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INDIGENOUS VOICES:

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL LEADERSHIP

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Art Work
The cover of this WINHEC Journal displays the S'YEWE legend pole designed and carved by Charles W. Elliot (TEMOSEN), Tsartlip, Coast Salish. The history pole was first raised in 1990 to mark the Learned Societies conference at the University of Victoria. Due to water damage the pole was taken down for repairs and over time was fully restored. On September 12, 2017 the pole was rededicated in a ceremony and as part of the University of Victoria Indigenous week of welcome. To learn more about the S'YEWE legend pole please visit the following website:
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Foreword: Indigenous Voices: Indigenous Cultural Leadership

Ma te huruhuru, ka rere te manu; Me whakahoki mai te mana ki te whānau, hapū, iwi
Adorn the bird with feathers so it can fly; and return the mana (prestige) to us all

The above whakataukī (Māori proverb) aligns with the idea that a bird cannot fly without all of its feathers being aligned and working together, however if we work together to provide for what a bird needs to fly, it can thrive. The analogy being that Indigenous cultural leadership is really about coming together to collectively share our knowledge in ways that provide better opportunities to help (re)shape our educational futures as Indigenous peoples moving forward. It is also a critical response to new forms of colonisation that continue to oppress, alienate and assimilate Indigenous peoples ways of knowing within the current education system. In this regard, our past often informs the present, and the present provides the opportunity to narrate a more creative, innovative, and optimistic educational future that is both self-determining as well as transformative. Indigenous cultural leadership in action is as much about committing to a legacy of decolonisation, as it is about valuing Indigenous ways of knowing that is deeply grounded in the land, languages, community, culture and transforming our futures.

In this issue, Aboriginal art historian, Donna Leslie explores the concept of the 'crucible' in the work of Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas, and applies it to Australian Aboriginal art as an expression of cultural leadership. The idea being that how Indigenous peoples respond to adversity can provide invaluable insights into how Indigenous peoples approach leadership and in particular, how Indigenous peoples learn to channel adversity into creative and artistic expression. In this regard, the 'crucible' as a metaphor for cultural renewal and regeneration provides opportunities for reinvention, learning and exploration. More specifically, Donna helps the reader to explore what happens when an artist engages with a 'crucible' experience by highlighting a number of examples that have not only shaped Aboriginal art, but has also challenged the Nation to confront its own past social injustices.

Applying social justice theory and practice, Alex Barnes, a non-Indigenous Pākehā researcher and graduate of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori total immersion schooling, critically examines the impact of non-Indigenous Māori researchers working in Indigenous Māori research contexts. In this article, Alex seeks to understand how his own Pākehā culture continues to create unequal power relations while at the same time acknowledging his own privilege working in this space – it is indeed, a tricky ethical space to navigate. The solution, he suggests, is not only about how non-Indigenous Māori collaborators make themselves accountable, it also requires analysing these experiences using a specific theoretical, practical and ethical discourse called Kaupapa Māori. Alex concludes that by affirming Māori identity, language, culture, and ways of knowing that is holistic, and balanced within both a contemporary and traditional framework, is key to ensuring Indigenous Māori cultural leadership theory and practice thrives.

Nola Turner-Jensen's (Wiradjuri First Nation Australian) article is based on a 6 year-long study that sets out to define and compare two quite distinct belief systems – an Instinctive Belief System (a colonial mindset) versus a Collective First Mindset (an Indigenous mindset). The study is appropriately named the CultuRecode Project, and is described as Indigenous cultural leadership in action to address the following research question: Does the current colonial focused education system of Australia, meet the needs of how oral-based cultures, including Aboriginal Peoples learn best? The key finding to emerge is that the current educational standards, rules and systems do not work for Aboriginal peoples who seek more a 'narrative learning style' grounded in Indigenous kinship ways of knowing.

Jo-Anne Rey's article explores what custodial Indigenous leadership looks like in a city context, and does it have a place in today's educational institutions. In particular, Jo-Anne's study seeks answers to those questions by interviewing seven Indigenous Dharug women living in Sydney, Australia. Jo-Anne argues that when 'Country becomes a city', we must acknowledge and afford respect to those who are Indigenous to this place, and who as Indigenous peoples are engaged in upholding their custodial responsibilities to those now residing in this case, Sydney, NSW. In this regard, acknowledging the Goanna's (Australia English word four our monitor lizard) connection in being able to weave and understand the strength of place, identity and sense of belonging offers a form of relational and intercultural leadership that opens the door to a greater appreciation of Indigeneity, and in particular for Indigenous peoples now living in the city.

The article by Janice Victor, Warren Linds, Linda Goulet, Lacey Eninew, and Keith Goulet discusses an art-based program carried out in a Neehithuw (Woodland Cree) high school in northern Saskatchewan. The culturally-grounded and collaborative research project sort to enact Neehithuw (Woodland Cree) concepts and values that included an arts-based (historical based photos, poem, and performance) approach to achieve decolonisation and cultural affirmation. Underpinned by an Indigenous reciprocal leadership strategy, the inclusion of Indigenous language, culture and ways of knowing were a key strategy in the success of the project.

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank all the contributors for their hard work, commitment and dedication to this special issue on Indigenous cultural leadership – greatly appreciated. Each contribution not only highlights the long list of on-going struggles, tensions, issues and controversies associated with the changing educational landscapes Indigenous peoples face today, but also how incredibly determined Indigenous peoples are to upholding the ancestors' legacy of ensuring our ways of knowing, doing and learning will never be lost. Ngā mihi nunui kia koutou katoa!

Ehara tōku toa i te toa takitahi engari he toa takitini tōku toa
My strength is not due to me alone, but due to the strength of many

Paul Whitinui
Editor

The Crucible and Australian Aboriginal Art as an Expression of Cultural Leadership

Donna Leslie

Abstract

This essay explores the concept of the 'crucible' in the work of Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas and applies it to Australian Aboriginal art as an expression of cultural leadership. The exploration of creativity as transformational human activity is complementary to expressions of leadership in the arts relating to the crucible. In this essay, the work of a select group of Aboriginal artists is interpreted through the lens of the crucible. The format of this visual art essay privileges the interpretation of works of art as a primary source.

Keywords: Crucible, Aboriginal art, cultural leadership, creativity, transformation, visual arts

Introduction

This essay is a creative interpretation of cultural leadership in Australian Aboriginal art, which is inspired by creativity as a transformational human activity. As an Aboriginal art historian, belonging to the Gamilaroi people of northern New South Wales, Australia, my focus upon visual art privileges the interpretation of works of art as a primary source. I have long been interested in the lives of Aboriginal artists and the meanings and interpretation of the works of art they create. Australian Aboriginal art is a beautiful living cultural heritage which calls out to be understood and celebrated.

An area which has been neglected in art historical writings is the interpretation of Aboriginal art in regards to leadership. Since art history is a discipline which often draws upon a diverse range of interdisciplinary sources, especially in regards to the interpretation of Aboriginal works of art, the work of the leadership theorists Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas has inspired me to consider leadership in the arts through a different lens. I first came across their published writings in a course I undertook in Indigenous research and leadership at the University of Melbourne in 2014. The ideas presented in this essay are an outcome of my thinking about the concept of the 'crucible' presented by Bennis and Thomas, and the ways this concept may be applied to the interpretation of Aboriginal art. I have also long been interested in themes of Aboriginal cultural expression in relation to cross-cultural and intergenerational issues experienced by Aboriginal people in relation to the experience of colonisation. Interpreting Aboriginal art leadership through the metaphor and symbol of the 'crucible' appeals as a positive way to consider the challenges Aboriginal people face, and how these might be interpreted and understood through Aboriginal creative expression.

Crucibles of Leadership

In their article, 'Crucibles of Leadership' (2002), Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas explore the idea that the way people respond to adversity can provide insights into the ways they approach leadership.[1] Bennis and Thomas argue that extraordinary leaders transform experiences of meaning in their lives. They cite, for example, a problem encountered at a factory when the workers challenged management in response to a misguided decision that took away a late-night coffee break. A buzzer which 'announced the workers' break had become faulty, and when the management of the factory 'arbitrarily decided to postpone the workers' break for ten minutes when another buzzer was scheduled to sound', the workers, who needed their break at the original scheduled time, walked off the factory floor to have their break as usual, in defiance of the new directive. When a visiting executive was called to address the growing crisis that followed between the workers and the factory management, the executive decided that rather than take an authoritative or punitive approach towards the employees, he would instead refurbish everything. His refurbishment strategies included a decision to convert the factory into an environment where its employees had more 'responsibility for running their workplace'. Increased freedom and control at work was supported by other positive opportunities for the workers. These actions transformed the factory into a more productive experience for all.[2] The executive thus responded creatively to a workplace crisis which might otherwise have continued to escalate and worsen. The significance of this experience for the executive was something Bennis and Thomas identified as having been not unlike that experienced by other 'top leaders in business', who had dealt with their own leadership challenges similarly. They had tackled problems they had encountered as crucibles of leadership, creatively transforming issues that many people might have considered negative, into positive outcomes.[3] Distinctive leadership abilities develop, Bennis and Thomas concluded, when leaders have been confronted by 'a trial and a test' that 'forced them to question who they were and what mattered to them'.[4] Clearly, leadership practices are important because they affect others, but they also reflect the values and perspectives of the leader.

The concept of the 'crucible' falls into a broad spectrum of human experience, and Bennis and Thomas cite a number of examples. 'Crucibles' can also be identified as extreme human experiences. Bennis and Thomas describe, for example, the experience of an American journalist, Sidney Rittenberg (1921-), who was unjustly imprisoned in Communist China in 1949 because he was wrongly identified as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent. In solitary confinement and a small dark prison cell for six long years, Rittenberg discovered a strategy for survival in his

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[1] W. G. Bennis and R. J. Thomas. (2002). 'Crucibles of Leadership'. *Harvard Business Review* (September), 60-68; See also: W. G. Bennis and R. J. Thomas. (2007). *Leading for a Lifetime: How defining moments shape the leaders of today and tomorrow*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press; R. J. Thomas. (2008). *Crucibles of Leadership: How to learn from experience to become a great leader*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business Press.
[2] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 63.
[3] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 63.
[4] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 63.

remembrance of a small epigram by the American poet, Edwin Markham (1852-1940), titled 'Outwitted':

> He drew a circle that shut me out--
> Heretic, a rebel, a thing to flout.
> But Love and I had the wit to win:
> We drew a circle that took him in![5]

The verse, which had been recited to Rittenberg as a child, conveyed the message that although his imprisonment had shut him out of the circle of life, he could creatively transform the crisis of the experience by drawing his own symbolic circle into which he could invite others. He subsequently befriended his prison guards, persuading them to bring him books and a candle so that he could read. Six years in a dark prison cell was finally interrupted by his release when the Chinese authorities realised that he had been unjustly imprisoned.[6] Later however, Rittenberg was detained once more and sentenced to ten years imprisonment for supporting democracy during the Cultural Revolution in China. Again, he used the experience to study, write, and think. Although he was 'severely tested', he 'emerged from his second period of imprisonment certain that absolutely nothing in his professional life could break him'. Remarkably, he established a consulting firm 'dedicated to developing business ties between the United States and China'.[7]

Certainly, 'crucibles' range from relatively benign situations to extreme examples such as this, that test the very core, spirit and humanity of an individual. Bennis and Thomas have explored the 'crucible' in leadership in a range of published writings.[8]

Defining the 'crucible'

'Crucibles' may be negative or positive, but they are nevertheless characterised by their transformative nature. Three definitions for the word 'crucible' include:

1. 'a vessel of a very refractory material (such as porcelain) used for melting and calcining a substance that requires a high degree of heat';
2. 'a severe test'; and

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[5] The other pages (website). 'Poems'. http://www.theotherpages.org/poems/mark01.html (accessed 22 May 2019); Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 65.

[6] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 66.

[7] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 67.

[8] For example: R. J. Thomas and W. Bennis. (2002). 'Leadership crucibles', Executive Excellence, Vol. 19, Iss. 11, (November), 3-4; W. Bennis. (2006). 'Authentic Leaders', Leadership Excellence, *Aurora*, Vol. 23, Iss. 8, (August), 3-4; W. Bennis and R. J. Thomas. (2006). 'Crucibles: They make leaders', Leadership Excellence, *Aurora*, Vol. 23, Iss. 7, (July), 15; Thomas. (2008). *Crucibles of Leadership: How to Learn from Experience to Become a Great Leader*; R. J. Thomas. (2008). 'Life's Hard Lessons: Recognizing and discussing defining moments in both your professional life and personal life makes you a better leader', *HR Magazine*, (June), 143-146; W. Bennis. (2009). 'Crucible Generation', Leadership Excellence; *Aurora*, Vol. 26, Iss. 5, (May), 8.

3. 'a place or situation in which concentrated forces interact to cause or influence change or development'.[9]

The first definition is especially symbolic of its application to 'crucible' leadership, because when you heat metal at high temperatures and for long enough, it returns to a liquid state and is radically transformed. This image of a 'crucible' provides a powerful visual metaphor and reminder that something which can appear solid, static and fixed, can potentially contain properties of change and transformation.[10] Bennis and Thomas explain that 'crucibles' also change the individual. Since they are often borne of problematic or traumatic experiences, they test the individual and stimulate deep thinking and self-reflection which provides opportunities to examine values, assumptions and judgements. 'Crucibles' can occur, they advise, as a result of serious life experiences such as life-threatening illness or violence in discrimination.[11] It is this latter observation that was the initial inspiration for this essay with reference to the 'crucible' and Aboriginal leadership in the arts in Australia.

If I were to seek my own metaphor to imagine the 'crucible' for Aboriginal people, I would visualise an Aboriginal coolamon as a cultural container or carrying vessel symbolically filled with the fire of inspiration, creativity and Aboriginal histories waiting to be transformed by the artist through the creative power of art. Coolamons were used traditionally to carry babies and other items. They are a wooden cultural item carved from a tree. The tree may in turn be interpreted in regards to Aboriginal ancestry and the life journey.

Transformative Creativity

The application of Bennis and Thomas's findings to the artistic sphere reveals interesting dimensions, for if an individual can experience transformative events in such a way so as to positively influence their ability to provide leadership, then an individual artist who experiences a 'crucible' can do the same and use this experience to channel it into their artistic expression. Since art has played a powerful role in human histories and across cultures, the commonly held interpretation of art as a journey for the artist could be extended to the interpretation of 'crucibles' as milestones on the creative life journey.

For the Aboriginal artist, however, the life journey inevitably involves encounters with challenging contemporary realities and engagement with traumatic histories relating to racism and colonisation. This is evident in the creative work of many Aboriginal artists today. Five artists have been selected for the purposes of this essay whose work may be interpreted in regards to crucible leadership: Rover Thomas (1926-1998), Lin Onus (1948-1996), Trevor Nickolls (1949-

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[9] Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2019). 'Crucible'. (definition). https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/crucible#learn-more (accessed 20 May 2019).
[10] The history and etymology of the word 'crucible' comes from Medieval Latin. A 'Crucibulum' is an 'earthen pot for melting metals'. Merriam-Webster Dictionary. 'Crucible'. (definition).
[11] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 61.

2012), Julie Dowling, (1969-), and Dale Harding (1982-). Their creative contributions will be referred to later.

Interestingly, 'crucibles' provide opportunities for reinvention, learning and exploration. They enable what Bennis and Thomas refer to as a kind of 'neoteny', a quality found in juvenile characteristics that reflects delight in curiosity and learning.[12] A characteristic of individuals who respond to such life experience, however, may not necessarily be about a delight in discovery, especially with consideration to 'crucibles' that are related to painful or challenging narratives. Importantly however, 'crucible' experiences can impact the way an individual conceptualises and tells the story of the particular life event they experienced, how they dealt with what occurred, and how they were influenced by it. Individuals who respond to adversity with resilience, perseverance, strength and wisdom, make powerful leaders who allow adversity and significant life events to change them so that they emerge from such experiences feeling stronger and more confident.[13]

In the light of such considerations, what happens when an artist engages with a 'crucible' experience? While Bennis and Thomas do not explore the experience of the creative, they suggest that leadership skills born from adversity include engagement with others in 'shared meaning', the development of a 'distinctive, compelling voice', 'integrity', and 'adaptive capacity'. They argue that the latter is of particular importance because it is a kind of 'applied creativity' that is an opportunity for growth through reinvention.[14]

Arguably, all of these leadership skills are shared by many artists, because artists routinely explore meaning in their creative work. They also seek to develop a distinctive artistic voice through the application of their creativity to all manner of questions, learning and life experiences. They often seek to establish and to nurture their artistic skills with integrity and openness to adaptation, exploration and discovery. In this way, art can also be experienced as a catalyst for personal growth and investigation. Through creative journeying the artist can explore new pathways and discover previously unforeseen horizons connected to their own personal narratives. Art can indeed be experienced as profoundly transformational for the artist as an individual, or for artists who choose

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[12] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 66.
[13] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 63.
[14] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 68.

to work collaboratively. It can also be used as a healing tool.[15] In fact, the idea of creativity as transformational has been explored in a range of published writings.[16]

When the transformative power of art is considered within the contemporary Aboriginal art context, and its development over the past four decades of the Aboriginal art movement in particular, fascinating pathways emerge. Themes that have developed include emphases on cultural identity, belonging, and shared life experience. The relationship between art and life becomes particularly relevant, and narrative is an important vehicle of expression for Aboriginal people. A complex network of visual storytelling about experiences relating to identity, history, and heritage abound in the visual arts.

Counteracting what the Australian historian and anthropologist, William Stanner (1905-1981), called the 'great Australian silence',[17] contemporary Aboriginal artists often utilise art as a platform of communication to explore their own narratives which contain topics that were once largely ignored in Australian society. Historical neglect was evident to Stanner in 1938 when he recorded his early thoughts in regards to Aboriginal people. 'The process of extinction still goes on in the remoter parts of the outback, out of sight of the white urban populations, and out of mind', he wrote.[18] Three decades later, Stanner emphasised this perspective in regards to Australian history books, which had largely failed to include and acknowledge what had truly happened to Aboriginal people as a consequence of colonisation. In his Boyer lecture, 'The Great Australian

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[15] While the work of the artist, and the experiencing of art as a viewer is not the same, both roles can potentially be transformational. It is also worth noting that the transformative nature of creativity is commonly evidenced in art therapy programs. Art can be positively explored as a healing tool and this is a by-product of creative practice familiar to many artists. There is a broad field of literature on art as a form of therapy. See for example: D. Arrington, Banowsky. (c. 2001). *Home is where the art is: an art therapy approach to family therapy*. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas; C. Case and T. Dalley. (Eds.). (1990). *Working with children in art therapy*. London: Tavistock; A. De Botton, A. (2013). *Art as therapy*. London: Phaidon Press Limited; D. E. Gussak and M. L. Rosal. (Eds.) (2016). *The Wiley Blackwell handbook of art therapy*. Chichester, UK.; Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2016; S. Hogan. (Ed.) (1997). *Feminist approaches to art therapy*. London; New York: Routledge; M. Frings Keyes. (c. 1983). *Inward journey: art as therapy*. La Salle, Ill.: Open Court; H. B. Landgarten. (c. 1981). *Clinical art therapy: a comprehensive guide*. New York: Brunner/Mazel; E. G. Levine and S. K. Levine. (Eds.) (2011). *Art in action: expressive arts therapy and social change*. London; Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (electronic resource); B. L. Moon. (c. 2003). *Essentials of art therapy education and practice*. Springfield, Ill.: C.C. Thomas; J. A. Rubin. (Ed.) (c. 1987). *Approaches to art therapy: theory and technique*. New York: Brunner/Mazel; L. Silverstone. (2009). *Art therapy exercises: inspirational and practical ideas to stimulate the imagination*. London; Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (electronic resource).

[16] See for example: M. L. Grahm. (1969). 'Aesthetics and Cultural Transformation', *The Journal of Education*, Vol. 152, No. 2, Aesthetics in Education (December), 89-98; T. Hart. (2009). 'Chapter 7: The Process and Paradox of Transformation'. Counterpoints, Vol. 162, *From Information to Transformation: Education for the Evolution of Consciousness*, revised edition, 157-177. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/42977401; E. Mellou. (1994). 'Creativity: The transformation condition', *Early Child Development and Care*, 101:1, 81-88. doi: 10.1080/0300443941010108; M. Schwebel. (1993). 'Moral creativity as artistic transformation', *Creativity Research Journal*, 6:1-2, 65-81. doi: 10.1080/10400419309534466.

[17] W. E. H. Stanner. (1969). 'The Great Australian Silence', in *The 1968 Boyer Lectures: After the Dreaming*. Sydney: The Australian Broadcasting Commission, 18-29.

[18] W. E. H. Stanner. (1979). *White Man Got No Dreaming: Essays 1938-1973*. Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1; Stanner. (1969). 'The Great Australian Silence', 18-29.

Silence', (1968), Stanner referred to the exclusion of Aboriginal people in Australian historiography, identifying what he called a 'collective cultural amnesia' about Aboriginal Australia. He surveyed books published between 1939 and 1962, that indicated a complete lack of attention to Aboriginal people. While his list was a 'partial survey' Stanner's research made it clear that the level of 'inattention on such a scale' could not 'possibly be explained by absent-mindedness'. What he called 'a cult of forgetfulness' had been 'practised on a national scale'. He predicted that this so-called 'forgetfulness' would be addressed by later generations of historians. If a 'comfortable nostalgia for a vanished past',[19] needed to be shaken up however, not only historians, but artists would be seen to address this most powerfully in the next generation and in later generations to follow. Indeed, many Aboriginal artists from the 1980s to the present day have become creative leaders in their own right. They speak out publicly about previously neglected realities in relation to Aboriginal people via the language of art. Art has provided them with a safe, public platform that has the power to reach people. Contemporary visual art has the potential to communicate to art audiences, giving them new ways to understand and to relate to Aboriginal people and their narratives.

