INDIGENOUS MEDIA PRACTICE

Book Reviews in this issue

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DISCOURSE, DEFICIT AND IDENTITY: ABORIGINALITY, THE RACE PARADIGM AND THE LANGUAGE OF REPRESENTATION IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA

Abstract

Deficit discourse is expressed in a mode of language that consistently frames Aboriginal identity in a narrative of deficiency. It is interwoven with notions of 'authenticity', which in turn adhere to models of identity still embedded within the race paradigm, suffering from all of its constraints but perniciously benefiting from all of its tenacity. Recent work shows that deficit discourse surrounding Aboriginality is intricately entwined within and across different sites of representation, policy and expression, and is active both within and outside Indigenous Australia. It thus appears to exhibit all the characteristics of what Foucault has termed a discursive formation, and its analysis requires a multi-disciplinary approach. Developing research overseas on the prevalence and social impact of deficit discourse indicates a significant link between discourse surrounding indigeneity and outcomes for indigenous peoples. However, while there is emerging work in this field in Aboriginal education, as well as a growing understanding of the social impact of related behaviours such as lateral violence, the influence of deficit discourse is significantly under-theorised and little understood in the Indigenous Australian context. This article will problematise the issues and explore theory and methods for change.

In 2009 and 2011, two workshops[1] brought together Indigenous people from around Australia to discuss 'the recognition that an erosive mindset of deficit pervades many Aboriginal communities and that this includes perceptions of authenticity adopted from dominant views held about Aboriginal people by non-Indigenous Australians' (Gorringe et al., 2011: 3). This article is written by some of the participants in those workshops (referred to below as the Change the Conversation or CTC Workshops), and outlines research undertaken subsequently that has sought to examine the issues identified and discussed. In doing so, we use the term 'deficit discourse' to describe a mode of thinking, identifiable in language use, that frames Aboriginal identity in a narrative of negativity, deficiency and disempowerment. We argue that such a discourse adheres to models of identity still embedded within the race paradigm, and is interwoven with notions of 'authenticity', commonly expressed by language about who is a 'real Aborigine' and who, in deficit comparison, is not.

In the first instance, it is important to consider the meaning, and thus significance, of 'discourse'. For this purpose, Kerin's recent summary is useful:

> Discourse has been described as systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of actions, beliefs and practices that shape reality by systemically constructing the subjects and the worlds of which they speak. Discourse plays a role in wider social processes of legitimation and power; emphasising the constitution of current truths, how they are maintained and what power relations they carry with them. (Kerin, 2012: 26)

Recent work of scholars such as Aldrich et al. (2007), Bamblett (2011, 2013a, 2013b), Gorringe et al. (2011), Hinkson (2007) and McCallum (2010, 2013) indicates that deficit discourse surrounding Aboriginality is intricately entwined within and across different sites of representation, policy and expression, and is active within non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australia. It thus appears to exhibit all the characteristics of what Foucault terms a 'discursive formation' (see below). Our research adopts the approach that discourse is both constitutive and productive, that it is a social action which frames and constrains understanding, but that it is also productive of knowledge and social relationships (Culler, 1982), and 'defines and produces the objects of our knowledge [and] governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about' (Hall, 2010: 72). As Kerin (2012: 26) notes, it follows that:

> Those who have the ability to shape discourse define what it is possible to think, while suppressing other ways of thinking. The ability to shape discourse, legitimatise and reproduce it builds power. By defining what is possible to think and suppressing others, those with institutional power – like governmental agencies – do not need to draw on coercive force to change people's behaviour because the dominant discourse has established a framework, or 'rules of the game', that individuals and groups must 'play to' in order to be recognised and participate.

Overseas research on the prevalence and social impact of deficit discourse indicates a significant link between discourse surrounding indigeneity and outcomes for indigenous peoples (Nairn et al., 2006; Shields et al., 2005). While there is emerging work in this field in Aboriginal education (Armstrong et al., 2012; Gorringe and Spillman, 2008; Sarra, 2011), as well as a growing understanding of the social impact of related behaviours such as lateral violence (Gooda, 2011; Gorringe et al., 2011),[2] deficit discourse and its influence are substantially under-theorised and have been paid little research attention in the Indigenous Australian context.

