

Narrating Oppression, Psychosocial Suffering and Survival through the Bush Babies

Project

Amy Quayle

BPsych (Hons)

MAppPsych

College of Health and Biomedicine

Psychology Discipline

Victoria University

Melbourne, Australia

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

(July, 2017)

Abstract

Aboriginal people in Australia continue to fare worse across the broad range of social, economic, and health indicators. One response to fostering Aboriginal empowerment has been through community arts and cultural development—a creative and participatory methodology for working in and with communities. The current research examined the stories shared by Aboriginal Elders as part of the Bush Babies project, and in conversational interviews with four Aboriginal Elders who participated in the project. Aboriginal storytelling through the project and in the context of the research was conceptualised as a site to examine and challenge power as part of a transformative psychosocial praxis (Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013). Informed by contextualist constructionist epistemology and critical theory, the current research adopted narrative inquiry to examine the stories shared by Aboriginal Elders in explaining the past, present, and possibilities for the future and in constructing what it means to be Aboriginal/Noongar in the present. Rappaport's (2000) model for conceptualising personal stories, community narratives, and dominant cultural narratives, and writing on counter-stories/storytelling informed analysis of the stories. Three broad community narratives were identified in the Bush Baby storytelling. Drawing from both historical memory and the living memory of the Elders, the stories highlighted the circuits of dispossession in the lives of Aboriginal people. Elders not only narrated historical forms of violence and injustice, but also the continuity of structural and cultural forms of violence, and the ongoing disregard for Aboriginal people. The Elders' stories also showed the destructive and cumulative psychosocial impacts of social suffering for individual subjectivities, communities, and across generations. Importantly however, the stories also pointed to the various ways Noongar/Aboriginal people have resisted oppression and the resources that have been central to cultural continuity and survival. Told from positions of alterity, the Elders' stories provide insights into the oppression, resistance and change. Through these

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

stories, we are called upon to bear witness to social injustices, past and present, but also to the stories of strength and survival, which counter the common depictions of dysfunction and despair, and play an important role in affirming identity and ensuring cultural continuity. These stories are thus important both with and beyond Aboriginal communities. Community psychologists can play an important role in supporting Aboriginal communities to tell their stories. Yet working at the cultural interface requires ongoing vigilance.

Student Declaration

“I, Amy Quayle, declare that the PhD thesis entitled ‘Narrating Oppression, Psychosocial Suffering and Survival through the Bush Babies Project’ is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work”.

Signature:

Date: 18/07/17

Published Articles

The following articles have been published based on, or including aspects of, this research:

Quayle, A., Sonn, C., & Kasat, P. (2016). Community arts as public pedagogy: Disruptions into public memory through Aboriginal counter-storytelling. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20(3), 261-277. doi: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1047662

Quayle, A., Sonn, C.C., & van den Eynde, J. (2016). Narrating the accumulation of dispossession: Stories of Aboriginal Elders. *Community Psychology in Global Perspective*, 2(2), 79-96.

Sonn, C., Rua, M. & Quayle, A. (In press). Culture, Indigeneity and coloniality: A contribution to decolonizing applied social psychology. In Hodgetts, D. G., & O'Doherty, K. (Eds.). *Sage handbook of applied social psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all the Bush Babies and their descendants. It is my sincere hope that we are not having the same conversations in 20 years.

Acknowledgements

I would first like to acknowledge my Principal Supervisor Christopher Sonn for his guidance and support over the many years I have had the privilege of working with him. Thanks for the many invaluable opportunities you have created for me throughout my research journey. I feel incredibly lucky to have been able to work with someone whose work I so admire. Thanks for always pushing me to think more critically, your prompt feedback, your belief in me, and your humour. Thanks also to my associate supervisor, Julie van den Eynde. Your critical eye, insights, and personal reflections were extremely valuable, and you always seemed to know when I needed to hear some positive words.

I would like to acknowledge all those who participated in this research. In particular, the four Elders who volunteered their time to speak with me about their lives, and all the Bush Babies who shared their stories as part of CANs Rekindling strategy. I feel extremely privileged to have heard these stories, and it has been such an honour to be involved in putting these important stories into the public record. With the recent loss of some of the Bush Baby Elders' the importance of this work to rekindle stories on country, has been reaffirmed. Thanks to the artists, facilitators and others involved in the Bush Babies project, including Ross Storey, Ned Crossley, Karen Keeley, Graham Smith, and Jan Smith, who also contributed to this research in one way or another.

This research would not have been possible without the invitation by Community Arts Network to conduct the research alongside their Rekindling Stories on Country projects, and in particular, the former Managing Director Pilar Kasat who has been central to the collaborative relationship with VU and the development of the Rekindling strategy. Thanks Pilar for entrusting me to carry out this research, and for your generosity in my trips to Perth. Thanks also to Project Manager, Michelle White for taking me to and from Perth to Narrogin, for your enthusiasm and passion for the Bush Babies project, and for the many open and insightful informal conversations along the way: I learnt so much in those trips between Perth and Narrogin. Thanks also to CAN

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

staff based at the Narrogin office, Geri Hayden and Marcelle Reilley who played a central role throughout the research process. Thanks for generously sharing your insights and personal stories. It was invaluable to spend time with you both at the CAN office. Without your support, this research would not have been possible. Thanks to all the other CAN staff and project facilitators I met along the way. It was great to be part of the great work you do across the Wheatbelt.