Crucibles of Leadership in Aboriginal Art

'Crucibles' of leadership in Aboriginal art are most evident in works of art that communicate powerful life experiences. Sometimes these experiences may be collectively inherited by a community. This is acknowledged in the research that has been undertaken on the effects of intergenerational trauma and Aboriginal people.[20] A 'crucible' experience does not always point to one significant life event or a series of life events. For Aboriginal people who routinely face challenges relating to racism, justice and human rights, the entire life journey can be interpreted as a 'crucible'. The ways that the 'crucible' is engaged with by the creative artist is evident in a broad range of Aboriginal art today. The artist has become, not simply a leader in the conventional sense, but one who leads by using the creative platform to create awareness more broadly. Ultimately, awareness may also be potentially transformative for others.

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[19] Stanner. 'The Great Australian Silence', 22-25, 27.

[20] Healing Foundation. (2014). Muru Marri - A Resource for Collective Healing for Members of the Stolen Generations: Planning, implementing and evaluating effective local responses. Prepared for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation by Muru Marri – I. Blignault, L. Jackson Pulver, S. Fitzpatrick, R. Arkles, M. Williams, M. Haswell, and M. Grand Ortega. (Nov.). https://healingfoundation.org.au/app/uploads/2017/02/Muru-Marri-SCREEN-singles-sml.pdf (accessed 30 May 2019); P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy, and R. Walker. (Eds.) (2014). Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice. Barton ACT.: Commonwealth of Australia. https://www.telethonkids.org.au/globalassets/media/documents/aboriginal-health/working-together-second-edition/working-together-aboriginal-and-wellbeing-2014.pdf (accessed 30 May 2019); See: J. Atkinson, J. Nelson, R. Brooks, C. Atkinson, and K. Ryan. (2014). 'Chapter 17: Addressing Individual and Community Transgenerational Trauma', in P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy, and R. Walker. (Eds.). Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice. Barton ACT.: Commonwealth of Australia, 289-303. https://www.telethonkids.org.au/globalassets/media/documents/aboriginal-health/working-together-second-edition/working-together-aboriginal-and-wellbeing-2014.pdf (accessed 30 May 2019).

Individuals who have experienced powerful 'crucibles' often share characteristics of resilience, perseverance and strength, and these characteristics abound in Aboriginal communities. Good leaders deal with what occurs creatively. They might respond to adversity, for example, with all of these characteristics. They might counter adversity with wisdom and humour. They allow significant 'crucibles' to change them, but rather than remaining negatively challenged by powerful experiences that might make some individuals feel that they are broken, creative artists have the potential to emerge from engagement with a crucible feeling stronger and more confident. They have the potential to become transformative leaders through the medium of art because they find a way of drawing from their experience to be of assistance to others. In the artistic realm, this assistance often comes in the form of educational journeying through engagement with art, counteracting the legacy of the great Australian silence.

When an artist experiences a powerful 'crucible', he or she knows that art is a medium of creative expression that can be drawn upon to communicate to others. Leadership skills relating to adversity include engagement with others in 'shared meaning', and this is something to which many artists can relate. Artists often seek to develop a 'distinctive, compelling voice' through their art, which is a characteristic Bennis and Thomas have also identified in regards to leadership and the 'crucible' experience, but it is also pertinent to artistic expression in the visual arts.[21] The characteristics of 'integrity' and 'adaptive capacity' are relevant to leaders who have experienced crucible events, too. Bennis and Thomas argue that adaptive capacity is of particular importance because it involves a kind of 'applied creativity', which can be an opportunity for growth through reinvention. Such 'applied creativity' relates directly to the experience of the artist who transforms experience through the medium of art in order to create something new.[22] Artists often, almost routinely, explore new ideas, and they directly or inadvertently stimulate opportunities for growth in themselves and in others. They utilise invention and reinvention to create new ways of seeing and understanding.

For the purposes of this essay, and to illustrate how the 'crucible' may be applied to leadership in the arts, I have selected a group of artists whose work has made, and continues to make, a powerful impact upon art audiences. Lin Onus, Julie Dowling, Rover Thomas, Trevor Nickolls, and Dale Harding, have been chosen as examples of 'crucible' leadership because they share a keen interest in addressing matters of historical importance to Aboriginal people and communicating these through skillful and insightful artistic expression. Each in their own individual cultural and creative ways, contribute a unique visual language of their own that offers the viewer a deeper understanding of Aboriginal histories and contemporary realities for Aboriginal people.

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[21] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 68.
[22] Bennis and Thomas. 'Crucibles of Leadership', 68.

Lin Onus (1948-1996)

Lin Onus, a Yorta Yorta artist who sought during his lifetime to give art audiences opportunities to better understand Aboriginal histories and justice issues through artistic expression created, for example, what has been described as the 'first history paintings by an Aboriginal artist'.[23] In a series of narrative works of art that explore the life of the nineteenth century Aboriginal freedom fighter Musquito (c.1780-1825),[24] Onus also addressed the need to acknowledge Aboriginal perspectives and histories. He explained:

Some people write their history, I can't write so I paint instead. Whilst painting Musqito I became sure of the fact that for the first time I was painting for my people, not for the money, not for the influential "Gubbah" (white man) but for my community.25

Although he was not initially inspired by a need to paint for the 'Gubbah', Onus nevertheless went on to develop a distinguished career as a painter who influenced non-Aboriginal art audiences he also engaged with. Addressing the inheritance of hidden histories of resistance, he was one of the first contemporary Aboriginal artists to consciously give voice to Aboriginal histories in a deliberate and personal way through painted expression.[26] Onus absorbed what the Aboriginal activist, Gary Foley, has described as, 'the emotions of the great political struggles' he had both witnessed and taken part in, drawing from them and working with them creatively.[27] Onus realised, for example, that the Australian education system had offered to Aboriginal people 'everyone's else's history and values'. Responding to this 'crucible' which had grown meaningful to him during his formative years, he embarked on a journey of his own to learn about and to understand Aboriginal histories, counteracting the dearth of opportunity his generation and generations of Aboriginal people before him had experienced at school.[28] A growing understanding of the reality

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[23] Aboriginal Education Unit. (1993). 'Aboriginal Images: White Australia has a Black History'. Sydney, NSW.: New South Wales Department of School Education, 13.

[24] Musquito is thought to have been an Eora man, born at Port Jackson, New South Wales. His resistance to colonial rule was met with fierce reprisal from the colonial government who ordered his arrest in 1805. Exiled to Norfolk Island as a prisoner for eight years, Musquito continued to live in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) where he was 'praised [for] his service as a tracker of bushrangers'. Later, his animosity towards the settlers led to further revolutionary activities in the early 1820s. Musquito's capture in 1824, led to his subsequent trial in Hobart Town (Hobart) for the 'murder of a stockkeeper'. He was hanged on 25 February 1825, even though the crime had not been clearly attributed to him. See: N. Parry. (2005). 'Musquito (1780-1825)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/musquito-13124/text23749. (accessed 29 May 2019).

[25] Statement by Lin Onus for 'Dalkuna Munaway Nhe Rom' exhibition, Melbourne, 1987, in Aboriginal Education Unit. (1993). 'Aboriginal Images: White Australia has a Black History', 13.

[26] See for example: H. Perkins and B. L. Croft. (1994). 'Truths, myths and little white lies', in Sydney, Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative, *True Colours: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists raise the flag*. Sydney: Institute of New International Visual Arts and Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative.

[27] G. Foley and B. McGuinness. (2000). 'Lin Onus: A personal/political memory' in Brisbane, Queensland Art Gallery. (2000). *Urban Dingo: The Art and Life of Lin Onus, 1948-1996*. (Ed.) Margo Neale. St. Leonards, NSW.: Craftsman House in association with G and B Arts International and the Queensland Art Gallery, 33.

[28] J. Isaacs. (1992). *Aboriginality: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings and Prints*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 26. This book was first published in 1989.

of an Australian school curriculum that had reflected non-Aboriginal values and histories, led Onus to explore Aboriginal historical figures, whom he claimed as his own cultural heroes.[29]

Aboriginal freedom fighters were people Onus could admire. They resonated for him personally and culturally, unlike the non-Aboriginal heroes of colonial invasion taught at school.[30] Foley stated that Onus's struggle for Aboriginal justice had 'pervaded his consciousness all his life', and that it had defined 'the nature of his being'.[31] The artist's 'crucible' was his lifelong engagement with, and struggle to come to know, Aboriginal histories and to communicate narratives of relevance through his art. In his final painting of the Musquito series titled, *Wanted, one rope thrower*, (1979-82),[32] Onus painted Musquito as if drowning in a symbolic sea of papers. The multi-layered meanings inherent in the image included an appeal to Aboriginal historians to write their own histories and to present their own perspectives.[33] The transformative power of Onus's Musquito narrative can be identified in the ways he interpreted this history and made it relevant to Aboriginal people in the contemporary context.[34]

Julie Dowling, (1969-)

For Julie Dowling, of the Badimaya people,[35] references to freedom fighters in her work, are revelatory of the artist's mastery as a creative leader who celebrates and commemorates Aboriginal history through the power of portraiture. In her moving *Self-portrait: in our country*, (2002),[36] Dowling references her heritage and matrilineal ancestors, depicting herself as the central figure in the composition. Her body, silhouetted against the earth becomes a window into the past, and an expression of connection to her ancestors and country, where the past becomes symbolically one with the present. The inspiration for the portrait originated from the need to express how she felt about 'returning' to her 'grandmother's country, which is located near a small town called

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[29] Isaacs. *Aboriginality*, 23.

[30] Foley. 'Lin Onus', 38, 42.

[31] Foley. 'Lin Onus', 33.

[32] Lin Onus, *Wanted, one rope thrower*, (1979-82), Musquito series, Aborigines Advancement League Collection, Melbourne. Synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 161 x 74.5 cm. Image Reference: D. Leslie. (2008). *Aboriginal Art: Creativity and Assimilation*. South Yarra, Vic.: Macmillan Art Publishing, 237.

[33] L. Onus. (c. 1982). 'Musqito', unpublished notes. Upwey, 3.

[34] The way that Musquito was responded to is evident in newspaper articles of the day. For example, *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* made reference to Musquito on a fairly regular basis. See; *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, (1804-1825). (references to Musquito). 23 December 1804, p. 3; 7 July 1805, p. 1; 12 January 1806, p. 1; 19 January 1806, p. 2; 16 March 1806, p. 2; 17 March 1825, p. 3; 22 April 1824, p. 2; 28 April 1825, p. 2; On 17 March 1825, a short announcement describing Musquito as a 'Sydney black', announced he had been executed for 'murder'. 17 March 1825, p. 3; Almost one year later on 16 March 1806, another mention of Musquito was made in regards to the 'long standing animosity of the natives' that followed his death. 16 March 1806, p. 2.

[35] National Portrait Gallery. (2018). 'Julie Dowling'. https://www.portrait.gov.au/people/julie-dowling-1969 (accessed 29 May 2019).

[36] Julie Dowling, *Self-portrait: in our country*, (2002), synthetic polymer paint, oil and red ochre on canvas, 120 x 100 cm. National Gallery of Australia, purchased 2002. Accession no: NGA 2002.377. Image Reference: National Gallery of Australia. 'Julie Dowling'. *Self-portrait: in our country*, (2002). https://cs.nga.gov.au/detail.cfm?irn=37840 (accessed 29 May 2019).

Yalgoo', located north-east of Geraldton in Western Australia. Dowling paints herself with her ancestors as if time has not separated them.[37] Like Onus, the 'crucible' in Dowling's artistic expression is identified in the way she engages with, and responds to, narratives of the past. Rather than paint images directly attesting to the historical suffering of Aboriginal people during the colonial era, however, Dowling's heroes and heroines are men and women portrayed with dignity and strength.

Walyer, (2006),[38] a large romantic portrait in the National Gallery of Australia collection, depicts, for example, the Aboriginal freedom fighter (c.1800-1831), also known as Tarenorerer of the Tommeginne people of Emu Bay, Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania). Walyer wears a traditional cloak, incised with cultural designs revealing of her heritage. Stephen Gilchrist, former curator at the National Gallery of Australia, writes that Walyer had been 'sold into slavery to Bass Strait sealers' as an adolescent. She later escaped and returned to her people where she fought alongside them with 'male and female warriors who attacked the establishing colonies and other Aboriginal groups with great success'. Gilchrist explains:

> By examining episodes in history that privilege an Aboriginal perspective, Dowling's portraits reveal what we as a nation choose to remember and what we force ourselves to forget.[39]

In her biography of Walyer, Vicki maikutena Matson-Green of the Palawa people, refers to Walyer as a heroic leader who organised attacks against Van Dieman's Land settlers in the late 1820s. Walyer had not only learned English during the time she was abducted, but she had also learned how to use firearms after observing their use by her captors. In 1830, her recapture by sealers later led to her apprehension by the colonial government authorities who responded to her as a formidable foe who should be annihilated. Blamed for atrocities against white settlers and for her organised revolutionary activities, Walyer died on 5 June 1831 after contracting influenza.[40] European introduced diseases such as this played a powerful role in causing the deaths of Aboriginal people in the colonial era. While Dowling is a leader in the depiction of heroes and heroines of Aboriginal history, she also chooses to paint individuals who convey leadership through their contribution to Aboriginal community and their achievements, today. Her portrait

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[37] National Gallery of Australia. 'Julie Dowling'.

[38] Julie Dowling, *Walyer*, (2006), synthetic polymer paint and natural earth pigments on canvas, 200 x 150 cm. National Gallery of Australia, purchased 2007. Accession no: NGA 2007.9. Image Reference: National Gallery of Australia. 'Julie Dowling'. *Walyer*, (2006). https://cs.nga.gov.au/detail.cfm?irn=144778 (accessed 30 May 2019).

[39] S. Gilchrist. National Gallery of Australia. (2010). https://cs.nga.gov.au/detail.cfm?irn=144778 (accessed 29 May 2019).

[40] V. maikutena Matson-Green. (2005). 'Tarenorerer (1800-1831)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/tarenorerer-13212/text23923 (accessed 29 May 2019).

Richard Walley, (2015),[41] featuring the distinguished Aboriginal activist Richard Walley, (1953-), a Nyoongar artist, writer and performer, honours a contemporary leader whose cultural and community achievements were acknowledged with a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 1993 'for service to the performing arts and to the promotion of the culture of the south western Aboriginals, the Nyoongahs', and a Doctor of Letters from Murdoch University in 2001.[42]

Rover Thomas (1926-1998)

For the Kukatja/Wangkajunga artist of the Kimberley, Rover Thomas, massacres in his community which occurred just prior to his birth were representative of a powerful intergenerational 'crucible' which he painted repeatedly. Thomas inherited the traumatic histories referred to as the 'killing times', because massacres had been occurring in the Kimberley until 1925, the year prior to his birth. He grew up with people who had first-hand memories of the atrocities. In his writings on the historical legacy of the Kimberley, Wally Caruana, former curator of Aboriginal art at the National Gallery of Australia, refers to 'the confrontations between white and black, often resulting in massacres' of Aboriginal people and the 'forced migrations of peoples' that were all part of the modern history of the Kimberley. Massacre was, Caruana writes, 'fresh in the minds of those of Thomas' generation' who had 'either lived though it or learned it from their forebears'.[43] In paintings such as *Ruby Plains killing 1*, (1990),[44] and *Ruby Plains killing 2*, (1990),[45] Thomas communicates the tragedy of the 'killing times' through his art. He made, for example, eight paintings comprising a series that referenced serious conflict in the eastern Kimberley in the early twentieth century.

Ruby Plains killing 1, is one of the eight paintings.[46] The power of Thomas's visual narrative seems all the more disturbing because of the simplicity of the image. The only content that suggests something is wrong is Thomas's minimalist reference to a figure on the left-hand side of the

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[41] Julie Dowling, *Richard Walley*, (2015), synthetic polymer paint and red ochre on canvas, 152.5 cm x 121.5 cm. National Portrait Gallery, Canberra. Accession number: 2015.64. Image Reference: National Portrait Gallery, Canberra. https://www.portrait.gov.au/portraits/2015.64/richard-walley (accessed 29 May 2019).

[42] National Portrait Gallery. (2015). 'Richard Walley OAM honoured in new Portrait Gallery commission'. (2 Sept.) https://www.portrait.gov.au/content/richard-walley-oam-honoured (accessed 29 May 2019); Australian Government, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Australian Honours. https://honours.pmc.gov.au/honours/awards/873640 (accessed 30 May 2019).

[43] National Gallery of Australia. (2000). 'World of Dreamings: Traditional and modern art of Australia'. (Rover Thomas). http://nga.gov.au/dreaming/Index.cfm?Refrnc=Ch5 (accessed 22 May 2019).

[44] Rover Thomas, *Ruby Plains killing 1*, (1990), from the massacre series, natural earth pigments on canvas, framed 92.4 x 202.2 x 5.5 (d) cm. National Gallery of Australia, purchased 1990. Accession no: NGA 90.1755. Image Reference: National Gallery of Australia. https://artsearch.nga.gov.au/detail.cfm?irn=147688 (accessed 30 May 2019).

[45] Rover Thomas, *Ruby Plains killing 2*, (1990), from the massacre series, natural gum and pigments on canvas, framed 92.8 x 112 x 55 (d) cm. National Gallery of Australia, purchased 1990. Accession no: NGA 90.1730. Image Reference: National Gallery of Australia. https://artsearch.nga.gov.au/detail.cfm?irn=148446 (accessed 30 May 2019).

[46] National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. (2009). Commentary. https://artsearch.nga.gov.au/detail.cfm?irn=147688 (accessed 29 May 2019).

composition, and yet the title indicates unerringly what the painting is about. Likewise, in *Ruby Plains killing 2*, from the same series, Thomas presents the viewer with what can be imagined as a topographical map of his ancestral country. Reference to a figure in the bottom left hand side of the composition again disturbs the apparent tranquility of visual reference to the land. This visual sign, and the title of the painting signals the hidden history of tragedy. The remarkable nature of works of art created by Thomas on the theme of massacre, is not only the reality of what occurred, but the recent reality of the experience for his community and the way that Thomas recorded this.

While cultural and contemporary narratives play a strong part in the art of Rover Thomas, so too does his traditional country. Visual references to actual locations in his paintings and the familiarity with which the artist paints his country, establishes the imagery as culturally and spiritually significant. It is imagery that is also intimately linked with oral histories and shared, communal recollection. Thomas was 'first and foremost a great painter' who made 'sophisticated, modernist' abstract works of art with 'universal appeal'.[47] A remarkable aspect of Thomas's painterly translation of these histories is the way he constructs his compositions. He uses imagery symbolising the land which would not usually be associated with images of massacre. The country itself becomes 'witness' to 'the atrocities, bearing marks of history', and the artist's leadership is inherent in his efforts to communicate this to the world through powerful visual narratives. Thomas conveyed the meaning of the narratives of massacre known in his community through what the late art critic, Nevill Drury, has referred to as the 'inherent spirituality of the landscape'.[48] The dissonance between the terror of massacre with the subtlety and beauty evident in Thomas's image-making only seem to reinforce his message all the more meaningfully. Drury explains:

> What is truly extraordinary is that a timeless, universal quality arises in these works which seems to transcend the tragedies themselves: it is also a great tribute to the descendants of the victims that they are able to recall these grim events without moral outrage or vengefulness towards present-day white Australians. These were tragedies in the past, they say; these were killings that happened "in them days".[49]

Thomas did not begin painting until he was in his mid-fifties. He had been a stockman who had worked on various cattle stations prior to becoming an artist. His rich cultural life experiences underpin works of art that drew upon 'cosmological and historical references' and presented audiences with a 'new and profound view of the land'.[50] He also presented, most meaningfully, a

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[47] National Gallery of Victoria. (2003). 'Rover Thomas: I Want To Paint'.
https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/rover-thomas/ (accessed 29 May 2019); Holmes à Court Gallery.
(2003). *Rover Thomas: I want to paint*. (exh. cat.), East Perth, WA.: Heytesbury Pty Ltd, Holmes à Court
Gallery.

[48] N. Drury. (1999). 'The Spiritual Perspective of Aboriginal Painter Rover Thomas'. Nevill Drury (website):
http://www.nevilldrury.com/nevill-drury-articles-rover-thomas.htm (accessed 22 May 2019).

[49] Drury. 'The Spiritual Perspective of Aboriginal Painter Rover Thomas'.

[50] K. Akerman. (2000). 'Rover Thomas', Tribute, *Artlink*, March. https://www.artlink.com.au/articles/1390/rover-thomas/ (accessed 29 May 2019).

'crucible' which was passed to him intergenerationally, which he transformed on the surface of the canvas into compositions of beauty that are imbued with strong feelings relating to histories of massacre that took place on the land of his ancestors.

Trevor Nickolls (1949-2012)

For the Ngarrindjeri artist, Trevor Nickolls, the 'crucible' evident in his work is his engagement with a society that symbolises a clash between Aboriginal and Western cultures. This was a theme that consumed him for decades. Nickolls was interested in what the Gamilaroi art historian, Donna Leslie, has described as images of coexistence and contrast. His painted metaphors referred to a challenging cross-cultural world.[51] They are revolutionary, innovative, and intensely personal.[52] Nickolls eschewed the need to meet with Western expectations of image-making, seeking and building a visual language that dealt with the cultural duality of life he experienced personally. His imagery was unfamiliar to art audiences because it explored the encounter between Aboriginal cultures and Western society. He wanted to find 'balance between the black and the white', but his efforts were a constant, enduring, personal struggle.[53] The incongruence between Aboriginal tradition and Western technology led also to his exploration of alienation and loss in a profoundly meaningful way.

In *Dreamtime machinetime*, (1979),[54] a painting now in the Art Gallery of South Australia collection, for example, Nickolls's dreamlike world is dominated by a looming skyscraper, depicted anthropomorphically with sharp teeth ready to swallow a giant dollar sign whole.

In *Machine Time Madonna*, (1981),[55] a painting also in the Art Gallery of South Australia collection, Nickolls captures the theme of duality once again, contrasting more obviously the theme of spirituality and peace with the deathlike, detachment of the machine age. Ulli Beier, in *Dream Time - Machine Time: The Art of Trevor Nickolls*, (1985), explains that Nickolls's narrative was essentially autobiographical because his art was a 'personal commitment' rather than a 'political statement',[56] and yet Nickolls's narrative seems also profoundly universal. The artist's

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[51] D. Leslie. (2008). *Aboriginal Art: Creativity and Assimilation*. South Yarra, Vic.: Macmillan Art Publishing, 105, 134.