Negative stereotypes not only contribute to damaging behaviours such as racism and lateral violence, but 'are entangled with (as well as foster) notions of helplessness and lack of agency' (Gorringe et al., 2009: 14). Disengaging non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians from such discourse may be fundamental to affecting change, but there are obstacles to this, which derive from factors such as the tenacity, subtlety and pervasiveness of this mode of discourse, its powerful currency in the current socio-political climate and the sensitivity of the topic:

> Issues surrounding identity and the ways in which negative stereotypes are used *by* Aboriginal people *against* other Aboriginal people are a matter of great sensitivity, with candid and rigorous debate stifled by valid fears of reprisal, which include being perceived as negating the presence of real disadvantage and exposing people and communities to further misrepresentation and outside attack … identifying these issues *does not* mean denying the real need of many Aboriginal people, nor the continuing racism which people experience, but provides mechanisms which may effect change in these areas. (Gorringe et al., 2011: 3)

Identity and discourse

Considerable work in the social sciences has focused on the complex relationship between discourse, knowledge and power, particularly through the writings of Michel Foucault. For Foucault, the episteme (or mode of discourse that is characteristic of a particular way of thinking) will appear across 'a range of texts, and as forms of conduct, at a number of different institutional sites within society' (Hall, 2010: 73). When these refer to the same object, have the same style, support a strategy and have a 'common institutional, administrative, or political drift and pattern' (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 84–85), they belong to what he terms the same 'discursive formation'. Simply put, in adopting a Foucauldian approach, what is 'known' in a particular period about 'Aborigines' has a bearing on how people are regulated and controlled (or regulate and control themselves). As Hall (2010: 76) notes, 'knowledge does not operate in a void … it is put to work, through certain technologies and strategies of application, in specific institutions, historical contexts and institutional regimes'.

Foucault's analysis does not conceptualise power only in the form of an hierarchical chain, but rather as deployed and exercised as a network (Foucault, 1980: 98), indicating that all touched by it are caught up in its circulation – both the oppressors and the oppressed (Hall, 2010: 77). Foucault's work shifted attention away from large-scale strategies of power 'towards the many, localized circuits, tactics, mechanisms and effects through which power circulates' – the 'microphysics of power' that articulate power relations, which 'go right down to the depths of society' (Foucault, 1977: 27). The evidence of deficit discourse as a discursive formation also present within Aboriginal communities is therefore unsurprising: 'Power relations permeate all levels of social existence and are therefore to be found operating at every site of social life.' (Hall, 2010: 77)

Historical context

Assumptions and accusations of Indigenous deficit have saturated the history of cultural relations in Australia since contact, and are a key component of racism and prejudice. There has been substantial research to show that colonial ideology adhered to constructed 'truths' about Aboriginal people that were underpinned by notions of deficiency, and had very little to do with how Aboriginal people saw themselves (Dodson, 1994; Langton, 1993, 1999; Healy, 2008; Russell, 2001). For most non-Indigenous Australians, the dominance of Eurocentric representations *about* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has been their sole point of reference and understanding. Rather than knowing and relating to Aboriginal people, 'they relate to stories told [about Aboriginal people] by former colonists' (Langton, 1993: 33). As noted by Dodson (1994), defining characteristics were described in unambiguously loaded language that predominantly identified Aboriginal people in terms of what they lacked. Under the gaze of the colonising culture, 'Aboriginality' changed from being a daily practice to being a 'problem to be solved' (Dodson, 1994: 3). Conceptualisation of Aboriginality in terms of racial theories based on blood quotient, coupled with notions of the 'noble savage' and the tenets of biological determinism, formed the basis of deeply pervasive (and persistent) concepts of 'authenticity' wherein some people are designated as 'less Aboriginal', 'less real' or 'less valid' than others. While these perceptions were constructed first by non-Indigenous Australians, the CTC workshops focused on the presence of these introduced deficit concepts among Aboriginal peoples, noting their effect on relationships between and within families, groups, peoples and communities (Gorringe et al., 2011: 5; see also Gooda, 2011).

