries and misfits' that illuminates the *particular* ways in which they are materialised, and challenged, by pre-service teachers in post-colonial, 21<sup>st</sup> century Australia.