[52] L. Onus. (1990). 'Language and Lasers', *The Land, The City: The Emergence of Urban Aboriginal Art*, Special Supplement, *Art Monthly Australia*, No. 3 (May), 15.

[53] L. Thompson. (compiler). (1990). Aboriginal Voices: Contemporary Aboriginal Artists, Writers and Performers. Brookvale: Simon and Schuster, 110.

[54] Trevor Nickolls, *Dreamtime machinetime*, (1979), synthetic polymer paint, metallic paint on canvas, 121 x 51.5 cm. Art Gallery of South Australia. Gift of the Bensimon Family 1996. Image Reference: Art Gallery of South Australia. https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/collection-publications/collection/works/dreamtime-machinetime/35848/ (accessed 30 May 2019).

[55] Trevor Nickolls, *Machine Time Madonna*, (1981), synthetic polymer and metallic paint on canvas, 59.5 x 50 cm. Art Gallery of South Australia. A. R. Ragless Bequest fund 1988. Image Reference: Art Gallery of South Australia. https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/collection-publications/collection/works/machine-time-madonna/23950/ (accessed 30 May 2019).

[56] U. Beier. (1985). *Dream Time - Machine Time: The Art of Trevor Nickolls*. Bathurst, NSW.: Robert Brown and associates, in association with the Aboriginal Artists Agency, Sydney, 28, 12, 14, 16.

leadership is inherent in the expression of a 'crucible' of experience to which many Aboriginal people can relate; the reality that the imposition of Western society is a world utterly different to Aboriginal heritage and the Aboriginal way of being.

Dale Harding (1982-)

Dale Harding, of the Bidjara, Ghungalu and Garingbal peoples, works with a range of influences that are also intergenerational and personal. In a powerful series of works of art exhibited in 2013, Harding referenced, for example, oral histories of his family and 'complex and often painful hidden histories of violence and discrimination' that had been 'enacted against Aboriginal communities'. In so doing, Harding's art signifies much broader narratives of colonialism and its scourge internationally.[57] In *bright eyed little dormitory girls*, (2013),[58] Harding made five hessian and wool items that symbolise domestic slavery experienced by his 'mother, grandmother and great-grandmother'. Historically, the use and abuse of Aboriginal girls and women was widespread in Australia, and often connected with the forced removal of children from their families. Harding's grandmother had been taken from her family and consigned to a mission dormitory. She was trained to undertake domestic duties and contracted to work for others at the tender age of thirteen years. When her employer attempted to abuse her, she defended herself with a 'mop and bucket'. Her punishment for resisting included having to 'wear a hessian dress', which was harsh and unforgiving against her skin. Harding's hessian garments symbolise his grandmother's experience. They feature 'stencilled numbers and letters printed on the coarse weave [to] signify the inhumane practice of calling inmates by an alphanumeric code, rather than their names'. Crowns embroidered by the artist on the left-hand-side of each garment are intended to identify the 'wearer as the property of the state'. Harding reports that his grandmother, who was identified not by her first name but as 'W38', was 'hospitalised because of the severity of the abrasions on her neck and arms caused by the hessian sack she was forced to wear'. He symbolically alleviated the punitive memory by embroidering soft, mohair designs around the neck of the garment.[59]

White Collared, (2013),[60] which was created the same year as *bright eyed little dormitory girls* extends Harding's theme of enforced Aboriginal enslavement, juxtaposing the feminine beauty of lace collars with threaded leather cords suggestive of a collar or item that cannot be easily removed. Harding's 'imagined artefacts of mission times' symbolise the control of government, state and

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[57] D. Harding. (undated). Artist Profile: https://www.mca.com.au/artists-works/artists/dale-harding/ (accessed 29 May 2019).

[58] Dale Harding, *bright eyed little dormitory girls*, (2013), hessian, mohair wool, 5 parts: bag 1: 30 x 22 x 3 cm; bag 2: 33 x 21 x 3 cm; bag 3: 31 x 22 x 3 cm; bag 4: 32 x 20 x 3 cm; bag 5: 34 x 21 x 3 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art, purchased with funds provided by the MCA Foundation, 2013. Accession number: 2013.61A-E. Image Reference: Museum of Contemporary Art. https://www.mca.com.au/artists-works/works/2013.61A-E/ (accessed 29 May 2019).

[59] D. Harding. (2014). (quoted by Lauren Barker). 'Dale Harding, artist'. The Weekend Edition, 13 March. https://theweekendedition.com.au/the-locals/dale-harding/ (accessed 31 May 2019).

[60] Dale Harding, *White Collared*, (2013), found collars, rawhide, thread and brass, 190 x 38 x 2 cm (dimensions variable). Image Reference: Institute of Modern Art. http://www.4a.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/11.jpg (accessed 30 May 2019).

church authorities over Aboriginal lives.[61] Through his use of carefully selected found objects as symbols of servitude, the artist transforms each lace collar into headdress like imagery, when he turns the collars upside-down and has them displayed that way. They also echo the spiritual symbol of a halo.[62]

Conclusion

Bennis and Thomas teach us that extraordinary leaders utilise 'crucible' experiences in their lives to create transformational change. Since 'crucibles' can change the individual and are often borne out of traumatic experiences, they can stimulate deep thinking and self-reflection that provides opportunities to learn about life and relationships. 'Crucibles' challenge the individual to examine his or her own values, assumptions and judgements, but when an artist channels the experience of a 'crucible' into his or her creative work, they can challenge the audience, too. All of the Aboriginal artists mentioned in this essay do this in implicit and explicit ways. Art can be powerfully effective in communicating human experience. It can potentially transform the hearts and minds of the audience. Art can be a vehicle to communicate personal 'crucibles' that reach people emotionally. For example, it can act as a source of reflection about Aboriginal Reconciliation and its meaning. It can assist in guiding the interpretation of Aboriginal histories, and it can potentially generate increased understanding.

The Yorta Yorta artist, Lin Onus, conveys the importance of Aboriginal histories for Aboriginal people, and in a different way, for the non-Aboriginal audience. He aims to present Aboriginal histories and to seek their acknowledgment in a world which had largely neglected Aboriginal people. He identifies his own cultural heroes, counteracting the information he had been taught at school.

Julie Dowling, of the Badimaya people, explores historical and contemporary freedom fighters in her work through the power of the portrait. Seeing herself as indivisible from, and intimately connected to, her ancestry, Dowling references her matrilineal line, and identifies with narratives of history that acknowledge the strength and dignity of Aboriginal people. These become a powerful 'crucible' of humanity depicted on the surface of the canvas that art audiences can access and relate to.

The Kukatja/Wangkajunga artist of the Kimberley, Rover Thomas, painted massacre histories, which are a meaningful intergenerational 'crucible'. They convey an inherited narrative and its ongoing effects on his community. His paintings on this theme remind the audience of the contemporaneous reality of conflict in his traditional country. Thomas records this with visual

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[61] Institute of Modern Art (website). (2015). 'Dale Harding: White Collared'. https://ima.org.au/exhibitions/dale-harding-white-collared/ (accessed 29 May 2019).

[62] M. King. (19 Sept. 2015). Institute of Modern Art, related podcast (with reference to 'Dale Harding: White Collared', 8 Aug. to 19 Sept. 2015. https://ima.org.au/exhibitions/dale-harding-white-collared/ (accessed 30 May 2019).

beauty that establishes him as a sophisticated painter immersed in country who records such narratives in his own inimitable way.

For the Ngarrindjeri artist, Trevor Nickolls, the 'crucible' is his personal struggle with a non-Aboriginal society which has been imposed upon Aboriginal people. Nickolls paints cultural dualities that are an enduring struggle, conveying to art audiences in the process, a broader Aboriginal struggle that is a legacy of colonialism.

Dale Harding, of the Bidjara, Ghungalu and Garingbal peoples, reminds his audiences that his own family histories are intergenerational and personal. They contain painful hidden histories and yet he symbolically transforms these histories with sensitivity and compassion. Harding's work also points to broader meanings relating to racism and the historical control of Aboriginal people by the invading peoples. His 'crucible' is the personal nature of the narrative that is intimately connected to family.

'Crucible' experiences such as these are more likely to belong to a continuum of experiences in the life of an Aboriginal person. Repeated experiences of discrimination may be interpreted as a 'crucible' that Aboriginal leaders can draw from to teach others about justice and human rights. Ongoing hardship and persecution might, for example, represent a prolonged 'crucible', which can also indicate resilience and strength, something which Bennis and Thomas have identified as characteristic of leadership. 'Crucibles' can provide opportunities to learn and to gain valuable insights about life. While they may not be welcome experiences, the insights they bring can ironically inform the ways an individual approaches leadership. Bennis and Thomas argue that extraordinary leaders have a tendency to transform experiences that are meaningful in their lives. Interestingly, it does not matter whether these experiences are negative or positive, but generally they relate to a life experience, or an exposure to suffering that can be transformative. All of the artists mentioned in this essay manage, whether intentionally or not, to utilise art as a platform that is ultimately transformational.

The key to such transformation in the life of the artist as leader lies in the way a 'crucible' experience is creatively interpreted by the artist and audience. Paintings by Rover Thomas, for example, have the potential to transform the viewer to consider the sanctity of Aboriginal lives. Thomas's voice is all the more compelling because of the Kimberley painting style he utilises. He demonstrates adaptive capacity that challenges the audience to understand the human experience more deeply. Leaders in the visual arts like Thomas demonstrate that they are leaders because of the particular way in which they have communicated the 'crucible' they have experienced. When an individual artist responds to adversity with resilience, perseverance, strength and wisdom, he or she communicates powerful leadership. Leaders can skilfully use their experience to engage with others in shared meaning, and when they are able to effectively engage others in the narrative of their experience, they can inspire others. The development of a distinctive and compelling voice

is particularly powerful when it is spoken through the integrity of lived experience. All of the artists mentioned do this with great meaning and depth, indicative of their leadership in the arts.

It is my hope that educators might consider the interpretation of Aboriginal art through the lens of the 'crucible' as a meaningful metaphor that encapsulates the Aboriginal experience informed by shared histories and contemporary cultural and intergenerational realities. I hope that this work supports a growing, deeper understanding of Aboriginal art and the ways that diverse Aboriginal visual languages of creativity offer new insights into Aboriginal leadership in the arts for study and reflection.

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Social Justice Theory and Practice: Pākehā, Kaupapa Māori and Educational Leadership

Alex Barnes

Abstract

This article explores the intersection of leadership theory and practice using the experience of two Māori leaders working in Kaupapa Māori education. An objective of the article is to enable these Māori educationalists to share their experiences of Māori leadership theory and practice. This research aims to add current insights into the theorising and practice of social justice and leadership within Kaupapa Māori education. Within a Kaupapa Māori research framework, I critically examine the involvement of dominant culture (Pākehā) researchers in Kaupapa Māori contexts; Kaupapa Māori education; and Māori leadership theory. Kaupapa Māori and qualitative research methodologies were the selected analytical frameworks for this study. This is because analysing the experiences of Kaupapa Māori educational leaders should be undertaken within a related theoretical and practical discourse.

Keywords: Kaupapa Māori, Māori leadership, theory and practice, education, social justice

Introduction

As a Pākehā graduate of Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives (both Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa), and a former participant of a Māori adult tertiary education programme (through Whare Wānanga), I have experienced Māori educational leadership for twenty years. These educational environments have given me a unique intermediate cultural position, which has extended my understandings and analysis culturally, politically and socially. Consequently, I am an active advocate of Kaupapa Māori initiatives, particularly within the education and research fields. The research discussed in this article explores leadership theory and practice of two Māori leaders working in Kaupapa Māori educational contexts. I conducted this research through a Kaupapa Māori and qualitative research lens, two methodologies within a social justice agenda (Bishop, 1996, 1998; Smith. L.T., 1999). Prior to meeting with the research participants, I reviewed much of the literature concerning traditional and contemporary Māori leadership, and that available on the broad discourses of Kaupapa Māori research and education. I also interrogated the role and theoretical position of researchers from the dominant culture (such as myself) conducting research within a Kaupapa Māori research discourse.

Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives have largely been a result of a broader Māori cultural, political and social revitalisation movement (Benseman, 1992; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; McCarthy, 1996; Mead, 1996; Smith. G. H. 1991; Smith. L.T., 1999; Walker, 1991). They have intervened in Māori peoples' lives, and actively resisted and challenged the dominant colonial and neo-colonial narrative of Aotearoa-New Zealand (Bevan-Brown, 1998; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Mead, 1996; Smith. G. H. 1992, 1999; Smith. L.T., 1999; Walker, 1993). As a Pākehā male undertaking research within a Kaupapa Māori framework, I challenge the practice of many researchers from the dominant culture. My involvement in this discourse is an attempt to honour the Treaty of Waitangi/Tiriti o Waitangi. As a Pākehā involved in research based within an alternative epistemology, I embrace my responsibilities to tangata whenua (indigenous people, people of the land) within a Treaty/Tiriti research framework (Bishop, 1996; Consedine, 2001; Herzog, 1996; Smith, L.T. 1999).

I believe I play a dual role as insider and outsider. I am an insider in that I have experienced Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives, and I continue to support and act within Kaupapa Māori discourses. My educational, social and cultural experiences are shaped by dominant euro-centric culture, and by the early and current evolution of Kaupapa Māori initiatives. I am an outsider as a Pākehā identified within dominant culture, while also developing my awareness of the privileges and cultural blindness that come with that. In addition, I am not in a position of administrative power within a Kaupapa Māori context.

Pākehā Working in Māori Contexts

Conducting research from within an alternative culture that actively privileges Māori/Iwi concepts and processes requires a shift in how I conduct myself as a researcher. As a Pākehā I participate within a political struggle that resists colonial and neo-colonial impositions and challenges unequal power relations. This position has less to do with guilt, avoidance or paralysis (Tolich, 2001), and more to do with what Giroux (1992) defines as cultural work; a practice that aims to use principles of equality, liberty and justice to organise a meaningful and respectful relationship between Pākehā and various Māori communities. The implications this has on research design and process is important, and is recognised by many Kaupapa Māori theorists and researchers (Bishop, 1996; Powick, 2002; Smith, G.H. 1990; Smith, L.T. 1992, 1999; Teariki, Spoonley & Tomoana, 1992; Te Awekotuku, 1991).

Simultaneous to the development of Kaupapa Māori research practice, are the changes in Pākehā cultural awareness (Spoonley, 1997; Spoonley & Fleras, 1999). Since the late 1970s, a growing number of Pākehā and non-Māori have been engaged in creating socially just and culturally sensitive theoretical and practical positions, nearly all of which are based within a Tiriti o Waitangi framework (Black, 1997; Consedine, 2001; Herzog, 1996; Jones, 1992; Margaret; 2002; Simpkin, 1994; Teariki et al, 1992). These critical cultural analyses inform a research approach that validates my position as Pākehā, while also offering strategies of working in a Kaupapa Māori context as a member of the dominant culture.

This position seeks its validity within a Te Tiriti o Waitangi analysis, where tangata whenua are acknowledged as having tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) over all things precious to them (culture, lands, forests, fisheries). This position also implies recognition of a partnership or bicultural relationship and an open-ness on behalf of the dominant culture as to what possibilities and limits tino rangatiratanga may have on the sharing of power (Spoonley, 1999). These elements become foundational building blocks of the research, and the research relationship is built upon principles of mutual respect, negotiation, collaboration, and accountability.

However, while principles of negotiation, collaboration, respect and doing no harm are important elements of qualitative research and a broader Kaupapa Māori research strategy. This does not exempt the researcher from other restrictions. This is especially important for a researcher or practitioner operating in a different cultural context from that which is most familiar to them. In my case, I had to consider many restrictions. How well could I communicate in Te Reo Māori (the Māori language) with the research participants? What role did Te Reo Māori play in the research, what were its possibilities and what were my limits? I had to examine my relationships with the participants prior to conducting the research, during the research process, and after the research had been completed. How do I fit into existing relationships, not only with individual participants but also with their whole whānau? My accountabilities were broad, and I had to act within these with care. Such issues needed consideration prior, during and after the research.

As a person of the dominant culture operating in an alternative cultural world- view, the benefits of critically analysing my position is challenging but ultimately invaluable: trust is enhanced between myself and the participants; relationships are formed that exist beyond individuals and extend to our wider families and friends; the participants become a reference point for me within Te Ao Māori (the Māori world); and the multiple values of Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) are theorised and practiced, which adds and extends their inherent value. Collaboration of this type represents a willingness on behalf of each culture to work together within boundaries that keep the integrity of all parties intact.

Kaupapa Māori Discourse

Kaupapa Māori challenges the dominance of traditional, individualistic research which primarily, at least in its present form, benefits the researcher and their kaupapa. In contrast, Kaupapa Māori research is collectivistic and is oriented toward benefiting all research participants and their collectively determined agendas - defining and acknowledging Māori aspirations for research, whilst developing and implementing Māori theoretical and methodological preferences and practices for research. (Bishop, 1996, p.19)

A Kaupapa Māori framework is not restricted to one particular discipline or area of enquiry; rather it encompasses a world-view that is theorised and practiced in a wide variety of settings (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Cram, 2001; Powick, 2002; Smith, L.T. 1999). Education, health, justice, research

and biographies are all but a small representation of Kaupapa Māori theory and practice. However, of particular significance here is its application as a research methodology.

As an evolving field of enquiry, Kaupapa Māori research is constantly being shaped and impacted upon within its own field, and by exterior discourses nationally and internationally. While such shifts in the terrain occur, a variety of core Kaupapa Māori research characteristics have been identified by a number of researchers and practitioners (Bevan-Brown, 1998; Bishop, 1996; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Cram, 2001; Powick, 2002; Smith, G.H. 1990; Smith, L.T. 1999; Teariki et al, 1992). For example, Jill Bevan-Brown (1998) has identified the need for Kaupapa Māori research to be "conducted within a Māori cultural framework, it must stem from a Māori world view and be based on Māori epistemology and incorporate Māori concepts, knowledge, skills, experiences, attitudes, processes, practices, customs, reo, values and beliefs" (p. 231). Re-positioning the cosmology of a Māori world-view at the forefront of research, shifts and challenges the balance of the dominant western research discourse and practice: from a position that has primarily claimed to be objective, rational, and scientific, to a position that is critical, intersubjective and nestled within culturally preferred practices and preferences (Bishop, 1998; Cleave, 1997; Smith, 1990).

A Kaupapa Māori theoretical position assumes a critical role for Māori cultural, political and social realities. Such notions imply the need to survive and revive Māori culture and language, which transpire into research that promotes, utilises, retains, revitalises, creates and adds to an already existing Māori resource base. Underpinning these positions is the resistance to imposed colonial and neo-colonial structures, and a struggle for tino rangatiratanga, which promotes an intervention and active participation of Māori people within the design and implementation of research with various Māori communities, iwi, hapū and whānau (Smith. L.T. 1999).

These core characteristics provide a very general understanding of Kaupapa Māori research discourse. However, a Kaupapa Māori research framework is not restricted to the elements described here; important research considerations and debates continue to exist. For example, how do age and gender issues affect research practice? How would a young Māori man conduct research with a Kuia (elder Māori women) from a different tribal location? How extensive should non-Māori/Pākehā involvement be within the research, and what will the effects be? Also, Māori as a broad category is very diverse and subject to multiple realities such as rural and urban divisions, differences in tribal dialects and protocols, and divergent political and organisational representations. As such, Kaupapa Māori research does not simply provide an easy categorical shift away from western derived research methodologies and practices. Rather, important and competing theoretical and practical considerations must also be acknowledged within the methodology as it evolves.

Kaupapa Māori Education

Kaupapa Māori educational theorist Graham Hingangaroa Smith (1999, p. 38) maintains that a Kaupapa Māori approach to education encompasses the following elements:

- *Self-determination* (the ability to have increased control and autonomy over the meaningful education decisions which impact on one's life)
- *Cultural aspirations* (the emotional need for Māori language, knowledge and culture as a basis for one's cultural identity)
- *Culturally preferred pedagogy* (learning and teaching which is couched in and positively reinforces the values, behaviours, customs and cultural capital of the Māori home)
- *Mediation of socio-economic impediments* (the mediation of the socio-economic impediments which impact in disproportionate levels on Māori)
- *Extended family social structures and practice* (the employment of Māori collective cultural practices built around extended family structures and responsibilities)
- *A collective vision* (a shared vision supported by all of the participants and that provides direction and impetus for the struggle)

These key theoretical foundations have been employed within a number of Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives including Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, Wharekura (Māori medium language secondary school), and Whare Wānanga (Māori tertiary institution) (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; McCarthy, 1996; Mead, 1997).