The recent case of *Eatock v Bolt* (2011),[3] and the public interest it created, demonstrate the intensity of issues surrounding 'authenticity' faced by Aboriginal people who may not conform to outside notions of the so-called 'real Aborigine'. Similarly, a report by the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) on racism experienced by Aboriginal people working in universities shows that a considerable component of the prejudice they encounter relates as much to 'being black' as it does to *not being black enough*, and that the latter accusation is received from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (NTEU 2011: 22–35). The report provides qualitative data on internal racism, which is often expressed through lateral violence. The timeliness of the CTC discussion topic is demonstrated by the frequent citation of a publication resulting from the 2009 workshop (Gorringe et al., 2009) in the 2011 *Social Justice Report*. Focusing on relationships within and between communities, the *Social Justice Report* dedicates a chapter to the subject of lateral violence, and identifies a need for further research (Gooda, 2011: 15). While there is some emerging research about lateral violence in Australia and Canada (Coffin et al., 2010; Dudgeon et al., 2000; Langton, 2008), there remains a significant deficiency in understanding its prevalence, impact and drivers.

The construction and representation of Aboriginal identity by 'white' Australia have received considerable attention (Cowlishaw, 1993; Dodson, 1994; Langton, 1993, 1999; Lattas, 1993; Meadows, 2001; Russell, 2001), including some application of Foucauldian theories (Arnold and Attwood, 1992; Fforde, 2002) and analysis of 'Aboriginality' as a construct arising from interaction between white and black Australians (Bamblett, 2013a; Healy, 2008; Nakata, 2007). The 'legacy of definition' and 'the prison knowledge builds' have been identified (Dodson, 1994: 2, 3), and the field of whiteness studies has contributed to understanding of the use of racial notions of 'superiority' as central to construction of 'white' identity, with significant research in this area in the Australian context (Moreton-Robinson, 2005; Russell and Fee, 2007). Research on the politics of representation, recognition and difference (Cowlishaw, 1993; Merlan, 2009; Langton, 1999; Rowse, 2008) has examined the role of identity as a powerful site of struggle for social justice, within which notions of 'authenticity' can be regarded as an increasingly significant factor. Wetherell and Potter's research (1992) into the discourse of *Pakeha* New Zealanders about Māori identity has broadened understanding of the subtle language of racism. However, much less work has been done on the nature and impact of the *discursive environment* surrounding Aboriginal identity.

Policy platforms: 'The Intervention' and 'Closing the Gap'

Policy platforms such as the Northern Territory Emergency Response (known widely as 'the Intervention') and 'Closing the Gap'[4] allow initial assessment of the extent of the deficit discourse landscape within particularly significant policy flagships for Indigenous issues implemented for the express reason of improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

While there has been much critique of the Intervention itself, there has been less analysis of the discourse used by political leaders, government documents or news media to articulate and promote the policy, or by Aboriginal people to support or oppose it, particularly since its reiteration as 'Stronger Futures'. Nonetheless, Hinkson (2007) has written on the discursive ploys used in the justification for the intervention, and Lovell (2012) has examined content from parliamentary debates, political speeches and government reports to 'develop an understanding of the discursive and rhetorical context in which these interventionist and authoritarian strategies came to be seen as essential to the protection of Aboriginal children's safety and wellbeing' (2012: v). Similarly, Macoun (2011) has identified the dominance of 'deficit' in the discourse

of Aboriginality utilised in political texts about the Intervention for the period of its initiation through to its legislative passage, concluding that:

> Constructions of Aboriginality deployed to justify the intervention are formulations that link Aboriginality to the abuse of Aboriginal children. This alignment establishes a political debate about the nature and future of Aboriginality in a discursive terrain in which the authority and perspectives of Indigenous people are problematised. In deploying constructions that attempt to situate and contain Aboriginality temporally and spatially, the intervention's settler advocates seek to resolve the 'problem' of Aboriginality by subduing the savage and developing the primitive in spaces they designate an authentically Aboriginal domain. (Macoun, 2011: 531)

Although there has been some examination of the conceptual weaknesses of 'Closing the Gap' (e.g. Altman, 2009; Altman and Fogarty, 2010; Pholi, 2009), this has not explicitly been in terms of the impact of the discourse employed. Terms such as 'Closing the Gap' employ language that continues to carry an implicit assumption of deficit that, we posit, may work against achieving the very aims for which it was developed. 'Closing the Gap' may well fall within the definition of what Freire (1970) terms the 'sloganising' of the oppressed, and if so, it can be predicted that it may act to disengage people from the programs that are delivered under its banner. Some work in New Zealand has been undertaken on philosophical analysis of 'Closing the Gap' (Humpage, 2001). It is significant that in recognition of the constraints arising from the deficit approach inherent in such terminology, New Zealand abandoned this phrase in the 1990s, instead adopting strength-based language in policies aimed at improving outcomes for Māori (Comer, 2008; Levy, 1999). As noted by Sullivan (2011a: 100–22, 2011b), in Australia, 'Closing the Gap' may itself be seen as a new iteration of the policy of 'normalisation' of Aboriginal people and communities pursued by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) since 1991, but with renewed energy under the 2008 National Indigenous Reform Agreement.[5] Aboriginal management, for example, is often seen as 'lacking capacity' (a salient trope of deficit discourse), while Sullivan notes instead that Aboriginal service organisations are a well-adapted and essential component of development outcomes (2011a: 48–66).