The public profile of Kōhanga Reo in particular has provided a powerful example of Kaupapa Māori philosophy and practices (Smith. G. H., 1992). Bishop & Glynn (1999) state that the success of Kōhanga Reo has laid the foundations for further initiatives in the primary and secondary schooling area, most notably Kura Kaupapa and Wharekura. Such initiatives continue the culturally preferred pedagogy established in Kōhanga Reo, while re-affirming the collective visions of the various whānau involved in the schools. Graham Hingangaroa Smith (1992) acknowledges the important role of the Māori educational charter Te Aho Matua in this process:

> Kura Kaupapa Māori have a collective vision which is written into a formal charter entitled 'Te Aho Matua'. This vision provides the guidelines for excellence in Māori; what a good Māori education should entail. It also acknowledges Pākehā culture and skills required by Māori children to participate fully and at every level in modern New Zealand society. 'Te Aho Matua' builds on the Kaupapa of Kohanga Reo, and provides the parameters for the uniqueness that is Kura Kaupapa Māori. Its power is in its ability to articulate and connect with Māori aspirations, politically, socially, economically and culturally. (p. 23)

Whare Wānanga share many of the qualities and culturally specific pedagogy that pre and post-primary Kaupapa Māori schools advocate. Jonathan Benseman (1992) states that prior to European contact, Whare Wānanga were a specialised site for the conservation and transmission of existing iwi and hapū knowledge (pp. 5-6). Today the term Whare Wānanga has been used once more under the 1990 Education Amendment Act, this time referring to a Māori tertiary institution (McCarthy, 1996; Mead, 1997). While the locus of power in terms of funding, resources and overarching educational requirements rests with the state (McCarthy, 1996), Whare Wānanga aspirations and curricular continue to be nested within a Māori epistemology, as Sidney Moko Mead (1997) states:

> One trend that is working itself out in the Wānanga is the indigenising of teaching programmes. There are two forms of this at Wānanga. The first is the definition of a subject area called mātauranga Māori… Mātauranga Māori can be described briefly as Māori philosophy and Māori knowledge in its broadest terms… Another trend is the concentration on adapting teaching programmes to the local culture, so that the Wānanga works within Māori culture and on its behalf rather that against it, as was previously the case. (pp. 61-62)

Māori Leadership: Traditional and Contemporary

An understanding of Māori leadership depends upon an awareness of the fusion that exists between both traditional and modern discourses. Historically Māori have been subjected to radical changes in their social, cultural, and political organisation. Urbanisation has impacted greatly on the social organisation of iwi, hapū and whānau (Walker, 1990; 1993), the establishment of a euro/male-centric education system has undermined unique cultural belief systems (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; McCarthy, 1996; Mead, 1996; Smith. G. H. 1999; Smith. L.T., 1999; Walker, 1991) and Māori political voices have been marginalised by western colonial institutions (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Evans, 1994; Graham, 2003; McCarthy, 1996; Smith. G. H., 1992; Walker, 1990; 1991). Ranginui Walker (1993) states:

> Māori leadership is a contradictory mix of tradition and modernity. For most of this century, organic leaders in the various guises of intellectuals, prophets, politicians and radical activists held the political initiative in the counter-hegemonic struggle for cultural survival and self-determination. (p.23)

Traditional Aspects

Ngā Toka Tu Moana: Māori Leadership and Decision Making prepared by Ngā Tuara (1992) for Te Puni Kōkiri, has been a formative text in terms of discussing and understanding traditional and contemporary forms of Māori leadership and decision-making (Mead, 1997; Royal, 2001). With reference to traditional aspects of Māori social groupings, Ngā Tuara (1992) state that leaders were attached to collective groups such as waka (descending canoe), which were constituted by various iwi (tribes), hapū (sub-tribe) and whānau (family). Within these social groupings were "identifiable

leaders who were chosen based on their genealogy and personal qualities" (p. 12). These traditional leaders are known as ariki (paramount chief), rangatira (chief), tohunga (holder of expert knowledge) and kaumatua (family elder, tribal elder) (Mead, 1997).

Emergent themes that define the characteristics of traditional leaders are shared in common by Ngā Tuara (1992), Mead (1997), and Royal (2001). These shared characteristics include:

- *He kaha ki te mahi kai:* The leader has knowledge of and is industrious in obtaining or
- cultivating food;
- *He kaha ki te whakahaere i ngā raruraru:* Able to mediate, manage and settle disputes;
- *He toa:* Is courageous in war;
- *He kaha ki te whakahaere i te riri:* A good strategist and leader in war;
- *He mōhio ki te whakairo:* Has knowledge of the arts and carving;
- *He atawhai tangata:* Knows how to look after people;
- *He hanga whare nunui, waka rānei:* Has command of the knowledge and the technology to build large houses or canoes; and;
- *He mohio ki ngā rohe whenua:* Has sound knowledge of the boundaries of tribal lands.

In addition to these generic characteristics of early Māori leadership, Api Mahuika (1992) articulates that iwi were not homogenous; rather they exercised variable beliefs according to their own existing tikanga (process) and kawa (protocol). For example, Mahuika states:

> The fact that women in Ngāti Porou have the right to speak on the marae indicates they were leaders in the fullest sense. If one accepts the marae as the centre of tribal affairs where the political fate of the tribe is decided, then to deny women the right to speak would support the view that they were figureheads. (p. 48)

Contemporary Aspects

Ripeka Evans (1994) argues that the role of Māori women in positions of leadership has become subordinate to those of men. Evans emphasises the role that colonialism has played in shifting power relations between both Māori women and men:

> As a consequence of the debasement of our own culture there has been an erosion of our power and status as a people and as women. A void has been created and a new set of power relations has emerged. The new power relations are dominated by cliques which accommodate to political pragmatism and are largely a revision of Māori ideologies. (p.53)

Despite this imbalance of power relations, Evans emphasises the critical leadership roles Māori women have played in recent Māori educational, activist, and organisational initiatives such as

Kōhanga Reo (Māori medium language pre-schools), Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori medium language primary schools), Ngā Tamatoa and the Māori Women's Welfare League.

In addition to these shifts in gender power relations, Ranginui Walker (1993) argues that western colonial establishments, such as western governance structures, pre-empted the emergence of new forms and models of Māori leadership. These models and forms included "intellectual organic leaders" (p. 5) and "new institutional mandates" (p. 7). Intellectual organic leaders include Sir Apirana Ngata, Sir Peter Buck, and Maui Pomare, and are identified by Walker as those who epitomised a shift in the focus of Māori leadership: from a point of tradition, to a point where leadership roles were "determined from above by a culture of domination" (p. 6). While supported by their own iwi, hapū and whānau, these leaders were ultimately subjected to measurements of leadership held within the structures, politics and culture of dominant Pākehā culture.

With reference to new institutional mandates, Walker (1993) argues that western-derived institutional structures such as rūnanga (tribal trust boards), Māori councils, incorporations, and the Māori Women's Welfare League, created shifts within the terms of Māori leadership. These shifts impacted on the representation and accountabilities of Māori leaders, as they were primarily created and legitimated by government sanction (Walker, 1993). Walker summarises this situation well:

> As state-funded institutions, the Māori Council and the League [Māori Women's Welfare League] provided legitimating bases for intellectual and organic leaders both within and outside tribal territories. But, as subalterns within the power structure of the state, they were expected to co-operate with its bureaucratic systems of control and management of people. Any leader who deviated from that role was perceived as a dangerous subversive and marginalised in political discourse as a radical. Those who conformed to the roles defined by the rulers were awarded Royal honours and granted additional but limited powers. (p. 10)

Findings

Much of the research conducted on traditional and contemporary Māori leadership has indicated the importance of whakapapa within leadership, and the associated mana (integrity, prestige) attached to leaders who hold or are well positioned genealogically (Mahuika, 1992; Mead, 1997; Ngā Tuara, 1992; Royal, 2001). Within this traditional discourse, an important focus has been on the knowledge held by traditional Māori leaders of whakapapa, and their ability to recount and place themselves within the various histories and stories attached to descending waka, iwi, hapū and whānau (Mead, 1997; Ngā Tuara, 1992). Since the onset and influence of western colonisation, the power to determine traditional leadership roles amongst various Māori iwi, hapū and whānau, has been weakened as competing discourses and world-views have continued to impact on Māori leadership styles, formations and representations (Evans, 1994; Ngā Tuara, 1992; Turia, 2001; Walker, 1993).

The findings of this study appear to illustrate this point. Both research participants shared how their Māori identity (knowledge of their whakapapa, reo and tikanga) are important foundations in shaping their own theorising and practice as Māori educational leaders. They argued that these understandings and references were especially pertinent within a Kaupapa Māori educational setting, where Te Reo and Tikanga Māori are crucial philosophical foundations. However, in addition to this knowledge of Māori cultural epistemology, they also appreciate and acknowledge the multitude of exposures and experiences that have impacted on their cultural and general knowledge over time. Both participants viewed their knowledge of things Māori and their wider experiences nationally and internationally, such as domestic/overseas travel and forming relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds, as existing in relationship with each other. For example, when asked about his core Māori identity such as whānau, hapū, and iwi impacted or shaped his leadership practice, Arapeta stressed the importance of a wide range of influences attributing to his leadership role in Whare Wānanga. He pointed out that his whānau, hapū, and iwi obviously played an important role in shaping his understandings of leadership. However, he felt uncomfortable restricting himself to such categories:

> Acknowledging that [the role of Māori whakapapa] as the basis and the foundation, but then building on that. I always thought, and I still believe absolutely, that if it's good for Māori then it's good for anyone in the world. So the leadership style that you've got should be inclusive of, or be adaptable to, any culture in the world, which is an inclusive culture, an inclusive leadership style. It's mobilising our people as opposed to leader at the front.

Hamuera reiterated the theme of being inclusive, especially with respect to how students within Wharekura interact with a wide range of peoples, cultures and communities locally, nationally and internationally:

> Sometimes when you stand within a Kaupapa Māori community that is your world, as a teacher, as a student, and then as a parent and as a principal, it is your world, twenty-four-seven. But also to expose our rangatahi to the world, and appreciate the other cultures in Tamaki, in New Zealand, and then stretching out to our global whanau. So another major focus there is just for our rangatahi to feel confident about interacting with other cultures within our communities. Also the reciprocity, and giving those cultures ownership in the school. As a Kaupapa Māori initiative there is a lot we can learn from other communities, sub-communities within our wider community.

This demonstrates the continuing intersection between what is traditional and what is contemporary with regards to how Māori educational leaders define themselves and their roles within Kaupapa Māori contexts. This research finds that the fusion between Tikanga Māori and local, national and

international exposures has shaped the practice of these educational leaders, in that they operate within a variety of cultural settings.

The impact of a Māori leadership programme that both research participants are involved in was also found to be influential in relation to re-establishing core Māori values. The programme's emphasis, on establishing healthy relationships, taking and encouraging responsibility, acting in a reciprocal manner, redistributing wealth amongst the collective and community, and respecting human dignity, are echoed within what Mead (1997), Ngā Tuara (1992) and Royal (2001) define as traditional Māori leadership characteristics. In particular, parallels can be drawn to a traditional leaders ability to; mediate, manage and settle disputes (emphasis on relationships, taking responsibility); and knowing how to care for people (reciprocity, respect for others, redistribution of resources). Both participants explained how the leadership programme helped re-affirm their traditional belief systems personally and in their teaching practice, as Hamuera explains:

> It has [the leadership programme] been a major influence on how I operate. It has been major in how it affects me and how I relate to different people, organisations, issues, initiatives, places... It's really made me think about how I approach things. How I approach kaupapa, how I approach people, and it just gives a deeper meaning to a relationship you know, relationships Whanaungatanga; full responsibility… For us in the school we want to develop our rangatahi as having core Māori values, because you can have all the knowledge in the world but what you do with it, it's what you do with the knowledge; how you contribute to society, how you contribute to whanau. So in the school it's the promotion of those core-values… throughout the rangatahi, throughout the staff, through the school out to the community.

Ranginui Walker (1993) examined the role that western colonial governance structures, have had on the emergence of new forms of Māori leadership. Walker argues here that a shift has taken place in Māori leadership; from a point where traditional Māori leaders gained mandates and were accountable to their own iwi, hapū and whānau, to a present position where measurements of leadership are now held within the structures of the dominant euro-centric culture.

In relation to this shift in power relations, both leaders identified the dynamics of this situation, and were attempting to either change it, or negotiate ways of dealing with it in order to maintain their value base. For example, Arapeta spoke about how Wānanga providers are playing a vital role in bringing Māori adults back into the tertiary education system after years of systematic failure:

> The bottom line is that when you have so few Māori with qualifications such as School Certificate, University Entrance, and Bursary, the University targets the small number that do. We [the Wānanga] target the larger proportion, because we need to bridge that… So in affect we're not actually looking at the small number with qualifications, we're looking at the large number without

qualifications, and that's our target. So many of these people without school
qualifications will never go there [to University], because we're talking about
forty years of Māori failure in the New Zealand education system with nothing
that has worked like Wānanga towards bringing them into tertiary education.

This finding illustrates a categorical shift in how Aotearoa/New Zealand's tertiary education system is currently providing for adult or mature Māori people and students.

Hamuera identified that negotiating the philosophies and visions of Wharekura whānau with statutory bodies, is an area of some difficulty. The possible compromise between the ideals and visions of the school, in conjunction with the obligations and regulations of the state, present a dilemma for all those involved:

We just have to be careful not to compromise reo Māori and tikanga Māori too
much. That is the foundation, that's why the school is established, and we can't
lose focus on that. That's the foundation of its Mana Motuhake.

Furman and Shields (2003) argue that the role of social justice is to instigate a deliberate intervention that challenges fundamental inequities, which is what Kaupapa Māori educational leaders are striving to work towards, albeit within a system that has only recently began to create space for their educational initiatives.

Extending the Kaupapa Māori Focuses

Both participants acknowledged and spoke about the important role Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives play in affirming and developing Māori cultural consciousness in Māori and non-Māori communities. Each recognised and acknowledged the core elements of a Kaupapa Māori educational approach, as previously defined by a number of Kaupapa Māori theorists (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Evans, 1994; Mead, 1997; Smith. G. H. 1990, 1992, 1999; Smith, L.T., 1999). Within the Wharekura, Hamuera emphasised the importance of extending the student's previous experiences in Kōhanga and Kura Kaupapa; in particular their ability to extend and take for granted Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori:

And that [Tikanga and Te Reo Māori] is the kids' competitive advantage, for
want of a better word. They come here with that kete (basket) full. The difference
with our school and a mainstream school is that, the mainstream school disregard
a lot of that kete, we want to take it and build it up more and use it as leverage
into other areas.

Hamuera added that, within Wharekura, there is a consistent focus on students recognising and affirming their understandings linguistically and culturally, while also encouraging them to develop their skills and confidence within areas not traditionally associated with Kaupapa Māori

initiatives. For example, students are encouraged to use traditional tukutuku (soft textiles) or mahi whakairo (art creation) skills in creating designs for t-shirts, architecture and design projects. This aspect extends the theoretical positions of various Kaupapa Māori theorists (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Mead, 1996; Smith. G. H., 1990, 1999; Smith. L.T., 1999) in terms of affirming the validity of being Māori in Kaupapa Māori schools: students are encouraged to feel comfortable in applying their cultural knowledge and skill in areas and projects they feel passionate about.

Mead (1997) discussed how a trend in Wānanga is to indigenise teaching programmes in order for the curricula to work on behalf of Māori students and culture rather than against it, as has previously been the case. This research found that most of the programmes run through the Wānanga aimed to meet the cultural needs of Māori students within a variety of fields; Te Reo Māori, employment skills and information and technology classes. The findings of this study suggest that leaders within Wānanga are interested in promoting the success of the Wānanga to the Government, especially in highlighting its achievements in attracting and retaining Māori students traditionally not encouraged to participate.

These research findings suggest two things. Firstly, that the core Māori cultural curriculum, especially with regards to Wharekura, continues to be developed and supported locally. Secondly, that attempts are being made to form supportive networks and relationships nationally and internationally amongst Kaupapa Māori educational leaders. Both findings raise issues surrounding the potential range of opportunities that Kaupapa Māori initiatives provide for its students nationally and internationally. These were aspects that I did not identify within the general literature on Whare Wānanga or Wharekura.

In addition, the emphasis on forming strong relationships or whanaungatanga for both leaders is an area that has not been discussed in great detail within the literature. For Arapeta and Hamuera, the focus on relationships was of paramount importance. Both leaders felt very passionate about the potential opportunity that healthy relationships bear on the advancement of their respective roles; the enhanced opportunities for their schools and organisations; and the positive influences strong relationships have in terms of maintaining the wellbeing of colleagues, students and families.

The preceding discussion has affirmed and added new discourses to the theory and practice of Kaupapa Māori educational leaders. In particular, the following aspects have been identified:

- There exist important intersections between traditional forms of Māori identity and leadership, and contemporary exposures such as national and international influences;
- The role of Kaupapa Māori educational leaders is subjected to a variety of considerations such as students, whānau, communities of interest, the government and statutory bodies;
- While continuing to validate and affirm culturally preferred pedagogy and practices in Kaupapa Māori education, both leaders are attempting to extend the parameters of these initiatives in order to meet the needs of students, whānau and communities; and

- There is strong belief amongst these leaders that forming relationships and networks locally, nationally and internationally is of great importance and benefit.

Implications

The findings of this research contribute to social justice and educational leadership in a multitude of ways. This article suggests how non-Māori collaborators can contribute to Kaupapa Māori projects in ways that are mutually beneficial. Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives continue to transform the lives of Māori people. This is primarily done through; practising care and building strong accountability to guide the roles of non-Māori researchers; affirming Māori identity and culture; positively positioning Māori values and culture within a global environment; and practising Māori leadership that is holistic and balanced within a cultural traditional and contemporary framework. While these findings indicate a positive outlook amongst educational leaders within Kaupapa Māori contexts, there continues to be areas in need of future research:

- Research into the tensions between Government regulations/obligations and the visions and aspirations of different Kaupapa Māori initiatives;
- Research into how successes in Kaupapa Māori educational settings are celebrated;
- An exploration of the challenges for Kaupapa Māori educational leaders, rangatahi, or whanau with respect to their rural and urban environment (issues of sustainability and resources, teacher retention etc);
- An investigation into how the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is impacting on the pedagogy and curricular of Kura Kaupapa and Wharekura;
- A study that examines the relationships and foundational philosophies of different indigenous tertiary providers internationally;
- A study that maps out and contrasts the experiences of Māori women working in Kaupapa Māori environments compared to that of Māori men;
- Collecting the experiences of both Māori and non-Māori who have collaborated on Kaupapa Māori and identifying more specifically the risks /and benefits of dominant culture co-researchers; and
- Developing guidelines for non-Māori working with Māori to prevent unintended intrusions and to provide best practice suggestions that will promote cultural safety for all parties.

It is also important to recognise bias and limitations. The main bias of this research report relates to gender, while the limits relate to scope and time. The two research participants and I (the researcher) were male. However, there are significant numbers of Māori women active in Kaupapa Māori discourses (Evans, 1994; Irwin, 1992; Johnston and Pihama, 1994; Pihama, 1994; Smith. L. T., 1999). The experiences of the research participants identified in this article will differ from those of the Māori women involved.

Time was a limitation for both participants. Opportunities to follow up or discuss areas of interest, validate information, and talk generally about the research were restricted. This could be because this study was initiated by me as part of my university study, as opposed to the research arising out of the self-defined needs of the research participants. While aspects of the leadership theory and practice of these two participants correspond to previous Kaupapa Māori theoretical and practical positions, there were also new aspects found in their theory and practice. For example, the emphasis on extending the curricula in order to meet the evolving needs of students, insights into the growing negotiating role Kaupapa Māori educational providers now play, and the global out reach these initiatives are developing in relation to other indigenous groups. All these aspects illustrate that educational leadership within this area is complex, multifaceted and continuously evolving, as are the roles of dominant culture allies and collaborators. In strengthening relationships and maintaining accountabilities, positions of leadership within this area demand a variety of skills, understandings and support personally and culturally.

Acknowledgements

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DhuriNya (dar-rin-ya) (Ancient Aboriginal meaning - Cycle of Being): How to Restore a National First Nation Australian Education System?

Nola Turner-Jensen (Wiradjuri First Nation Australian)

Abstract

This paper is all about introducing readers to two polar opposite Instinctive Belief Systems that drive our unconscious thoughts and the life changing discoveries we found in our 6-year communication discourse research study between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Australia. A key finding is that an Instinctive Belief System sits more so with those that have ancestry from Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Celtic cultures of many colonial Australians. Conversely, we discovered that Indigenous peoples of the world including the Pacific Islands, most African, Asian, South American and some Slavic nations are based more on a Collective (rather than Individual) First Mindset. In this study, I helped lead a team of people who discovered how this Instinctive Belief System bias, within our current education and schooling sector, has contributed unequiviocally to the on-going frustrations, misjudgement, resignations, personal battles, and high levels of school dropout among many Indigenous Aboriginal people in Australia today.

Keywords: Mindset, Indigenous, Aboriginal, individual-collective, belief systems, culture, instincts, localization

Introduction: My Mother's people -The Wiradjuri (weir rad jury) Nation

The Wiradjuri are the largest Aboriginal language group in New South Wales (NSW). They occupy a large area in central New South Wales, from the Blue Mountains in the east, to Hay in the west, north to Nyngan and south to Albury: the South Western slopes region. The Wiradjuri tribal area has been described as "the land of the three rivers, the Wambool (wum bool) later known as the Macquarie, the Galare (Gull air) later known as the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee (Murrambidyi) rivers. The Yindi (Murray) River forms the Wiradjuris southern boundary. The Wiradjuri people had an estimated population of 12,000-20,000 before white settlement. During my youth in a small country town in NSW Australia, our family did not reveal our Aboriginality to anyone other than a few close friends. Not because it was a life or death secret, but because my mum preferred that we 'fit-in' as the majority, and was quite paranoid about our image in the community. This perfect image (that was a constant source of tension in our home,) we found out later, stems from my mum being taken from her Aboriginal mum's family after her mum died, when she was in primary school and placed with my grandad's very proper English, Irish family. A loving family, who reminded mum daily (in whispered tones) not to tell people you are Aboriginal because government workers could take you away or kids might not play with you.

What a way for a small child to get through each day. No wonder she grew up so paranoid and focused on how other people viewed her and her family. Judgement became a way of life for my mum. My mother's experience and mine as an adult, is very much a key motivator for me to find a way for all cultures to understand and respect each other far, far better than we have done in Australia in my eighty-nine-year-old mum's lifetime. We have to find a positive way forward for the sake of our future adults. The mental health and well-being of this countries young people is our responsibility as an entire society. When I look back on my life and my efforts to improve and honour Australia and all its living things. I am going to grade myself on, "What kind of ancestor was I to my grandchildren's' grandchildren?"

My name is Nola Turner-Jensen – I am an Aboriginal social worker, published children's author and independent researcher with over 20 years' experience. I would like to acknowledge and pay my respects to the traditional owners of the land I stand upon. In this paper, you will learn about the discoveries of our six-year comparative research study. My team included both Indigenous and Australian psychologists, social workers, educators, Elders and cultural knowledge keepers. These discoveries will prove that there are two polar opposite instinctive belief system cultures in Australia at the moment. These belief systems have created the invisible barriers to Indigenous and colonial Australian peoples collaborating with respect, honour and trust. I am excited to be able to present, what these invisible barriers look like in everyday engagement situations like meetings, project design, family events, engagement, mentoring and communication.

The CultuRecode Project (Making the Invisible Visible) – Cultural Leadership in Action

Australia's' Two Mindset Culture Strangers

It is my contention that two Instinctive Mindset Cultures (where subconscious thought originates from) exist in Australia today. Walking and thinking in parallel to each other most of the time. Mindset strangers, oblivious to each other's powerful inheritance of a set of values, norms and behaviours shaped by their primitive brain long ago. We observed in hundreds of comparative scenarios, the ethnocentric, invisible battles for dominance that takes place every time these two Mindsets collaborate or engage with each other. The prize we subconsciously fight for – systemic control. After all, when you control the standards and rules of a society – you control everything. We purposely stepped outside of the social psychological circle of Masters and PhD's to run a community-led comparative study using strategies based on ancient Aboriginal teaching systems. Naturally the Mindset Culture of any person is subconscious, unseen and hard to get a handle on. It was my singular purpose over six long years to make the invisible visible. I strongly believe that if something is tangible then you have a shot at finding a solution. I called it The CultuRecode Project

Within our project we found one Instinctive Mindset Culture sits with those that have ancestry from Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Roman, Celtic cultures of many colonial heritage Australians (Ahmat, et al., 2015). A much more recently evolved Mindset Culture that has grown from

incredible hardship, single mindedness, Christianity, slavery and constant invasion and wars to create the Mindset Culture where you need to stand on your own two feet and are in the sole charge of your own destiny (Individual First Mindset). We also found another Instinctive Mindset Culture that is the only example from early mankind societies. A Mindset that is still controlling the subconscious of Indigenous people of the world, where group harmony is the only goal (Collective First Mindset). Ancestry from Indigenous peoples of the world also align to oral based societies such as Pacific Islands, most African, Asian, most South American and some European and Slavic nations. To enable the specific instinctive differences (i.e., create a First Nation Australian and colonial heritage Australian profile) to reveal themselves, we ran hundreds of real-life scenarios over six years. In these scenarios we had amazing Aboriginal and colonial heritage people undertake activities at different times under the same conditions and rules. We observed, interviewed and took part in activities such as picnics, meetings, mentoring, project design, parenting and other collaborations that required cross-mindset engagement. We then looked at how they prepared, how they parented, how they problem solved, communicated, and the different roles and responsibilities along with their personal goals. From this emerged a Collective First Mindset for parents and carers.
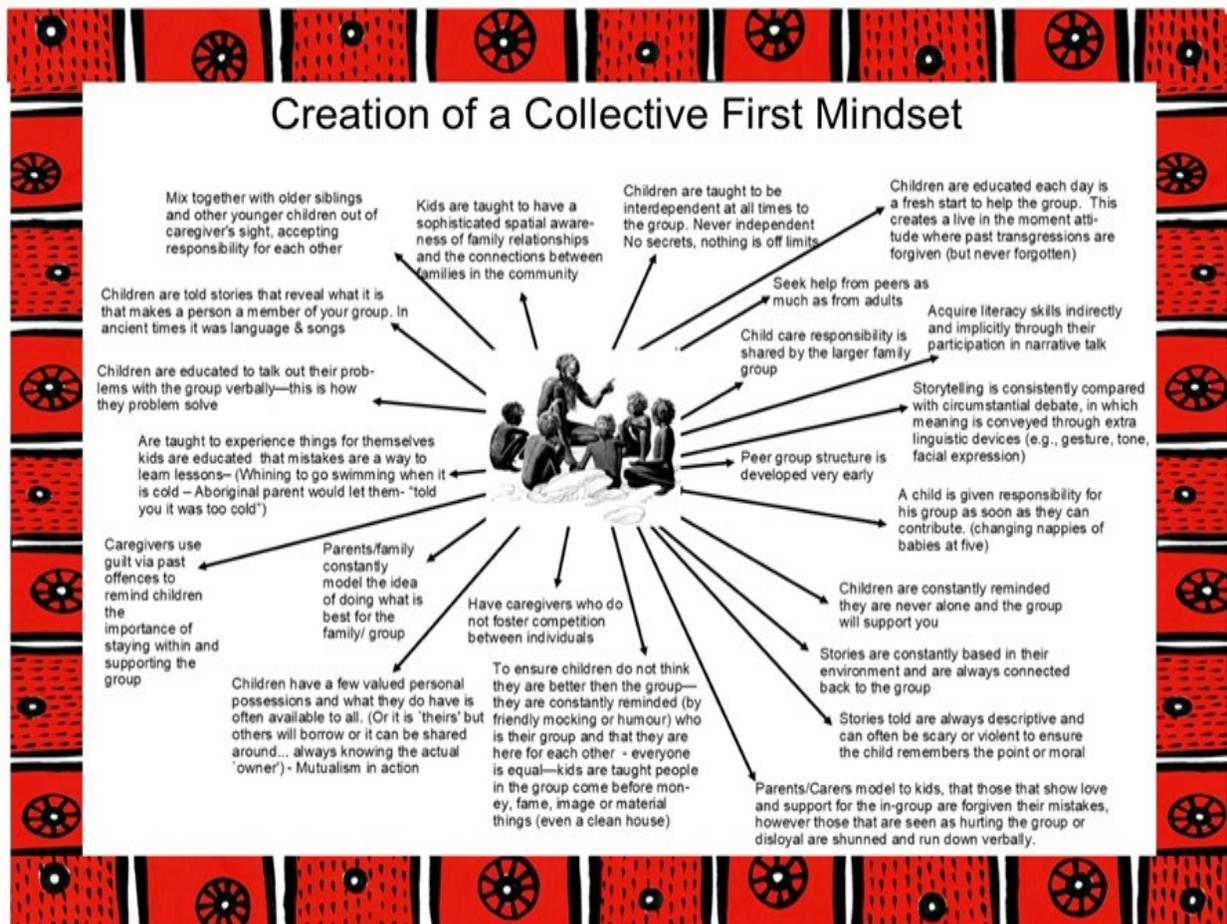

Figure 1: The creation of a Collective First Mindset for parents and carers

Does Instinctive Maintenance Affect How we Learn?

It does indeed. The technological and logistical advances of globalisation have enabled learners to become independent and empowered as never before, but this technology does not diminish the instinctive inheritance and collective communications systems used daily by those from oral based societies, such as Aboriginal families. For Indigenous people and those of oral based societies, independence is contextualised in the vital relationship and links they enjoy with others (their inner circle); in their families and communities, in their wider cultural societies, geographical entities, and finally, as a part of the entire local living landscapes that in their traditional homelands.

How do we help Aboriginal families, students and teachers alike navigate and curate the vast information available? How do we encourage individual growth while also underlining the importance of belonging and including the reciprocal responsibilities and privileges of education needed by those people from oral/collective societies? How do we help all students build the skills and attitudes necessary for positive engagement in distributed, modern communities that so often lead to polarisation and alienation instead? How do we educate with independence and interdependence in mind? How do we engage meaningfully in the ancient Indigenous teaching systems through modern education strategies? The CultuRecode Project Team undertook a reflective and comparative study on the desirability, bias, extent and limits on independent learning that today's education systems are framed upon for students and the institutions and structures within which we work, teach and learn. We do not educate, nor are we educated, in vacuums, but within inherited learning contexts and constraints such as families, groups, and societies; of nations and cultures; crafting our born identities and spirituality. The question we pose is; Does the current British based autonomous focused education system of Australia, meet the needs of how oral based cultures such as Aboriginal people (and approximately 70 countries of the world) learn best? These and many other questions are addressed in the CultuRecode Project's five-year research study where we developed innovative learning paths, instinctive difference, ground-breaking strategies and frameworks to enable those educators not of Aboriginal culture to implement in their classrooms. We called it the Culture Instinctive Toolkit (CIT). According to the Close the Gap data there was also little change in the rate of attendance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from 2014 to 2016 by state and territory (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2019). All of the changes were less than one percentage point, apart from the Northern Territory (1.6 percentage point fall). No jurisdictions were on track for this target in 2016. Teachers of Australia have reported witnessing the frustrations of Indigenous students on many occasions when it comes to in class education and learning. The teachers often concede they have not been able to find a tangible solution for Aboriginal student engagement and success in the classrooms of Australia. Example statements that made us weep for our Indigenous kids trying to learn in a system that does not allow for how they learn best – see below.
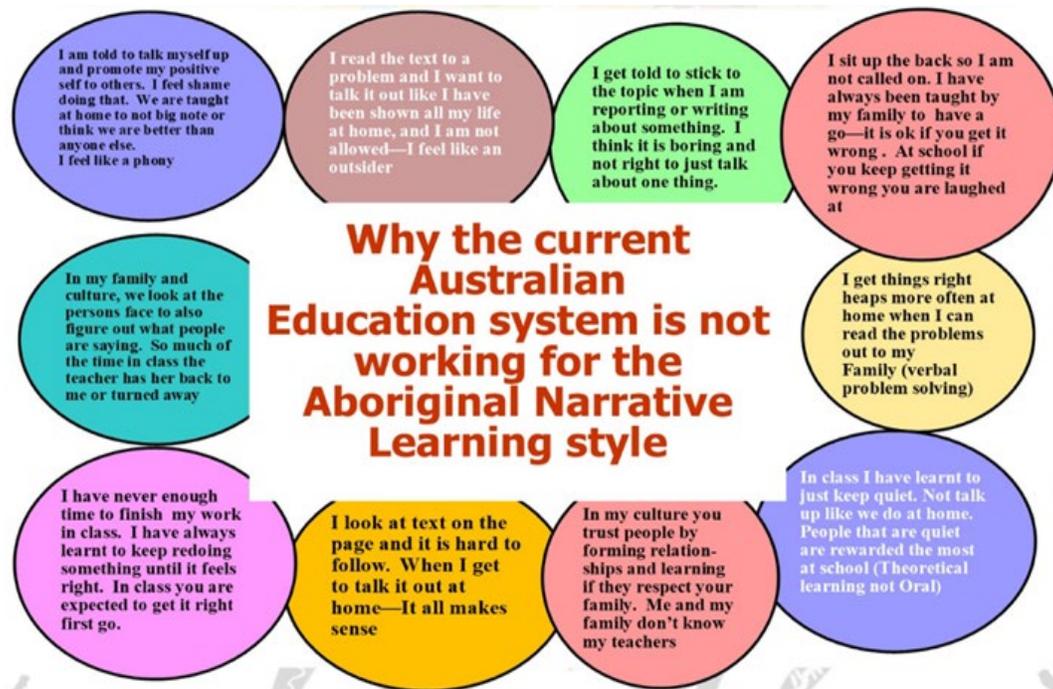
Figure 2: Why the current Australian system is not working for the Aboriginal narrative learning style

The Standards, Rules and Systems of Australia Today

1. The English word "system" has two distinct definitions: A set of principles and procedures that dictate how something is done.
2. A set of parts that form a complex whole.

The question that many experts seem unable to address is why Indigenous people cannot thrive mentally, physically, economically and emotionally as most of the colonisers have in Australia over the last 230 odd years? All the blame has been laid at the feet of intergenerational trauma, loss of land and language and deprivation of cultural skills being handed down. These causes are genuine and affect greatly all Aboriginal people (including me) in many ways, absolutely. Colonisation was brutal for Aboriginal families and it is still fresh and present in my Aboriginal family. However, having completed an in-depth investigation of a Culture's Belief System Evolution, it is now appropriate to reveal our extraordinary findings – that the powerful instinctive inheritance of Indigenous peoples is incompatible to the compulsory societal systems, rules and standards of the European colonisers. How we think, learn and live. I believe that this incompatibility causes constant Systemic Shame experiences for Aboriginal families and is a debilitating cause for the status of my mother's people. The identification of this will likely be considered very controversial, as it should, because this represents a major paradigm shift. But if you read this research it will make sense to you as it has to me and others who have supported our implementation trials over the last two years. Our hope is these new discoveries will help bring

healing to colonised countries of the world. Below is a framework highlighting today's colonial people's individual-first society alongside an Ancient Indigenous people's collective-first society:

CultuRecode™ Project— A Framework of Colonial People's Individual First Society

The Five Ancient Systems of an Individual First Mindset Society

Governance	Law	Education	Health	Economic
Nuclear Family Structure	Social laws	Languages	Sacred places/idols	Social Classes
Marriage Protocols	Marriage social law	Moral spoken stories	Social Taboos	Taxes
Armed forces	Colonisation	Navigation	Exploration research	War/invasion
Religions	Religious laws	Religious Teachings	Medicine/shelter	Charitable services
Government	Royal Houses	Male dominant	Druids/science	Trade
Ceremonial Calendar	Pagan Rituals	Dance/music/art	Life & death ceremony	Performance ceremonies
Royalty	Farming	Exportation	Hunting practices	Local Food/water security

The Instinctive inheritance today of most Individual First People living (for thousands of years) under the Five Systems

Hierarchical	Text based Learners	External to local nature	Future driven	Individual Mindset
Independence parenting	Productive	Literal speech	Private	Literal
Parent led	Verbal Communicators	Cognitive trust	Formal	Creative
Indulgent	Factual speech	Ceremonial	Direct communication	Musical
Self-Reliant	Opportunity driven	Ideological	Symbolic	Protective
Gender specific	Competitive	Productive	Bureaucratic	Cognitive Trust
Indirect charity	Risk adverse	Time is linear	Honour driven	Productive
Private	Non-Experiential learners	Visual Learning style	Youth focus	Ceremonial Funerals

Figure 3: Today's Australian Individual-First Society Framework
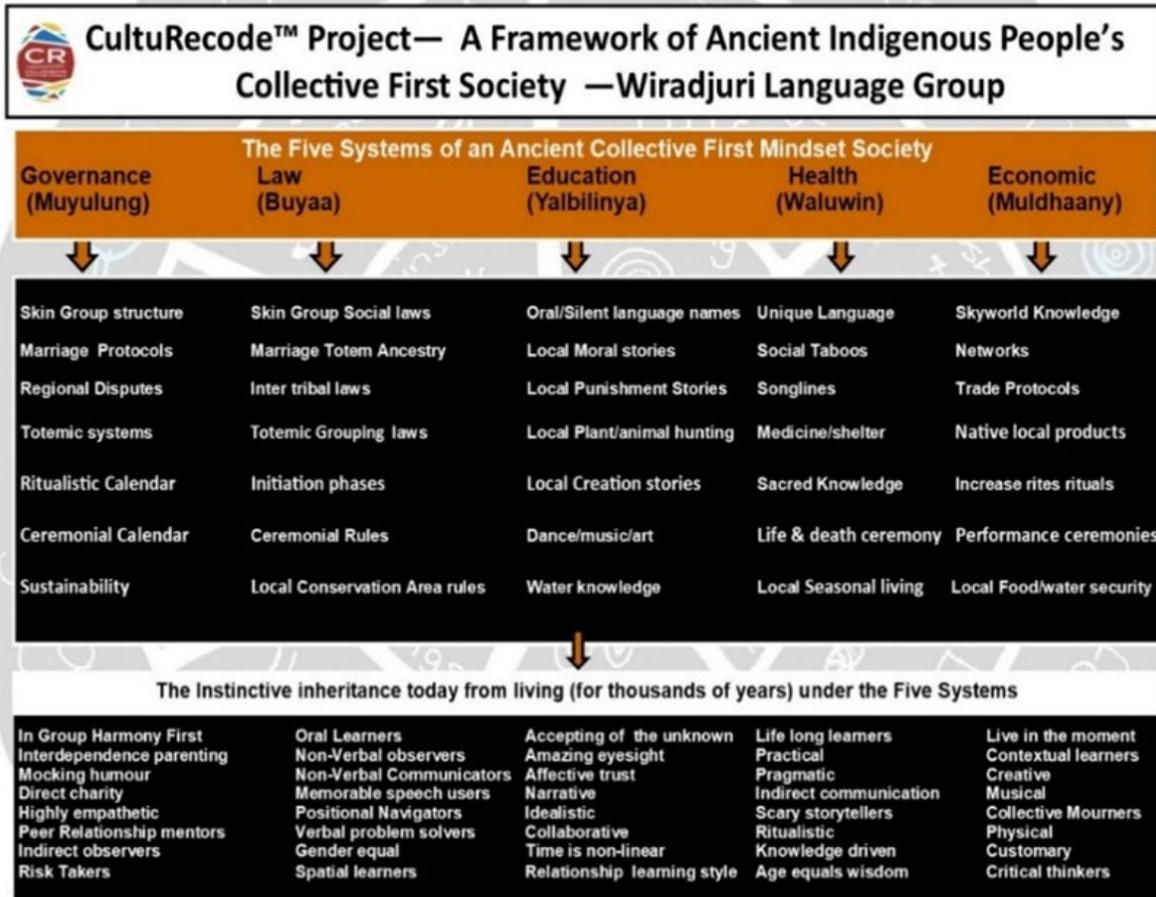
**Figure 4:** Ancient Indigenous People's Collective-First Society Framework

The CultuRecode Solution

The CultuRecode Solution is to utilise the learning and teaching strategies of Collective First Mindset (Indigenous societies) Peoples to create a new Collective pedagogy that is 100% Australian. The learning and teaching strategies of a Collective First Mindset peoples education system includes:

- Negotiation skills
- Collaborative Group Learning
- Localised competency-based learning
- Mindfulness Mapping
- Oral storytelling (Moral and Skin Family)
- Critical Thinking
- Spatial learning
- Mistakes are positive
- Empathy building

- Identity strengthening
- Relationship skill building
- Localised Dreaming Totems
- Native plant-based Woodwork
- Positional Navigation
- Localised Geography
- Music/Dance/Songs
- Practice mimicking games

Whilst researching Ancient Indigenous Belief Systems law structure and strategies for the last six years. I always had a question up on my wall "How did the Belief System Laws of Ancient Australians survive for so long?" I had assumed it was the isolation (although they traded with other countries) or an entrenched Collective First consideration and loyalty that was the glue to this majestic system. It was not until recently it hit me like a proverbial ton of bricks. It was the localisation of every system – education, law, health, leisure, spirituality and governance, as well as how inextricably connected to our natural world that Indigenous communities were able to nurture, flourish and thrive. Imagine if all our systems – education, for example was based in our local environment first? We learnt all there was to know about the living landscapes, science, maths, history, economics and society based on what we see every day. How connected and grounded would every child in Australia feel? In ancient times, localised totems of native flora, fauna, skyworld, weather were the visual cues used daily by ancient Aboriginal people to remind them of their identity connection to their local landscape, culture & family. Using the teaching strategies of ancient Aboriginal people we have matched each Mindset Instinct with a native Australian visual cue and bringing the collective to the individual classrooms.
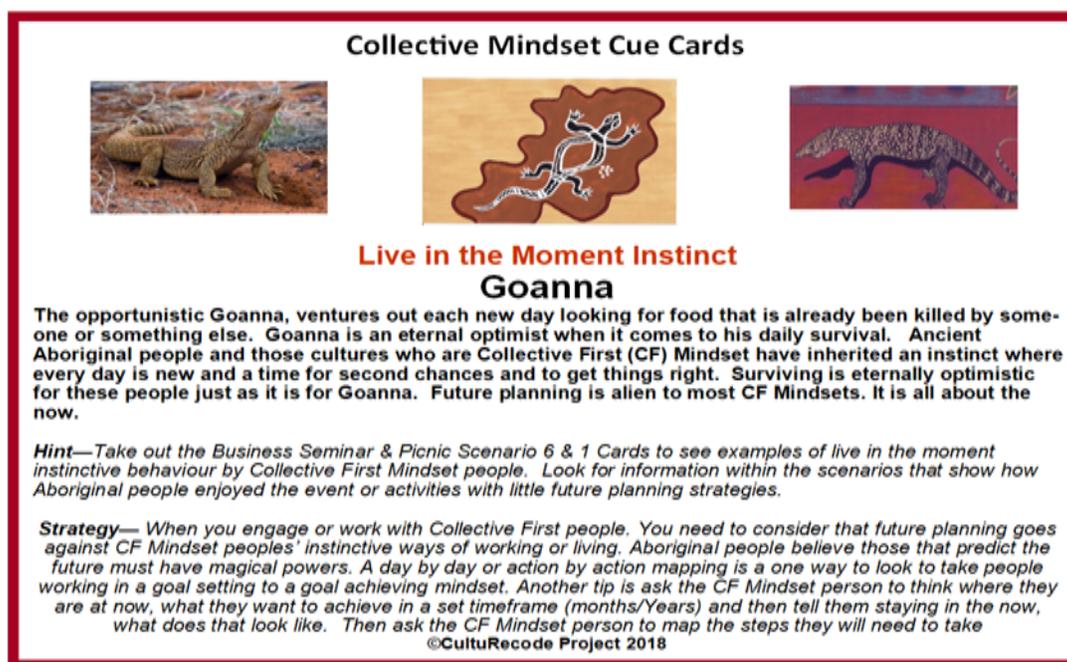
Figure 5: Collective Mindset Cue Cards: Live in the Moment Instinct (Goanna)

Collective Homes to Individual Classrooms

Everyone needs to know why Aboriginal Learning Styles are Different

CultuRecode team do not simply focuses on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural practices. The CultuRecode focus is more about knowing how to work and engage with each other productively and respectfully. We deal in the Why? Why do Indigenous peoples have a Collective First Mindset? Why do Indigenous peoples have different engagement needs? Why does colonisation still affect Indigenous people's education experiences today? Inviting someone to play the didgeridoo or putting artwork on the wall does not support different Mindset Cultures to learn or collaborate together effectively in the long term. These strategies have much value and show respect of an ancient culture externally; however, internally they do not solve the difference felt in everyday interactions that are crucial to a collaboration or engagement functioning at its most productive level. What works, is knowing how information should be presented, how to build trust, how to overcome indirect communication, and verbal problem-solving when working with others from another mindset (culture). As one participant from within the study shared:

> I do not need those people who are not Aboriginal to live my culture, how to speak my language, undertake my ceremony, nor take on my protocols and taboos. Unless you want to. I desperately need you to make room for my Belief Systems Instinctive ways of working, communicating and learning if our culture is to restore its wellbeing and good health again.