The subtlety of deficit

Our approach starts from the position that deficit discourse surrounding Aboriginality is intricately entwined within and across different sites of representation, policy and expression. This approach recognises the importance of multi-disciplinary reserach as well as the analysis of the more subtle forms of deficit discourse. For, while deficit discourse finds clear expression in overt racism, it is also present in more covert, nuanced, subtle and insidious manifestations. Our work is concerned with the discursive space around 'Aboriginality' that is created, and the relationship between this space and outcomes for Indigenous Australians – at this stage, particularly within health and education. These subtle manifestations of deficit discourse occur within language and terminology used by non-Indigenous *and* Indigenous Australians, often in contexts (including policy platforms) that seek to address very real social and economic need. Dickson (2013), for example, brings attention to how fundraising for literacy programs is embedded in a discourse of deficit, while Bamblett (2013a, 2013b) reveals not only how the association of English literacy education with Aboriginal deficit resulted in student and community disengagement, but how this was successfully reversed by carefully developing programs that no longer used this frame (see below).

A good example of such subtlety is that in confronting racism, it continues to be expedient to use language that produces an imagined place for Aborigines and Aboriginal communities that is inferior to that of the rest of the country. Historically, efforts to address racism made effective use of an equally strong language of deficit. That Aborigines and Aboriginal communities are inferior has not been in question. It is only the cause of and blame for the agreed inferiority that are subject to debate. For example, the Australian ideal of a 'fair go' is challenged with great effect in the writing about Aborigines in sport that seeks to address inequality. The evidence of inequality in this argument is that Aborigines suffer a 'basic oppression' (Broome, 1980: 69) that can be observed in the economic, social and cultural conditions within Aboriginal communities. Writing about Aborigines in sport repeated 'straight-line stories' of deficit that eventually saturated the discourse. Although used as a means of confronting both racism and denials of the pervasive nature of racism in Australia, the stereotype of the innate yet unpredictable (morally and inferior) Aboriginal athlete (Pollard, 1968) eventually gave way to another stereotype of need (Tatz, 1984), created in 'ghettos' (Harris, 1984: 9) and squalid camps (Calloway, 2004). Aborigines, it is argued, excel at sport as a way to escape 'abject oppression', and their success is viewed in terms of 'rags to riches' (Coram, 2001: 92–97). Thus the evidence used to prove racism against Aborigines is focused on negative assessments of Aboriginal communities, for whom deficit is assumed based on decades of accumulated meaning. Over time, the language used has become more subtle as the word 'Aborigine' has come to signify abject oppression and deficit. Writers no longer need to prove the existence of deficit or racism. These have become Indigenous causes, and have assumed a more subtle terminology as Aboriginal issues or Aboriginal disadvantage. It is interesting to ask why the history of Aborigines in sport did not instead focus on success through individual hard work, commitment, talent, practice, parental support and community sport initiatives.

Health matters in Indigenous affairs policy and the media appear to be similarly characterised by a discourse of deficit – illustrated, for example, in the enduring representation of Indigenous illness as an 'intractable problem' (McCallum, 2011). For Aboriginal Medical Services, navigating away from a narrative of disadvantage is complex (Gooda, 2009), not least because reducing statistical inequality through the over-arching 'Closing the Gap' framework requires identifying deficits and the 'lack of' to attract resources. Within a discourse of deficit, indicators such as public health, mortality and morbidity statistics become supportive of frames that accept the cause of 'illness' as part of Indigenous identity. The labelling of a group or individual as a deficient 'subject' (see Altman and Fogarty, 2010) dominates, while the facts of inadequate service provision, limited access and inequitable resourcing are ignored, or at best relegated to the background. Without denying the need for self-responsibility, the dominant dialogue can quickly become concerned with what the individual is doing/not doing to contribute to 'Closing the Gap', rather than challenging underlying assumptions of deficit discourse within policies, systems and structures to support equitable health outcomes.