Does Belief System Inheritance Affect How we Communicate?

The transmission of the message from sender to recipient can be affected by a huge range of things. These include our emotions, our Belief System Culture, the medium used to communicate, and even our location. As we have alluded to previously, most of what is communicated to us, is at an unconscious level. Our reaction, judgement or action of this information stems from unconscious thought processes that are innate - our default. These are our inherited instincts that tell us what is right or wrong, good or bad, whether to argue or get emotional about a subject. They also create our Belief System Culture's uniqueness and lead us to believe that our way is the only way. The traditional or standard view of communication (often called the transmission model of communication) is that ideas and thoughts exist independently "in the world" and communication (language, in particular) is a means of representing or transmitting these ideas to others. In other words, language is used to stand for, to represent, or point to something that already exists. And this is true. We do use language in this way: to name objects in nature or other "things" (although whether these are actually independent of us can be debated). But that is far from the complete story. When it is claimed that communication is fundamentally relational, it is done so to emphasise that there is always an "other" in communication with you. This "other" may be a partner, an opponent, or relative stranger. Regardless of who the other is, we are always in relation with them in communication. The meaning of any communication is incomplete until you respond to it. Your response shapes what that communication becomes.

When you think of the prolific use of extra linguistic cues such as facial cues, hand and body gestures in ancient Aboriginal communication practices, why would sign language and in particular non-verbal cues eventuate? One can suppose that in a dangerous environment it is safer to be quiet. Also, when hunting the element of surprise would require the use of signs or facial cues instead of words. So over thousands of years every child born would look to the face of their carers to read how they are feeling or whether all is well around them. Children would look at these non-verbal cues to ascertain if a person can be trusted or how they should react or behave. This observer's instinct is critical to reading a situation for all Aboriginal people still today. Communication is the primary and fundamental aspect of our lives. We are born into relationships, first with our primary caretakers, later with siblings and peers, teachers and other authority figures, friends and life partners within our Belief System culture. We extend, disturb, and continually transform our social worlds in these relationships as we continually engage in everyday (and some not so every day) communication within them.

> In ancient Indigenous relationship communication style, hearing, observing, and memorising were important skills, since all aspects of Ancient Indigenous culture were transferred orally or through example. Storytelling, oratory, and experiential and observational learning were all highly developed in Indigenous cultures.

The following model was developed based on the Belief System strategies utilised by Ancient Indigenous Australians for thousands of years and then linked to the Five P's of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030:
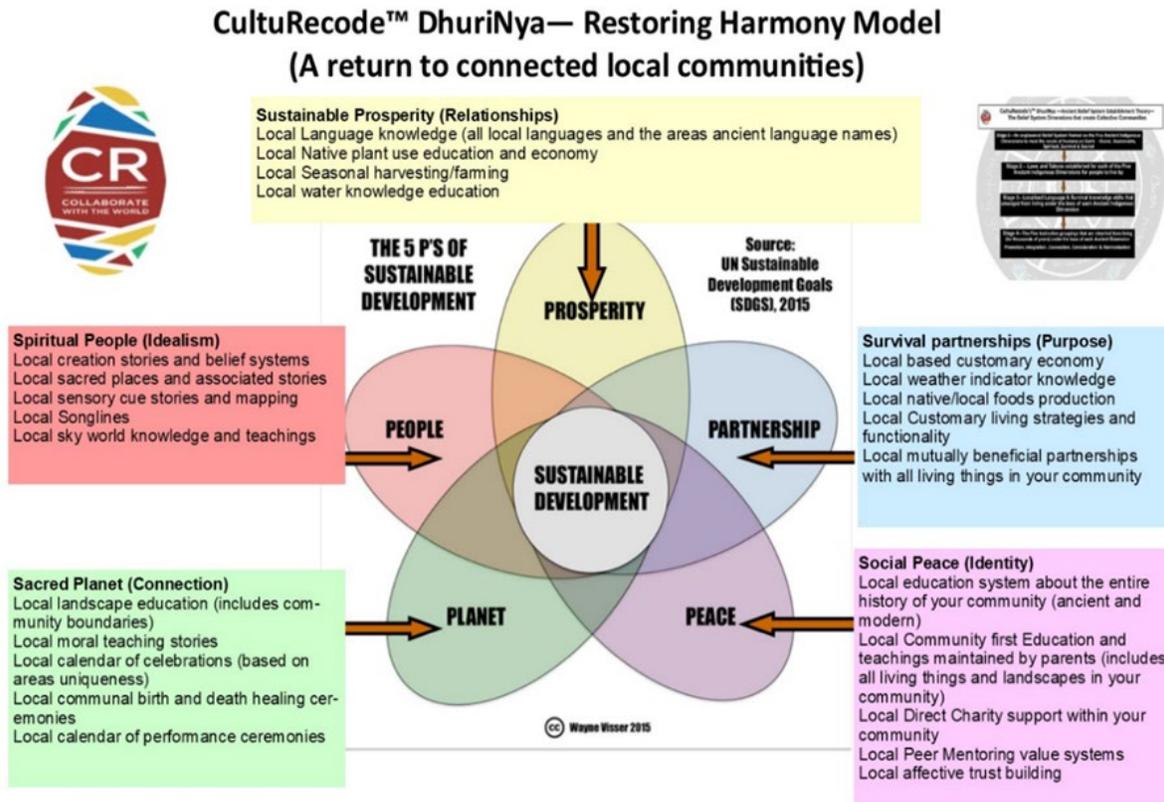
Figure 6: Aboriginal Belief Systems Linked to the Five P's on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030

Collective Harmony Indigenous Pedagogy (CHIP) (*Positive Localised Learning Solutions*)

The Collective Harmony Education Solution

The current class-based education system of Australia has been developed and designed for a particular Belief System culture's way of learning. Text based, theoretical, individualistic, every single student regardless of background, ethnicity, gender, passion, family history, local needs, or familial expertise will study the same thing delivered in similar ways–very much like a kind of academic tuckshop. The implied hope in a curriculum delivered to such students (i.e., all of them) in such a fashion, is that it will fit everyone's need. It is designed to be rational. And the methods of delivery of such a curriculum (e.g., teachers, classrooms, books, apps, tests, etc.) are also designed to be rational. That is, both the curriculum (what is studied) and the learning and instructional design models (how it is being studied) are designed to be practical: testable,

observable, and deliverable to every single student regardless of–well, anything. By design, public education is (intended to be) for all students everywhere no matter what, which based on our understanding of the collective-first society approach poses the following critical question.

How can a Collective Harmony's Indigenous Pedagogy (CHIP) Approach be Included Within the Australia's Education System?

Whilst writing up my research study on Belief System Mindset difference in Australia, I wondered how to transfer this learning into the Education System of Australia using a Collective approach. My realisation focused on how Ancient societies used localisation as the glue to identity, survival and learning. I explored how to transfer this into relevant learning strategies that teachers could use and benefit from in the classrooms and education settings across the world. Learning strategies that would replace the need of Individual First Mindset teachers and educators to constantly be put in a position of learning and presenting information outside of their cultures comfort zone yet still meeting the learning needs of children from both collective and individual learning systems. For example – learning multiple cultures and including them in an extracurricular delivery whilst making sure all protocols are maintained. This current approach of being up to date and on top of the needs and protocols of all cultures is a hugely negative tactic that forces people to communicate uncomfortably outside of their Belief System and we all know it is not working. If you observe animals in nature you start to see how they have behaviour patterns they follow instinctively. Take the Kookaburra, who regardless if the piece of food he has found is dead or not will bash the food against the branch anyway to make sure it is dead. This is because that is his unconscious ancient instinct that has been reinforced by his parents modeling. Humans are no different, we observe our carers and peers and learn from them what is best - what are our perspectives and cognitive processes to undertake or judge all things on. As distinct from every day educational practice in mainstream culture today, people in context rich oral cultures, those from ancestors untouched by writing in any form, learnt to memorise a great deal and possess and practice great wisdom, although they did not 'study' to acquire this wisdom (Teach Thought Staff, 2019). They learned by apprenticeship, discipleship, by listening, observing, by repeating what is heard, by mastering colloquial sayings, by using their imagination and developing evocative language to tell their stories. This unfortunately, is not seen as a serious educative learning style by theory-based Individual First Mindset people who designed most of the current standards within Education systems in Australia and most of the world.

This method of ordering the universe is both highly entertaining and instructive. It is highly regulated and repetitive and if it is used as the basis for story-telling and imparting information it has been proven to be a very efficient and appropriate way to pass on knowledge in an oral culture (lessons that are 50,000 years old after all). Oral cultures use concepts in situational, operational frames of reference that remain close to the living human life world (Collective First System) of the person delivering the information. Thus, at show and tell about a toy bear, a child from an oral based society may relay information regarding who in their family has a bear or adventures of such

a bear in family outings or shared ownership of the toy. A child from a text-based society may be more likely to describe the topic (the bear) factually and say when they received it and if it sleeps with them or why they love it. It is very much about how the topic relates to them as an individual. Another example is to ask an oral based child to describe shape of a full moon. A common response from this group would be descriptive – the milky roundness is the shape of the moon, whilst someone from a text-based culture will identify the same shape as a circle. The latter demonstrates training in school-room answers, which are not linked to real-life descriptive responses.

Creation time stories are stories which provide functional explanations of the landscape, attribute heroic, idealistic characteristics to the main players, and provide through the narrative, a value basis for living out one's life. These are ritualistic expressions, in local familiar settings that provide the prompting patterns easily memorised. We have to deal with all sorts of fears that may keep us from being open to learning new ways and taking risks, including fear of change, fear of accepting failure, fear of rocking the boat, fear of standing out, fear of disappointing and fear of uncertainty. Connecting education to your local community is a tried and tested teaching system that has been utilised for over 60 thousand years.

The classroom that encourages risk-taking embraces an attitude that communicates to each class member that he/she is a valuable person with important ideas. Each day the children and the teacher enter this room with great anticipation and expectations concerning the learning that is certain to happen (Rettig, 2017). This environment offers an unconditional, positive regard to each individual. Acceptance here does not depend on meeting the expectations of others but rather on the simple fact that children are capable of learning in an environment that allows them to do so in unique and different ways. Conforming to preestablished norms is not demanded; rather, nonconforming behaviors are accepted, encouraged, and enjoyed. A major feature of this classroom environment is that young students are given choices, their decisions are respected, and they learn to recognize the consequences of their decisions. Decision making is an ability that is acquired through practice and experience. Numerous opportunities exist for students to make decisions during the school day. It is important to utilise these opportunities so that young children can have the experience of making decisions and accepting the consequences of their decisions.

Four Learning and Teaching Areas of Collective Harmony Indigenous Pedagogy includes:

1) Harmony Education Strategies for Collective Relationship Building that include:

- Group first (Mindfulness Mapping)
- Interdependent Instinct (Empathy Building)
- Collective First Trust (Relationship skill building)
- All Age Peer mentors (Localised Competency Based Learning)

2) Harmony Education Strategies for Collective Problem Solving that include:

- Lifelong Learners (Mistakes are positive)
- Circumstantial (Critical Thinking)
- Direct Charity (Spatial Learning)
- Live in the moment (Risk taking)

3) Harmony Education Strategies for Collective Communication that include:

- Indirect Communication (Negotiation Skills)
- Oral Storytelling (Visual thinking)
- Non-linear time (Collaborative Group Learning)
- Pragmatic (Analytical skills)

4) Harmony Education strategies for Relationship building that include:

- Group first (Mindfulness Mapping)
- Interdependent Instinct (Empathy Building)
- Collective First Trust (Relationship skill building)
- All Age Peer mentors (Localised Competency Based Learning)

Conclusion

This journey into the past is a search for roots, which are grounded in humanity's deepest needs for belonging and communicating. The stories and knowledge of this journey restores faith in the cumulative power of identity. Even though some traditional ways have lost vitality, does not diminish their potential for regeneration today when we recognise, they are still within us. In fact, ancient education systems are a way for the continuity of the cultural values and the social norms that had worked so well for the idealised civilisations of all ancient peoples. This is the philosophy of ancient Indigenous peoples the world over. In our CultuRecode Project, our aim was to rise above ethnocentrism and recognised that there are other ways of thinking, ways of being that have value for others, not only for us as individuals. When we do this, we are in a sense putting our own Belief System "at risk," willing to consider, if only for a moment, that there may be other ways of making sense than those we are so familiar with. This is not an easy task, and many in our team have found it very difficult to transfer this new insight of other Belief System Instinctive ways into practice. This is because the systems they work in, are only framed on one ethnocentric framework and incredibly inflexible or closed to other ways and perspective.

Understanding the CultuRecode discoveries provides us with remarkable new tools – a new set of lenses, if you will, with which to view ourselves and our behaviours. It changes the way we see everything around us. What's more, it confirms what we have always suspected is true – that, despite our common humanity, people around the world really do the same things differently. The

CultureCode unlocks and works toward decoding the hundreds of ways unconscious perceptions effect the decisions you make every day. A culture's unconscious Belief System and its Instinctive inheritance are like a lock and its combination. If you have all of the right numbers in the right sequence, you can open the lock. Doing so over a vast array of shared values has profound implications. It brings us to the answer to one of our most fundamental questions; why do we act the way we do? Our intent with this paper is to liberate those who read it. There is remarkable freedom gained in understanding why you act the way you do. This freedom will affect every part of your life, from relationships you have, to your feelings about your possessions and the things you do, to the attitudes you have about yours and other peoples place in the world. You will see how the revelation of the two different mindsets led us to a new understanding of behaviours in this country, how it contrasts with behaviours in other cultures, and what these differences mean for all of us. Once you learn the Instinctive Inheritance codes, nothing will ever look the same again.

Aboriginal people taking back responsibility for our own culture' success story. To survive, Aboriginal people have to take a step outside of the colonised systems that have been implemented and embedded across every corner of this land without our input or consideration that continue to make us invisible today. We cannot thrive if we try to fit within the colonists systems. Their systems are their unique culture's rules, beliefs and law. We have our own ancient rules, beliefs and law. What we must do is teach our version/perspective of education, behaviour rules, communication and process need in the homes of Aboriginal people every day. We have to stand in a space where British Australian concepts and consideration is prohibited. We have to only develop and consider concepts based on the ancient cultural laws of our ancestors We have to focus on revealing our expertise, brilliance and capacity for independent wealth outside of the British Australian systems. We must restore what is best for Australia, independent of the colonisers, based on our 80,000 years of knowledge, Belief System and philosophy. A set of national shared principles based on an ancient Aboriginal blue print about what to do and what is taboo in this new colonised world must be retaught to our people in unmistakable terms.

The Aboriginal culture must satisfy ancestral instincts. If Aboriginal culture is to continue existing, it must stand on its own, with its own systems, beliefs and philosophies that each parent/carer can hand down to every new generation. Aboriginal people have to develop and consider business concepts based on the Ancient cultural perspectives of our Ancestors. This is where our unique talents lie, and our Aboriginal economy will evolve. We have to focus on revealing our expertise, brilliance and capacity for independent wealth outside of the ways of any other Belief System Culture. Such as that of the non-Aboriginal Australians. The business strengths that are unique to Aboriginal Australia are many. These strengths include, Localised Australian Storytelling, Oral education strategies, new learning styles, ancient Australian branding, native plant and animal production and use, group/team dynamics and engagement teaching when working with world collective cultures to allow Indigenous people's lived harmony to emerge from the dust.

Harmony from the Dust
by Nola Turner-Jensen (Wiradjuri)

Let's look to the daybreak after
Turn from invisible walls we fight
We can bathe once more in sunshine
feel again our old one's might
We must unite & draw the line
In the sand, ahead of the storm
Why don't we take a Culture Breath
Go where it's safe and warm?
It's not too late, there's time for giving
As the ancestors did, even after death
It's not too late, not while we're living
Inside our instinctive mind's eye
Let us go and restore our dignity
Our Systems of beliefs, laws and majesty
There's got to be a daybreak after
A magical time again for us to fly
We can be there by tomorrow – take flight
into the light, let the other ways float by – you must
Breathe in our smoke, leave all others on their shelf
Standing as one succeeding for self
Restore Mutualism once more and rediscover the Harmony from the dust

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Dharug Custodial Leadership: Uncovering Country in the City

Jo Anne Rey

Abstract

When Dharug Ngurra (Country), as an interrelated web of presences, places and practices, involves interweaving diversities that currently form cosmopolitan Sydney, Australia, the question of Dharug custodial leadership becomes pertinent. What does custodial Indigenous leadership in the city look like and does it have a place in today's educational institutions? This paper will engage those questions sourced from recent research centred on the traditional custodians of the majority of Sydney: the Dharug. Through yarning times, seven Dharug 'sistas' share their sense of belonging, caring and connection to the presences, places and practices of Country. Their custodial cultural leadership, undertaken in diverse educational contexts today, demonstrates leadership that enhances futures which belong, care and connect to Ngurra based in Dharug knowledges and practices embedded for millennia. While Dharug Ngurra may present as Sydney, it is argued that localised caring-for-Country practices strengthen localised belonging and enhance human and other-than-human wellbeing through custodial leadership. Recognising Goanna's (Australia English word four our monitor lizard) place in this weaving brings out the more-than-human in us all.

Introduction

When Country is a cosmopolitan city of around 5 million humans from around the world the question arises: How can traditional custodians continue to provide custodial cultural leadership? While much research engages Australian Aboriginal communities located in regional or remote contexts, this paper focuses on Dharug Ngurra, traditional Country of the Dharug-speaking peoples, known today as the city of Sydney, Australia. It is argued that traditional custodial leadership is being undertaken, as evidenced through doctoral research with seven Dharug women in place-related 'yarning' (sharing times/tellings) sessions, a cultural practice continued for tens of thousands of years. 'Goanna Walking' is recognised as both a way of weaving cultural obligations with the demands of urban modernity, and offers a more-than-human, third way, for intercultural engagement and leadership. It is suggested here that bringing our understandings of belonging to place, the obligations of caring for place, and understanding the relationality of place opens us to an appreciation of the values and practices that are the foundations of a sense of Indigeneity.

Expanding from this localised context, it is also argued that in this era of Anthropogenic climate change, continuing cultural knowledges, relationships and ways of knowing and doing that reflect

and engage cultural obligation to care for Ngurra (Country), is critical to continuing the sustainability that has been practiced across our continent for more than 65,000 years. This continuity is recognised as the longest continuing civilization on the planet. It is proposed that traditional custodial leadership, rather than the homogenous concept of "Indigenous" leadership has a unique and significant contribution to offer in educational contexts. It recognises traditional custodians are the holders of cultural authority because they have a unique and critical role as knowledge holders of storying that connects to and cares for presences, places, and people relevant to that Country. They have the cultural obligations of caring for Dharug Ngurra.

Indigenous Educational Leadership in the City

In an Australian Aboriginal context, Indigenous leadership often involves Indigenous relationships within Indigenous-dominant contexts, including presences (agents), places and practices. In remote regions of Australia traditional custodians of their Country are often the largest component of the Indigenous population and Indigenous leadership enacted through relational systems of Eldership holding cultural authority is recognisably a cohesive culture of difference to that of any non-Indigenous population that may live there. However, with Country-as-city, enacting custodial leadership becomes fraught with complexities, multiplicities and negotiations involving not only non-Indigenous hierarchies of power, but also various Indigenous communities living, working and enacting leadership roles outside of traditional custodial authority and within powerful governmental and other bureaucracies.

This is the case for Dharug Ngurra. Thus fulfilling custodial obligations around caring for Country and the diversities that are co-becoming there, in spite of its human centricity is extremely difficult (Bawaka Country et al. 2015). Colonisation and associated pressures from human over-population, traffic congestion, pollution of waterways, ecosystems and consumption of space for suburban sprawl have done much to undermine custodian agency. Ngurra's stress is symptomatic of global distress, as human overpopulation and rampant globalised extraction/extinction multinational industries undermine ecosystems, and results in human-induced climatic-changing conditions. Mother Earth now suffers through the era of the Anthropocene (Bignall, Hemming, and Rigney 2016). It becomes imperative therefore, that educational leadership involves changing ways of knowing and doing for sustainability. Finding ways to re-establish a custodial voice within urban Indigenous leadership, beyond binaried narratives of 'them and us', involves perspectives that foster inclusivity and caring with/for/of those diversities and brings authentic cultural authority to "Indigenous" educational leadership in the city. As the doctoral research thesis, *Country Tracking Voices: Dharug women's perspectives on presences, places and practices* shows, bringing custodial ways of knowing, being and doing into the academy opens pathways for custodial voice and authority (Rey, 2019).

Goanna Walking

For the research, an Indigenous approach of engaging two broad contexts evolved. That engagement I called 'Goanna Walking', as agency creating a 'third space' between the binaried positions of, in this case, Dharug and other-than-Dharug (Bhabha 1990). Goanna walking was finding a third way, between the diversities that engage the context of the academy (in this instance Macquarie University, on Wallumattagal Ngurra (located in the suburb of Sydney named North Ryde) and the diversities that engage the Indigenous context(s) of seven Dharug Aboriginal women. Goanna walking involved steps on the left (Dharug women's context/s), and steps on the right (Macquarie University, Department of Educational Studies and associated supervisors' context/s). It involved walking and learning between these Dharug women's ways of knowing and doing (Goanna's steps on the left) and the doctoral candidature ways of knowing and doing (Goanna's steps on the right). It involved engaging in Dharug custodial ways of transmission of knowledges, e.g. storytelling via possum skin mapping, ceremony, ancestral engagement, transgenerational storying, puppetry, art, song and poetry in association with sites of significance on Dharug Country (Goanna's left-way stepping). In contrast, it also involved engaging the written form of transmission as required by the western academy of the university (Goanna's right-way stepping). This journey produced Goanna's trailing tail-tale in the sands of time, as the doctoral thesis, producing new knowledges and a form of leadership, as a map of woven 'Indigenous to the Universe' ways and means (Arabena 2015), to be read and followed by others across timespacematter-ings (Barad 2010). As such, recognising Goanna brought other-than-humans into the place of research methodology. Sharing this approach acts as Indigenous educational leadership within the academy.

The Dharug Ngurra Web

'Goanna Walking', as the research method, brought to the surface the web of values, practices and some of the places of significance that these seven 'sistas' privilege for custodial continuity. This Dharug Ngurra web (Rey 2019) is made up of the affinity of *belonging*, the emotion of *caring*, and the engagement of *connecting*. These three aspects of the web were woven *through* cultural practices; woven *with* presences (human and other-than-human); and woven *into* and *from* places. This Dharug Ngurra web shows that a sense of belonging to Ngurra is strengthened by the custodial obligation of caring for Ngurra as the practice of reciprocity in return for the benefits Ngurra provides Dharug people. Reciprocity, belonging and caring become entwined within the Dharug Ngurra web (Rey 2019). An increased sense of belonging to Ngurra and obligation to Ngurra strengthens the sense of caring. Caring, reciprocally, enhances a sense of belonging and obligation. Belonging to Ngurra/Country (more broadly than the specific Dharug entity) does not include the concept of 'ownership' of land. Recognising Ngurra as Mother Earth, opens access to recognising humans in relationship, not only to the planet, but to the Universe.

Ngurra-as-Mother Earth and Universe-Reference

From the broader concept of humans in relationship with Ngurra-as-Mother Earth, we are able to conceive of our relational context as with not only the planet, but with the Universe. To Arabena (2015, xxv), the Universe is:

> A unity, an interacting and genetically related community of beings … bound together in an inseparable relationship in space and time. The unity of the planet Earth is especially clear; each being of the planet is profoundly implicated in the existence and functioning of every other being of the planet. The three basic tendencies identify the reality, the values and the directions in which the Universe is proceeding.

Accordingly, Ngurra as Universe-referent-agency becomes conceptually feasible and available for relationship with humans when practiced through custodial obligations and values which foster sustainability of these diversities through biotic communities (Arabena 2015, xx). It is important to note, as Arabena (2015) makes clear, that Universe-referent consciousness is not the equivalent or a synonym of 'universalism': the homogenization of all diversities that fosters predatory monoculturalism. Rather, to be Universe-referent in our agency is to be in harmony with the Universe's own agentic self-reference through diverse contexts and communities.

While caring for Country can take place without an Indigenous, millennia-old belonging, spiritual belonging to place and its diverse more-than-humans strengthens a sense of connection which in turn enhances wellbeing across diverse human-more-than-human contexts. We care about our places of belonging, just as we care about our human relationships, and those with whom we feel we belong. When we feel we belong to/with other-than humans, our sense of connection, and caring is increased and we co-become as more-than-human (Bawaka et al. 2016). However, it is only at the local level, that caring for Ngurra and all our relational obligations, can be successfully undertaken. Not by individuals working alone, but by connecting to others using collective approaches. Caring and belonging therefore builds collectives and communities. It follows, that strong communities are better able to support families, and strong families are better able to raise individuals that feel they are strong in belonging, caring and connecting to the presences, places and practices. These are the relational values and practices that have sustained diversity across millennia. Sharing these knowledges becomes Indigenous educational leadership to the broader populations living in urban spaces.

In Australia, when colonisation, as the enactment of predatory monoculturalism, began ripping holes through the fabric of this cultural web in 1788, on Dharug Ngurra, there were at least 250 Aboriginal Countries, with between 300 and 700 languages interwoven across the continent of Australia (AIATSIS 2019, Simpson 2019). Predatory monoculturalism practiced by colonizing settlers enforced prohibition of Aboriginal languages, forbade the practise of cultural ceremony, dispossessed peoples of food sources, land and biodiversity management systems. Dharug

communities initially, followed later in others' Countries, were unable to continue caring for Ngurra. Knowledges embedded in places, practices and presences were forced 'underground' into domestic spaces, with remnants kept alive behind closed doors. It is only in relatively recent times that custodians have felt safe enough to begin reweaving the web of connection and caring across communities and across the continent of Australia. This revival relies on understanding one's place of belonging, the values of reciprocity and caring for Ngurra, in all its diversities. Indigenous leadership as expressed and enacted by custodians in our cities, therefore, opens possibilities for educational leadership to foster a sense of caring for sustainable futures by the broader population. Such leadership was shown through the thesis, *Country Tracking Voices: Dharug women's perspectives on presences, places and practices* (Rey 2019). As researcher-participant and Dharug community member, further sharing of the evidence of Dharug community's continuity in the practice of caring for Ngurra, and their cultural continuity in the face of continuing colonisation, becomes an act of educational leadership that conforms to Dharug communal desire to have their custodial continuity recognised and their values and knowledges appreciated for the benefit of Ngurra. As such it also contests continuing colonisation and predatory monoculturalism.

Custodianship as Indigenous Leadership in the City

The question of Dharug custodial cultural leadership becomes pertinent when we seek ways to enhance caring for Country. Through yarning (shared storying) sessions with seven Dharug custodians, situated in their selected places of significance, a better understanding of what caring-as-custodianship entails was elucidated (Bessarab and Ng'Andu 2010). The seven women (including researcher-as-participant) chose not to use their English language names, but instead their other-than-human 'significant identifiers'. The word 'totem' was avoided as this term arose through colonial expeditions in other First Peoples' places, such as the US and Canada, and as such represents a homogenising instrument of the English language. The women's identifications included the Australian birds: Kookaburra, Wagtail, Crow, and Bellbird (the latter as researcher-participant), two possums: Bushytail and Ringtail and Sandstone, down at the beach. As such other-than-humans were brought into the Academy from the beginning, so that supervisorial discussions were always undertaken using these terms. From this point, for the researcher, it was easy to recognise another other-than-human in the research process – Goanna (as researcher-companion).

There were only two caveats required of the women. Firstly, as the knowledges gained from the project would go back to Dharug community, their primary audience would be community and so whatever they chose to yarn about was to bring benefit to community. Secondly, that their storying should be related to place and that the yarning would take place in the associated storying site. Thus places (including a cemetery, rock engraving sites, bush, and suburbia), associated presences (Ancestors and living other-than-humans), and practices (yarning) involving transgenerational storying (including various other customary and modern forms of storytelling, such as possum skin work, puppetry, art, song and poetry), were the basis for establishing the Dharug Ngurra web of

connections. Through the yarnings, values of belonging, caring and connecting became clear and the web was fully woven. One place of yarning was in the St. Bartholomew's cemetery, at Prospect (Western Sydney) with Ringtail possum, speaking of her Ancestor, Boorooberongal woman, Bolongaia (Maria Lock), and the importance of transgenerational caring as storying. The following extracts come from the doctoral thesis, *Country Tracking Voices: Dharug women's perspectives on presences, places and practices* (Rey, 2019):

> It feels nice, its calm, it's peaceful, and we talk about Maria [Lock] wherever we go. But being here, it's almost like she's included in the conversation. We always talk about her being put into the [Parramatta Native] Institute site and her achievements, and ability to get land grants, but coming here feels like she's been included in the conversation, and of course the family wouldn't have existed either without Robert, who is buried here with her, and so it's like being able to bring family in rather than talking about them. And we've come here a few times, on a few occasions and it's always felt a kind of calmness here, and so I think she's OK here. It's Warmuli Country, not Boorooberongal ... possum Country. We've never felt any kind of angst here and I think it does make a difference, and I'm always proud to talk about her and proud to let people know. But to include her in the conversation seems a little bit more real, and not just a tokenistic person that people talk about to make a point, because she was still our grandmother and still a human ... (pp. 190-191)

Ringtail possum also showed how the practice of reading Country is an act of caring that recognises the relational connections with other-than-human presences:

> …And the Old Grandfathers [Crows] are getting noisy now, because we are talking women's business, feeling a bit left out. (p. 193)

Additionally, caring for humans that have passed on, is part of the obligations of belonging to Ngurra. Ringtail possum explains:

> It's our obligation to look after anyone that's living or travelling or visiting our Country, not just our own. So, you know, that includes the dead. You've got to look after souls … (pp. 200-201)

But it is in the transgenerational sharing of Dharug knowledges, amongst other Aboriginal ways of knowing and being and doing, that continues culture across millennia. Such examples as these show Indigenous leadership and enables caring for Country sustainably:

> And you do know when the wind blows up, when you're talking like that, it's the Grandmothers sending you kisses. Thank you, Grandmas (p. 203).

It becomes clear these women's lives are enacting what has been at the heart of Indigenous culture, practice and sustainability, despite colonisation, despite millions of other humans coming into Dharug Ngurra, and despite the pressures of modern urban work and life, through the continuity of recognising, developing and maintaining human-more-than-human relationships. These relationships enable co-becoming as caring. As all the women are educators in one form or another, they are engaging in cultural practices through work and home. As Kookaburra shows us, her career through puppetry, and the puppet troupe, *Yarramundi Kids* (Burke), enabled an entwining of identities, times, places and storying into a life's work. She recounts the importance of a dream she requested to solve a problem:

> …now I think back and only now I make this connection, that has become my life's work, that [dream] was the beginning of my life's work 30 years ago. So ... I use that information and I put it into a story and it is a story that Nakita [the puppet] tells, and I use [Crow's] song, the 'Wirrawee Bubulwal' song, and … her grandmother sits her down one day, and her grandmother says to her, because … Nakita is grieving because her mother is no longer here, loss of her mother and all of this, and her grandmother sits her down and she says to her, 'Now, Nakita I want you to go down by the river, I want you to sit down there, don't take anyone with you, go on your own, and I want you to sing that song, and I want you to see what happens.'

> ... and Nakita, in the telling of the story, she says: 'But where Nan, where, where at the river?' And then she goes, 'Oh, I know, I know where, that big flat rock, that special place you showed me, the big flat rock.' … And so, what Nakita does … she just sits, … And she goes: 'Wirrawee'.

> And then she goes: 'And I wait, and I listen and I'm listening'… And when she [Nakita] tells this story, you could almost hear a pin drop. Now, I've told this story in Parliament House, Canberra, and you could've heard a pin drop with all these pollies [politicians]. But anyway, everywhere people wait, and then you hear: 'Bubulwal'. And she goes: 'Ah, Ah. So, I sing it again. I go "Wirrawee", [pause] "Bubulwal"'.

> And she [Nakita] goes: 'My Nan knew that was going to happen, eh? My Nan knew that was going to happen because...' and then she says, 'You know who what was singing back to me? That was my mum.' Right?

Here we have the dialogue passing from Kookaburra, to Nakita, across time as a recount of other performances, to audiences and across places, the place of performance, the place of Kookaburra's home (the telling for the research) and the place of the thesis, and now this place, this journal article. It is a story of how children need to listen to their Elders, in order to learn. A mighty example of Indigenous educational leadership, outside of classrooms, through oral transmission

which has been undertaken across cultural lines for thousands and thousands of years (Stutheit 1981).

Thus the women do not live in the binaried place where work is separated from 'life' (the left over hours after work), but rather live as 'lifeworkings' (Mitchell 2016, 2017), where work involves living and educating culturally, caring for Country through educating others, connecting to places and other-than-humans through storying, whether that be by the collection of materials required for continuing cultural practices such as grasses for weaving baskets, string, bags, belts, gathering eucalyptus leaves and branches for spiritual ceremonies of 'smoking' for cleansing, and 'gunyah' building (bush shelters); sourcing stones for cutting, and kangaroo and possum work for blankets and wraps, or as Kookaburra does, through puppetry teaching values, caring and connecting to the children (and adults) in her audiences. As Bushytail explains her lived practice:

> ... I am constantly thinking about who I am culturally as a person from the time I wake up to the time till even in my dreams when I go to sleep about my spiritual connection and how I can improve on that in a good way, and not only for myself but for my community and also my children ...

In terms of the interweaving of her life, work, family and community, Bushytail tells us:

> … Family is in the core, that would be in the circle in the middle, then another circle going out in another circle, with lines going out, which is how we belong to the community, and in a workspace, but there's effects of that as well. Community and school, Community is always on my mind, so that runs through, but the education is important as a teacher always on my mind too…

> It's all interwoven, actually. So, I work two days at school and the rest is really Community and family ... So Community can mean lots of different things, and I have my relationships with Aunties and Uncles, in my Community, who I consider family as well...and then there's other people identifying as Dharug Aunties...and so connecting, and a lot of us have experienced what it's like not to belong and so they have a yearning to belong, … and the generations are coming out now, because in the past they felt shamed or feared, but they are making a step to come out and identify.

Through connections to places, presences and continuing practices, values are enacted through lives lived attentively (Mitchell. 2016, 2017). As such their connections, values and practices become a source of strength, resilience and renewal as they co-become on Ngurra with the agency in all its diversities that are the Universe. To care for Country today requires a sense of reciprocity and respect for diversities. To educate others for sustainability requires changes in educational practices – away from values of competition, towards values embracing the collective and its diversities.

Bringing Indigenous Leadership into the Academy

The academy has been one of the most colonizing instruments throughout western history and continues to enact monocultural supremacy, by privileging western knowledges over diversity. Plumwood (1993) succinctly shows how western patriarchal hierarchies and separations, originating at least from Plato's time, driven by Christian narratives of human entitlement to colonize the 'primitive heathen' Others, and righteously exploiting Earth's resources for the wealth and maintenance of white supremacy, has been at the heart of the western hegemonic impetus. As western education was one of the enforcing instruments used for empowering this monocultural domination over diversities, it has fuelled discrimination, racial and biological genocides, and underpinned mechanization, industrialization and now globalization and extraction/extinction industries.

Today, the economic narrative of mass consumerism is one of the latest implementations for maintaining the privilege of the few over the poverty of the majority resulting in mass dependency. At the same time, systems of administration and funding competition within the academy are stripping, from the inside out, intellectual diversities so there is a domination of intellectual engagement by systems promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics, also known as STEM subjects. These are narrated as the ways needed to drive us into futures that will maintain the privilege of "us" over "them", that is the few over the multitudes (Murphy 2017). As Murphy (2017) describes it, the control of thinking through this domination is resulting in "zombie" universities.

On Dharug Ngurra, since the establishment of the first Native Institution, initially at Parramatta (1814), then Blacktown (1825), this monocultural enforcement and domination has been ruthlessly implemented and resulted in what came to be known as 'The Stolen Generations', with the removal of children considered fit for 'civilization', with an emphasis on those most looking white. Thus, Australian his-story since colonisation is the story of monocultural, patriarchal domination at the expense of the her-stories produced through matriarchal cultural diversity that underpins the peoples, presences, places and practices that have been engaged across the continent for, what some Aboriginal people say, has been forever.

Conclusion

Thus, the question arises, when Country is a city, when the monoculture of modernity is killing off the diversities of 'lifeworkings', how can Indigenous custodial leadership turn around the institutional 'Titanic' before it sinks its own ship and takes billions of diversities with it? It is suggested here that bringing our understandings of belonging to place and the obligations of caring for place, and others within it, opens us all to the values and practices that are the foundation of a sense of Indigeneity. As Arabena (2015) points out, we are all Indigenous to the Universe, and so a Universe-referent consciousness fosters our belonging, our caring and our connecting to presences (ancestral, living other-than-humans), places and practices across time, space and

matter. Doing so enables our co-becoming (Bawaka et al., 2016) and together with Ngurra timespacematter-ing and 'hauntological entanglements' are enhanced (Barad, 2010). Recognising the nature of custodial leadership currently being undertaken by Dharug community members when Country is a city, is critical to recognising its continuity. Dharug custodians who are engaged actively in the obligations of custodial responsibilities and continuing cultural reciprocity are bringing Indigenous leadership to the broader population residing in Sydney. It is therefore imperative for the academy to not only recognise its place within Ngurra today, but to own the moral responsibility and concomitant obligation to care for Country as an act of compensatory reciprocity, for its practices across past, present and forthcoming knowledge production. Recognising its presence in grounded locality in Dharug Ngurra requires its foundational knowledge production to provide sustainability for the diversities in Ngurra. When threats to diversities are undermining the very monocultures that have till now been fostered, educational institutions need to show indigenous leadership by thinking as Universe-referent beings. Connecting with custodians who belong in Dharug Ngurra, who are providing Indigenous custodial leadership that continue cultural practices, supports cultural obligations, and brings respect and reciprocity, enables the broader population to belong, care and connect to/with/for Ngurra in an indigenous Universe-referent manner. As has been shown, localised caring-for-Country practices strengthen localised belonging and enhance human and other-than-human wellbeing through custodial leadership. Recognising Goanna's place in this weaving brings out the more-than-human in us all.

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"Moving Forward": Arts and Indigenous Reciprocal Leadership in a Neehithuw (Woodland Cree) School Arts Project

Janice Victor, Warren Linds, Linda Goulet, Lacey Eninew, and Keith Goulet

Abstract

This article discusses an arts-based program carried out in a Neehithuw (Woodland Cree) school in northern Saskatchewan. Using historical photographs, students wrote a poem and then performed the poem for various audiences. The teaching/learning relationship based on Neehithuw language concepts and values allowed student leadership to develop so that students were comfortable bringing their lived culture into the curriculum. Thus, the project illustrates the effectiveness of the arts as well as a pedagogical approach that uses Indigenous reciprocal leadership to enact Neehithuw[1] concepts and values to achieve educational decolonisation and cultural affirmation.

Keywords: Arts, reciprocal leadership, culture, decolonisation, Indigenous leadership, Indigenous wellbeing

Introduction

Indigenous children have different educational needs that often put them at odds with the Euro-Canadian mainstream educational practices. These needs are further exacerbated by racism and poverty (Patteson, Restoule, Margolin, & de Leon, 2010). Patteson et al. indicated that 95% of their Aboriginal participants identified the need for traditional teaching practices that included learning models that were collaborative, hands on, experiential, and holistic. Indigenous students who engaged in arts-based learning activities exhibited improvements to their personal and cultural identity along with greater engagement, success, and enjoyment in learning activities that further contributed to their educational perseverance (Patteson et al., 2010). This article will elaborate on an arts project in a First Nations high school in northern Saskatchewan. The project illustrates the effectiveness of the arts as well as a pedagogical approach using Indigenous reciprocal leadership that incorporate Indigenous concepts of leadership that draw upon the Nehinuw (Cree) concepts of teaching and learning: *kikinaumagehin* (teaching others), *kiskenaumasowin* (teaching oneself) and *kiskinaumatowin* (teaching each other) (Goulet & Goulet, 2014).

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[1] In this article, the concepts of the Cree language are used since it is the language of the community in which the research took place. There are different dialects and spellings of Cree terms that are used in the writing of this paper since different sources of Cree language come from different dialect communities, for example the Neehithuw community where the research took place (TH dialect) and the Nehinuw community of Cumberland House (N dialect).

Arts-based educational activities become decolonizing practices when they empower students to choose and engage in projects with which they closely identify, thus validating their cultural identities and lived experiences (Riecken, Conibear, Michel, Lyall, Scott, Tanaka, & Strong-Wilson, 2006). When facilitated using reciprocal leadership, the arts have the potential to provide a venue for youth to identify the issues important to them in their own voices. The arts enable students to take leadership in generating stories of their lived experiences, which represents an alternative form of literacy through the discovery of knowledge in ways not limited to reading and writing. Once their voices are heard, the teacher can respond, sharing her expertise to assist the student or students' ideas or expression to move forward. This reciprocal leadership of the students and the teacher taking turns in learning leadership decolonizes the normalized colonizing hierarchical methods of teaching in our education systems.

Indigenous leadership

Research on Indigenous leadership informed by Indigenous research methods is a recent area of study, thus making Indigenous leadership from an Indigenous perspective an emerging area of research (Voyageur, Calliou & Brearley, 2015). In her research with Indigenous leaders, Pinay-Schindler (2011) identified four main aspects of Indigenous leadership: language, relationships, values, and place. These four forms are interrelated and interact with each other in the implementation of the process of leadership. Leaders are seen as guardians of the language, fostering healthy decolonizing relationships based on traditional values while facilitating interactions in the physical, social, intellectual and spiritual spaces.

In terms of language, Cree has several terms for leadership because leadership is more distributed throughout the community (Keith Goulet[2], personal communication). Decision making is not as hierarchical as more rigid forms of Western leadership. For example, the term *Ogimaw* is what the chief was traditionally called but other people who took leadership in other areas such as trapping or fishing may also be called *Ogimaw*. *Ogeechitaw* is a highly respected leader in the community who usually exemplifies the spiritual values of the community such as generosity and kindness. *Oneeganeew* is the general term for leader and literally means "one who is out front".[3] *Neeganeewin* is leadership, however in Cree, leadership does not necessarily rest with one person because there is a greater reciprocal flexibility. For example *meskocheestumatowin* is taking turns leading. In an educational context, leadership terms are implied in three forms of teaching that reflect a shifting in the hierarchical manner of power distribution in decision making: *kiskinaumagehin* (teaching others), *kiskinaumasowin* (teaching oneself), and *kiskinaumatowin* (teaching each other) (Goulet & Goulet, 2014). *Kiskinaumagehin* occurs when the teacher takes the position of leadership while in *kiskinaumatowin* the students (and maybe the teacher) are taking

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[2] Keith Goulet is a fluent Cree speaker, born and raised in the Nehinuw community of Cumberland House, Saskatchewan. When he was growing up, the community was an isolated Cree speaking community living off the land, with very few people, like the RCMP or the teachers, speaking English.

[3] This term *ogneeganeew* is not restricted to humans but is also used for other beings; for example, *oneeganootewustim* is the word for the lead dog in a dog team.

turns in the position of leadership interacting in a reciprocal manner, learning from the expertise and experience of each other. *Kiskinaumasowin* is when the self takes the lead in learning.

Developing healthy, decolonized relationships is key to Indigenous leadership. Green (1992) identified Indigenous leadership as related to the historical struggle for sovereignty and self-determination. Leaders act as collaborators, who through their caring work create a sense of belonging, reciprocity, trust, inclusion, and which builds a sense of community (Brearly, 2015). They facilitate interactions of the self (mind, body, heart, and spirit) and the collective, the land or place of engagement and people (Arden, Wall, & Horn, 2006). As storytellers they create an individual and collective identity and pass on Indigenous Wisdom.