Understanding the relationship between discourse and outcomes: First steps

Combining previous discursive analyses of identity (Benwell and Stockoe, 2006: 29–47) with consideration of research into the impacts of stereotyping, grievance narratives and self-fulfilling prophecy (Inzlicht and Schmader, 2011; Nairn et al., 2006; Paradies, 2006a, 2006b; Pearson, 2007) provides a way to begin to understand the relationship between discourse and outcomes.

Research emerging overseas has increased understanding of the pervasive influence that stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination have on behaviour, and health and education outcomes (Nelson, 2009; Stangor, 2009). Of particular interest in assessing impact are the concepts of *stereotype threat* (Inzlicht and Schmader, 2011) and *social identity threat* (Aronson and McGlone, 2009). Studied as situational mechanisms to understand disparities in outcomes between and across a range of groups, these occur when 'individuals are at risk, by dint of their actions or behaviours, of confirming negative stereotypes about their group', whether they personally believe these stereotypes or not (Steele and Aronson, 1995). Such threats have been shown to contribute to low performance across a range of areas and groups – for example, African Americans in education or girls in maths – and to impact on mental and physical health (Blascovich et al., 2001). Of significance in the context of this article, research has shown that stereotype threat and social identity threat can occur simply with the application of priming effects, as when subtle exposure to words associated with negative ageing stereotypes resulted in older people walking more slowly and exhibiting poorer memory than those who were exposed to words that cast ageing in a positive light (e.g. Levy, 2003). If being surrounded by deficit discourse associated with identity affects performance across a range of groups, there is significant reason to believe that its saturation in the Australian Indigenous context has substantial impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Recent work around community engagement with mainstream schools has demonstrated that there is a clear link between the representations of Wiradjuri identity and the choices people make. Bamblett (2013b) found that a Wiradjuri community had disengaged from mainstream schools for generations in response to continual reference to cultural and social deficit.

Alternatives: 'Strength-based' approaches

Assessment of the relationship between deficit discourse and outcomes is assisted by comparison with initiatives that proactively reject such discourse and challenge the perceptions within which it is embedded. One such initiative in Australian Indigenous education is the work of the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program (SSLP) (Sarra, 2011). Schools, educators and parents of Aboriginal students have been heavily socialised into a discourse of deficit. This constrains how Indigenous education is thought about and represented, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Data on Indigenous education (which inform decisions on funding allocations) are also delivered in this frame, both deriving from and reinforcing perceptions of Indigenous deficit (Fogarty, 2013). It is instructive for the current purpose to question why Indigenous educational *success* is rarely, if ever, framed in terms of innate Indigenous educational *ability*.

Focused on shifting this discourse, the SSLP is a professional learning space that challenges how people perceive, talk and think about teaching and learning in the context of Aboriginal education. It actively engages with educational leadership from across Australia to focus on the strengths of individuals (teachers, students, parents) as its starting point. Sarra's research (2011) provokes the consciences of school leadership about *which* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity they collude with – one grounded in deficit or one grounded in strengths?

Engoori is the foundational process from which the SSLP is delivered.[6] A three-phased strength-based process, *Engoori* focuses on the question, 'What makes/keeps me strong?' Subtly, this question leads to a conversation about 'how' we want to be, rather than 'who' we are – a powerful shift enabling people to remember their strengths, their hopes and aspirations, and their sense of connection. From a foundation of 'how we want to be', and with a strong recognition of the impact of deficit discourse, the

robust, trusting and challenging conversations around the big issues can be had. Its processes enable a safe space for dialogue as well as a sense of freedom from the overwhelming dominance of negativity and 'can't do'.

An international comparison is provided by *Te Kotahitanga* in New Zealand. Designed at Waikato University, this initiative is a professional development program for teachers that has achieved considerable success in improving outcomes for Māori students in mainstream secondary schools (Bishop et al., 2006). A fundamental component of the program requires teachers to explicitly reject deficit theorising as a means of explaining Māori students' education achievement levels (Berryman and Bishop, 2011). This includes rejecting the tendency to attribute blame that accompanies explanations of differences in student achievement in 'high-stakes' assessments (Shields et al., 2005).