Indigenous leaders base their actions on traditional values. Young (2006) makes the connection between traditional values and relationships when she states "[c]ulture informs leadership by providing values about how to interact in relationships, both with humans and non-humans" (p. 46). Leadership is seen more as an opportunity to serve the community that engenders the value of reciprocity. Leaders take the time to respectfully listen and develop a relationship, involving "every sense and every part of our being" in the process (Brearley, 2015, p. 91). In Cree, *pehegemmisowin* (excessive individualism) and *ispahgeninisowin* (the attitude of being superior to others) is frowned upon in any person, but especially in those in leadership positions. This view is apparent as one of Martell's (2016) participants shared his view of "an essential quality of a leader" (p. 137).

> [W]hen one realized that their competencies were as much or more owned by the community as by the individual, it put things into perspective. It helped to know where to direct one's energy. When humility taught that we were not as important as we thought we were, we stopped trying to provide all the answers and started to listen for them. There was richness in the community's will. It took many skills to draw out that rich direction but the most useful skill of all was humility. (p. 137)

Reciprocity and listening to the views of those affected by the decision making is a key in effective Indigenous leadership.

Place is a significant aspect of Indigenous leadership in that leaders situate themselves and their life journeys in the collective and in relation to others, both physically and metaphysically (Pinay-Schindler, 2011; Martell, 2016) so place is not just a physical space but an embedded view of being relationship with the physical, social, and spiritual aspects of life located in the present, the past and the future. As stated by Pinay-Schindler (2011), connection to land, the ancestors and place was "vital to being a strong leader" (p. i). Place is the context in which leaders are situated. Leadership is seen as a tool to be used in context to draw upon and further Indigenous knowledge and understandings to achieve the goals and aspirations of the community and nation as they strive for self-determination (Gladstone & Pepion, 2016).

The Context

This research took place in a Neehithuw (Woodland Cree) community located in northern Saskatchewan on the shores of a large lake at the edge of the Pre-Cambrian shield. It is one of the largest First Nations in Canada with a population of over 10,000 members. Although the youth we worked with live in the community and primarily speak English, their grandparents would have attended the Anglican residential school and speak Woodland Cree as their first language. Many grandparents would have spent a good part of their life living on the land, hunting, trapping, fishing and carrying out seasonal gathering activities such as berry picking and gathering medicinal plants. Many families continue to participate in these activities and the Woodland Cree language continues to be the predominant language of the older generation in homes and the community.

The Arts Program

The arts program referred to in this article was part of a collaborative research partnership of Indigenous and Settler scholars with the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre (IPHRC) and various First Nation communities in northern and southern Saskatchewan. The purpose of the larger research project was to offer theatre and arts-based programs to help First Nations youth examine and reflect on their lives with the goal of promoting wellness (for example, Goulet, Linds, Episkenew & Schmidt, 2011; Ranahan, Yuen & Linds, 2017; Hyslop, Linds, Goulet & Schmidt, 2018). For the research project referred to in this article, our research agreement was with Board of Education of the First Nation and our research was conducted from 2013 to 2016 in the First Nations' controlled grade 5 to 12 school that had a population of approximately 280 students, consisting primarily of members from the Neehithuw Nation. The extracurricular drama program was facilitated by the project's research assistant, Lacey Eninew, who also taught high school drama classes for the project. Lacey is a member of this First Nation so played a key role in community relationships and ethical considerations that were also approved by the University. A postdoctoral researcher with IPHRC, Janice Victor, visited the community once a week to work with Lacey and assist with the research process.

In early March of 2015, Lacey organized a group of girls between the ages of 12 and 14 for a lunchtime Drama Club. Boys were invited to be part of the club as well but none displayed any interest in participating. Initially, the group played trust building and theatre games. Lacey asked them if they wanted to work toward creating a small performance for the Tribal Council's Aboriginal arts festival in April. The group agreed so Lacey facilitated the achievement of this goal by coming up with a framework to help students generate ideas using brainstorming recorded on a flipchart. To her question, "What do you guys want to make?" the students responded, "Something about being Native." Further brainstorming elicited a wide variety of responses including: Neehithuw words for grandparents, different forms of traditional arts such as beading and dancing, activities like fishing and hunting, and so on. To narrow down the possibilities, Lacey used the next flipchart to get students to consider if they wanted to focus on what it means to be

Native in the "Past, Present, or Future." With those presented as their options, they came up with two ideas under the "Past" before deciding to focus on residential school and the fur trade. The next flipchart, "Research" was developed as Lacey had students come up with different ways that they could do research about the past for their project. "Creative options" was used to list the different options students had to choose from based upon the kinds of activities that students wanted to do and that Lacey felt comfortable leading, one of which was creating a poem to act out. It is important to note that as teacher, Lacey, in her leadership position, ensured that she was part of the decision making of the students at this point to ensure that the students' choice was one that she thought they all could accomplish. Lacey then revisited the different ways that the students could do research on their topic. The students' initial idea was to interview older family members about their experiences in residential schools. Students were provided with computer tablets to record the interviews and were also provided some advice on how to ask people about their experiences in the form of stories. Lacey developed a letter to explain the activity and purpose of the interviews to the students' parents and guardians. The youth did not end up doing these interviews because the process did not seem natural for them, or they were embarrassed about approaching their family members, so a new approach was needed.

As a member of the community, Lacey knew there were historical photos in the local library so she took the students to visit the location and had the archivist present the collection to the group. The archived photographs depicted the community's residential school, its students and teachers, and a wide variety of cultural activities of the community from the early part of the 20th century including fishing, hide preparation, food preparation, trapline cabins, and snowshoe making, among others. Lacey asked students to pick one photo that appealed to them in some way and provided each student with a copy of their chosen photo. Lacey guided students to think about their chosen archival photos by getting them to fill out six sections on a paper that had headings to encourage descriptions of their photo in those areas in preparation for writing the poem. The headings were: Image, Sound, Feeling, Light, Questions, and Repeating Words. The purpose of this activity was to get the students reflecting on the artistic elements of each photograph that added to their visual and emotional impact. Lacey then had the students vote on a single photo to write a collective poem about and they chose Marina's fishing image.[4]

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[4] While real names are used for the role in this research for the authors of this paper and for the Elder, all student names are pseudonyms.

Figure 1: Fishing with hands (Northern Saskatchewan Archives, photograph by Florence McKay)

This was an archival photo of boys and girls from the residential school in their community during the spring sucker run[5] at the shallows of the river that flows into the lake, where to this day, children and community members continue to catch suckers using just their hands. Lacey then asked the students to each write a stanza of poetry about the fishing picture. She collected those stanzas and then, as a group, they created a poem by rearranging the students' lines into a much larger poem. The choices of where to place each line was made based upon chronology and theme, as determined largely by the students. With students' permission, Lacey made minor changes to some of the words to improve flow or readability. The final poem is as follows:

Moving Forward

Catching fish
Surrounded by trees
Eating from Mother Nature's dish
The children were free.

Fishing with nets
Catching with our hands

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[5] The sucker run occurs over the course of a few days in April or May when the White Sucker fish (*Catostomus commersoni*) and Longnose or "Red" Sucker fish (*Catostomus catostomus*) are spawning. The fish migrate from the lake into the local stream and are easily hand caught in the shallow rapids at that time.

Getting our feet wet
Proud is how we stand.

Many Native people
A lot of fresh waters
A newly built steeple
Beautiful sons and beautiful daughters.

They took the kids in boats and planes
To the Mission School with a priest
When they got there it started to rain
Many would starve while few would feast.

The kids were filled with fear
They were crying
They shed many tears
Cause it felt like they were dying.

Today we know that the residential school was wrong
But we still have our pride
And we know that our people are strong
Because our language and culture is still alive. (Grade 6 Drama Club, April, 2015)

Then, in Lacey's words:

> When the poem was done, I asked them who should read it and they agreed that
> I read while they perform. We began with the first stanza and they spontaneously
> began acting it out. I guided them only on an aesthetic level and when sensitive
> topics arose, like during the line "cause it felt like they were dying". I had a
> conversation with them about how there would most likely be former residential
> school students watching their performance. How many are still healing and we
> don't want to open old wounds. It was this conversation that led to the
> importance of moving on. Yes, this terrible thing happened. Yes, it was wrong.
> Yes, we must acknowledge it. But we cannot be stuck there. We have to move
> forward. It was this conversation that gave the title of the poem "Moving
> Forward". I encouraged them to think about the positive aspects. Is our culture
> still alive? Yes! Can you still hear our language being spoken? Yes! What does
> this tell us about our people? That we are strong! So with this idea, we wrote the
> last stanza together. I guided them in this way because I knew it was of
> paramount importance to end on a positive note, no matter how grim the subject
> was. (Field notes, April 27, 2015)

Influenced by a conversation she had with a community elder, Bill Ballantyne, Lacey also talked to the students about the power of art to create the future. Her intention with this part of the activity was to enable the youth think about how we can move forward, which thus became the title of the poem. After they had created movements to animate the poem, they practiced and then performed it on three occasions. They first performed at the regional Fine Arts Festival hosted by the Grand Council and then did so a second time at a day activity centre for adults with developmental disabilities. Their final performance was done during an assembly of all the students at their own school.

Indigenous Reciprocal Leadership and the Arts

We contend that Indigenous, reciprocal leadership and the arts foster the development of curricula that is decolonizing and culturally appropriate for the students. With their focus on creativity and imagination, the arts have the potential for student reflection and cultural expression that can develop and reaffirm the students' Indigenous identities. In this drama project, Lacey's leadership is reciprocal as she incorporates the Cree concepts of the three forms of Nehinuw teaching and learning: *kiskinaumagehin* (teaching others), *kiskinaumasowin* (teaching oneself) and *kiskinaumatowin* (teaching each other). Through use of these three forms the four aspects of Indigenous leadership emerge: language, values, relationship and place.

In her interaction with the youth, Lacey enacts the concepts of teaching/learning of the Cree language. All three forms (as above) are evident in her teaching interactions with the youth. For example, *kiskinaumagehin* (teaching others) is used when Lacey's creates frameworks to guide students in their creative processes and help them think through how they can bring to fruition their creative ideas. It is also evident when she talks to them about how art can create a future. *Kiskinaumasowin* (teaching oneself) occurs when students choose a photo, come up with descriptions of the photo and write a line of poetry on their own whereas *kiskinaumatowin* (teaching each other) takes place as students write the poem collectively and work together as group to create the actions that illustrate the lines of poetry they had written. One other key Neethinuw term evident in Lacey's interactions with students is that of *tipenimisowin* (coming to have authority over oneself). *Tipenimisowin* is developed by Lacey's turn taking in leadership. By sharing leadership with students, she is developing their decision-making ability and thus their sense of self authority. In addition to utilizing Indigenous language concepts, Cree language terms are used in the students' responses in the brainstorming. We also see Cree language referred to as a sense of pride in the last line of the students' poem.

Many Neehithuw values are evident in Lacey's leadership. She uses these values to decolonize her interactions with her students. By decolonizing, we refer to the transformation of the conventional classroom that is hierarchical, teacher-driven, and task centered into one where Indigenous pedagogies and values are at the centre of the relationships between teacher and student. Here space is made for Indigenous ways of knowing and being, thereby shifting perceptions of culture

and power relationships (Smith, 1999). Interactivity is a key concept in the Cree world view reflected in the grammatical structures of the language itself (Goulet & Goulet, 2014). Cree educator Verna Kirkness identified reciprocity as a key value in Indigenous education (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). When reciprocity is brought to educational leadership it is one method of sharing power in the teaching-learning relationship, where the teacher creates space for students' self and group expression, then responds to that creation and, in her response, creates another space for student thought and leadership.

Lacey's use of reciprocal leadership fosters student choice as students made the group decision to create an entry for the Fine Arts Festival. They brainstormed and chose the topic "Being Native", a topic that reflected their interest in exploring their cultural identity. Rather than defining for students what 'Being Native' was, Lacey responded to that choice by providing a structure through which the students could explore what 'being Native' was to them and how they could represent that understanding to others. In reciprocal leadership, the responses and ideas of either the teacher or the students do not always work out. In this particular case, it was the idea to interview adults about their experience in residential schools. Although Lacey and Janice talked about how to do interviews with the students, in hindsight, Lacey thought that the students did not have enough training in doing interviews especially concerning a sensitive topic like experiences of residential schooling. When asked a few days later why they did not do the interviews, students responded with "I don't know", "I fell asleep", "I forgot", or more telling, "I was going to ask that old man but I didn't want to because I thought it would be too creepy to call him and invite him to my house and ask him questions." Lacey thought perhaps the interview structure felt too contrived and superficial so students were uncomfortable communicating with adults in this way.

Additionally, time constraints meant that students only had one weekend to do an interview. However, one student did talk to her dad about residential school, and he told her about the day he was taken from the trapline. So even though these interviews did not happen in a predictable and controlled way, for one student, the idea was able to foster dialogue between two generations when done in a more natural and authentic manner. When the idea of the interviews did not work out, Lacey was able to draw on her local community knowledge of archival photos and flexibly adapt the activity to students' responses. By drawing upon her skills, knowledge and creativity as a teacher, she supported students' creative imaginations and needs while circumventing an obstacle. Her use of *otootemitowin* (openness) (Goulet & Goulet, 2014) to students and their ideas facilitated reciprocal leadership as with her students, she constructed a creative space where contributions were valued and boundaries were respected. This approach appeared to enhance students' experiences and contributed to the group's creative process.

Reciprocal leadership does not mean the role of the teacher and the students are the same. Lacey continues in her role as teacher by providing some structure for new learning or providing information that would help students think creatively and generate ideas. Although she remains open and shares power with students, she does not give up her authority as the teacher. As she

stated, when students were brainstorming the activities they wanted to do, she responded by keeping in mind her own limits to the student suggestions:

> Before we even began to create any product, the students came in with all kinds of ideas of what they wanted to do. One said, "I want to dance pow wow" and "I want to be a mean nun". Another wanted to make a human pyramid. So, as a facilitator, I kept these ideas at the back of my head not knowing exactly how they were going to fit into whatever we were going to create. I began by listing options of what they could do. Writing a group poem and acting it out was one option that was called out, and one that I had confidence in my own ability to facilitate. (Fieldnotes, May 7, 2015)

At the same time, remaining open to all ideas from students prevented them from feeling "shut down" and thus encouraged ongoing active participation. Decisions as to how to proceed with the project were made collectively as Lacey guided students to consider their various suggestions. In this project, Lacey also achieves reciprocity by implementing the Cree value of *kistenimitowin* (respect)(Goulet & Goulet, 2014; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). She respects students' expertise in knowing what they want to learn and how they want to learn when she has them determine the topics they want to investigate. She also does not require them to do interviews when they express discomfort with the process which, in addition to respect, is an example of reciprocal leadership as she takes direction for the process from the lead of the students.

During the project, leadership shifts from herself to individual students to groups of students and to the group as a whole. This reciprocity reflects the importance in Nehinuw thought of relationships and interactivity (Goulet & Goulet 2014) and the concept of *kiskinaumatowin* (teaching each other). When teaching each other, all parties come together to share what they have to offer to others in order to support and enhance the learning process. This can only happen in a relationship of mutual trust, power sharing, caring and respect, which Lacey made evident in her field notes:

> I made it a necessity to not censor their voices, and I think because of this they were very generous and comfortable sharing their ideas. I tried to incorporate as many of their original ideas as possible. For example, during the building of the steeple [to represent the church] they were able to do the human pyramid. Other ideas fell to the side, but I think that initially accepting *all* ideas was important. Also, having trust in them was huge. If I didn't trust that they could do it, I probably would have told the Fine Arts Committee that we were not going to go. Even though there was a moment of panic when the Festival was four days away and we still had nothing, I made it a priority to trust them. In the end, they created a beautiful representation of our people's history, learned some of the facts, and had fun with the creative process (Field notes, May 7, 2015).

This representation was made possible by a combination of arts and Indigenous forms of leadership including the second aspect of Indigenous leadership as identified by Pinay-Schindler (2011): relationships.

In the story of the Fine Arts performance, Lacey used the arts, specifically initially theatre games, to develop close, personal relationships between herself and the students and among the students as she started the process by playing theatre games with students. Brendtro, Brokenleg, Martin and Van Bockern (1998) assert that colonisation 'fractured' relationships within First Nations communities. Creating a culturally safe space that enables trust to emerge is of the utmost importance in the restoration of positive relationships. Theatre games are one way to construct this safe space (Goulet, Linds, Episkenew & Schmidt , 2011; Yuen et al., 2013; Victor et al., 2016). Theatre games are creative and playful opportunities that lead to collaboration and embodiment that engages the body, mind and spirit (Kangas, 2010). As Marjanovic-Shane (2010) underlines, "participants in play are seen as the collaborators in creating and directing their relationships, judgements, values and even rules" (p. 43).

In the drama project, the students participate in trust, group-building, and theatre games. For example, 'Blind' games help develop trust as participants close their eyes and, led by a partner, move around the space. These games encourage participants to pay attention to the senses we often ignore like touch and hearing. The games are introduced in order of complexity from simple to more complex which helps youth express their ideas and feelings. Through their participation, students practice self-determination and agency in making decisions and taking action in order to participate in games (Martin & Sugarman, 2003). For example, in *Circle Dash* (Rohd, 1998), everyone stands in a circle, with one person in the middle. The goal of the game is for any two people standing in the circle to silently signal with a head nod or a blink of the eye or another form of visual contact, and then switch places. The person in the middle's task is to get to an open spot before the people switching do. More than one pair can also switch at a time. "The key point here is that by just being in the circle, they are participants. Because they are making a choice one way or the other, they are involved" (p. 11), and disputes are regulated by the participants, not the teacher. Because games like these are artificial situations, there is less risk involved than 'real life' decisions and actions. At the same time, games are fun so as actions are taken in an enjoyable setting, trust is built and group cohesion develops. As Marjanovic-Shane (2010) points out, playful acts have a potential to change relationships between the players, giving them new points of reference and enabling them to experience themselves and others as co-authors of the situations. More importantly, these changes facilitate a change in roles, as players become co-constructors of the meaning of the situation and their relationship (p. 41).

Theatre games also help students overcome shyness as participation in the games requires students to make decisions and take action in a public way, practicing the skills of *tipenimisowin* (coming to have authority over oneself). Decision making is embodied and done in conjunction with other participants so all decisions and actions are visible to others. In this way, games help students

practice thinking for themselves and acting upon their ideas that lays the foundation for their participation in Indigenous reciprocal leadership and student willingness to share ideas used in the creation of the Fine Arts performance. When Lacey joins the theatre games, she becomes one of the group that flattens the hierarchical relationship between teacher and students. As the participants engage in games, it develops the trust and caring amongst the members of the group including the teacher. As the teacher participates in the games with the students, it builds teacher-student relationships, student-student relationships and flattens power relationships; all of these are key ideas in effective teaching practices for Indigenous students (Goulet & Goulet 2014).

Finally, Indigenous leadership considers the place or the context of holistic relationships in which the leadership takes place. Blodgett, Coholic, Schinke, McGannon, Peltier and Pheasant (2013) write that arts-based methods which emphasize creative expression "support holistic Indigenous ways of knowing and being that emphasize the interconnectedness of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions within an individual as well as with the life around an individual" (p. 314). The teaching/learning relationship based on Neehithuw language concepts and values allowed student leadership to develop so that students were comfortable bringing their lived culture into the curriculum. Students' sense of place, of connection to the land and waters were evident in their choice of historical photograph. The community's location beside a large lake means that the people have always been fishers, relying on fish for their livelihood. It is important to note that the historical photo selected by the students was one of fishing in a place in their community, doing an activity so familiar to all of them.

Using the archival photographs from the community connected students to their cultural past to engender pride in their people. Making connections to the past is foundational to the current era of Indigenous education because it helps to restore what was destroyed during the cultural genocide of the residential school and "60s scoop" era: cultural knowledge, identity, and pride (Sinclair, 2007; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). In the National Indian Brotherhood's[6] (1972) policy paper, "Indian Control of Indian Education", the authors stated:

> Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his people, their values and customs, their languages, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being. Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian (p. 9).

Strengthening cultural ties is important for Indigenous students. For example, Navajo elder Bruce Yazzie said, "there are many good things about being Navajo. The Navajo culture and being Navajo has sustained us for many years. It is who we are, and the culture has helped us survive all these years through many hardships" (Bruce Yazzie, 1970, quoted in E. Yazzie, 2013, p. 140).

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[6] The National Indian Brotherhood is now the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

Cultural ties foster resilience in Indigenous youth to overcome adversity and resist negative social influences (Ulturgasheva, Rasmus, Wexler, Nystad, & Kral, 2014). Cultural continuity, which involves the restoration and maintenance of culturally-based practices and values, is associated with decreased risk for youth suicide (Chandler & Lalonde, 2008). Drawing upon local knowledge is an important aspect of bringing culturally appropriate curriculum to schooling. When a teacher is not from the community in which they teach, it is harder to help students make connections to the local 'funds of knowledge'. For outsiders, it is important to develop relationships with those who are knowledgeable about the community such as Elders or community leaders so that they are willing to share their community expertise when needed by the teacher (Goulet & Goulet, 2014).

Concluding comments

Indigenous reciprocal leadership builds on Indigenous concepts and ways of thinking about and doing culturally appropriate, decolonizing education. As Cree educator and scholar, Angelina Weenie (2009) states, "We build a community of learners and establish alliances and partnerships to facilitate this process [of curriculum development]. The content emanates from that visioning process and using that imaginative realm of being, to come up with solutions, much like our ancestors did" (p. 68). The use of the arts to access that 'imaginative realm of being' combined with Indigenous reciprocal leadership illustrates the importance of both in a wholistic approach to Indigenous education. The arts develop students' self and group expression giving them the confidence and self-determining skills to be leaders in a reciprocal relationship with their teacher and each other: relationships developed through Indigenous leadership that incorporated Cree language concepts and values which in turn foster the students' expression of place, context, and identity.

Acknowledgements

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