Rejecting deficit thinking and moving away from the attribution of blame were key components of a dramatic improvement in early childhood English literacy outcomes at Erambie Mission near Cowra in central-western New South Wales (Bamblett, 2013b). Wiradjuri people at Erambie made a similar demand to that of Māori families in the *Te Kotahitanga* project, that schools and teachers see their culture as an advantage rather than dismissing it as a disadvantage, as would have occurred in the past. At Erambie, schools worked with the community to develop an English literacy plan based on key elements of Wiradjuri culture. The program focused on the compatibility of a thriving Wiradjuri storytelling tradition and a strong sense of communal responsibility with key reading development strategies for the early years. Prime Minister Julia Gillard noted the improved results in reading at Erambie in an address to the National Press Club. However, demonstrating the tenacity of deficit thinking, while the school was given credit for improved outcomes, no mention was made of the central involvement of the Aboriginal community in achieving this success.

Conclusion

Constructs about Aboriginality lodged in an old but enduring paradigm are likely to become more and more distant from self-expressed Australian Indigenous identity(ies) today and in the future. Identity is contextual, and as the political, social and historical context in this country changes, so do aspects of identity for many Aboriginal people. However, if dominant notions of Aboriginal identity are still tied to philosophical underpinnings generated during the colonial era, effective policy development and societal relations will be similarly constrained. Despite the significant changes that have taken place in the relationship between Aboriginal people and the state, deficit discourse appears to continue to be the dominant discursive formation for 'Aboriginality' in Australia, and until this undergoes a formative shift, it will continue to impede successful policy and relations.

Research on discursive formation has an important place for Aboriginal people and wider Australia in deconstructing and developing debates *about* Aboriginal Australia, especially in terms of policy (Sullivan, 2011a). There is a real need to 'unpack' and scrutinise deficit discourse surrounding Aboriginality and the context within which it is saturated, produced and replicated. Progress within the postcolonial space appears hampered by a discourse dominated by either participation in deficit models or, at best, oppositional reaction to these. Continuing evidence of the need to improve health and education outcomes urgently calls for reassessment of the dominant discourse about Aboriginality, as it may continue to compromise the capacity of Australia to either effectively re-evaluate past public policy in relation to Indigenous peoples or to develop new policy to chart the decades ahead.

The Foucauldian approach provides an instructive tool to investigate the discursive landscape, its interactions and implications, while recent work in the field of stereotyping and prejudice suggests additional methods to understand the relationship between discourse and outcomes. Existing programs that reject deficit discourse provide important comparisons to assist in understanding this relationship further. Taking such an approach may pave the way for new insights into a variety of questions, such as: How does deficit discourse in the health and education arenas influence and distort policy discussions in terms of notions of equity and service provision? What does policy freed from deficit discourse look like? How do organisations secure funding and express aspirations without engaging in a deficit model? How will Indigenous success be framed in non-oppositional media accounts? What type of discourse best engages students in education? What does history look like when freed from a deficit model, and how might this reframe current understandings? The utility of even considering that the conversation can and should be changed is demonstrated in the first instance simply by the different types of questions enabled by such a discursive shift.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] The 2009 workshop was convened by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the 2011 workshop was co-convened by AIATSIS and the Lowitja Institute.

[2] The term 'lateral violence' describes a range of damaging behaviours by those of a minority oppressed group towards others of that group, rather than towards the system of oppression; in particular, it uses accusations of inauthenticity as a tool of social exclusion.

[3] For a summary of this case, see: http://abalinx.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Eatock-v-Bolt-Judgement.pdf.

[4] For information on these initiatives provided by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FHCSIA), see www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/programs-services/closing-the-gap and www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/programs-services/closing-the-gap/closing-the-gap-engagement-and-partnership-with-indigenous-people/northern-territory-emergency-response.

[5] Revised in 2012, through the National Indigenous Reform Agreement, COAG 'sets out the objectives, outcomes and outputs needed to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage'. See www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/health_indigenous/indigenous-reform/national-agreement_sept_12.pdf.

[6] A set of processes that belong to the Tjimpa (Mithaka peoples) of far South-West Queensland, *Engoori* has been developed to assist organisations to navigate complex intercultural challenges. A strengths-based approach, it derives from principles used by Mithaka in the past within protocols for diplomacy and conflict resolution.

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