I feel very lucky to have been able to undertake my PhD alongside a group of wonderful and supportive fellow PhD students. Thanks to Linda Chiodo, Monica Madyaningrum, Kirsten Meyer, Dicky Pelupessy, Mema Motusaga, Wawan Mas'udi, Leila Rahimi, who all played a role in my PhD experience. It has certainly not been the isolating and lonely experience I was warned about. Thanks to the support from VU staff and particularly Chris and the Community, Identity and Displacement Research Network, in creating a supportive, collaborative, and encouraging environment for post-graduate students. The post-graduate discussion group was extremely valuable part of my learning. Thanks also to Lutfiye Ali, Alison Baker, and Romana Morda for their support, encouragement, and inspiration along the way. Thanks to David McCallum for his generous and constructive feedback, Garth Stevens for his insights into the research, and Karen Jackson for her support and kindness. Thanks to my friends and family, and especially Tim for your patience, support, and encouragement throughout this long and arduous journey. I am looking forward to a post-PhD life with you. Finally, I will be forever grateful to Romana and Chris for the day they came for coffee/cakes at the cafe where I was working and encouraged me to come back and do my honours in psychology. Who would have thought I would eventually go on to complete my PhD. Thankyou!

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Student Declaration.....	iv
Published Articles	v
Acknowledgements.....	vii
List of Figures	xv
List of Tables	xvi
Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview	1
The Australian Post-colonising Context	1
Decolonisation and Liberation	3
Community Arts and Cultural Development and Indigenous Empowerment	6
Researcher Positioning.....	8
A shift in focus.....	9
Thesis Structure	11
Chapter 2: Australia's Ongoing Colonial History	15
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia	15
Noongar people of south-west Western Australia.	16
Ongoing disadvantage.....	17
Brief Historical Background	19
Racism and colonisation.	19
The protection era.	23
The assimilation era.	27
From assimilation to self-determination to practical reconciliation.	28
The Bringing them Home Report and the apology to the Stolen Generations.	31

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Closing the gap?.....	33
The Continuity of Colonial Power	35
Chapter Summary	39
Chapter 3: Psychosocial Impacts of Oppression and Approaches to Liberation	40
Theorising Oppression	41
Internalising Oppression: Effects for Individuals and Communities.....	46
Intergenerational Impacts: Trauma, Vulnerability and Woundedness	51
The Dangers of Mental Health Language	56
Psychosocial suffering.	61
Community-Based Approaches to Liberation	62
Stories and Storytelling.....	64
Indigenous people, resilience, resistance, and survival.	71
Mobilising stories and storytelling: Creative and participatory methodologies. .	76
Chapter Summary	85
Chapter 4: The Bush Babies Project in Narrogin.....	87
Western Australia's Wheatbelt	87
Challenges Facing the Noongar Community of Narrogin	88
Community Arts and Cultural Development	95
Community Arts Network Western Australia.....	99
The Bush Babies Project in Narrogin	103
The Honouring our Elders portrait project.....	103
Storylines.	108
Creating an archive of Bush Baby stories.....	108
Honouring our Elders exhibitions.....	112
Chapter Summary	113

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Chapter 5: Research Methodology and Methods	114
From Researching Community Arts to a Focus on the Elders' Stories	114
Critical and Contextualist Constructionist Research	117
Engaging with voices from positions of alterity.	121
Narrative Inquiry.....	126
<i>Critical Constructionist Narrative Inquiry</i>	129
Data Collection	134
Laying the Groundwork.....	134
Interviews with Elders	136
Interview participants.....	138
Initial interviews.	139
Follow up interviews.....	143
Reflections on interviews.....	143
Archival Materials	145
Reciprocity and Giving Back.....	150
Data Analysis	150
Data Analysis Framework.....	150
Data Analysis Process.....	151
Data triangulation.....	155
Three Shared Community Narratives	158
Chapter Summary	159
Chapter 6: Narrating the Circuits of Dispossession.....	160
The Collective Remembering of Oppression: "Life was put on us"	161
The ideology of white supremacy: "The blackfella was the outcast"	161
Direct violence: "It was the power to keep them down, have them in fear".	163

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Exploitation and exclusion: “They couldn’t do without the Noongars”	167
Fragmenting families and communities: “We weren’t allowed to be a family”	174
Dispossessed of culture: “We weren’t allowed to learn no Noongar culture” .	184
Narrating the Continuity of Oppression: “It’s Still Going on”	187
Structural violence: “We’ve still got nothing”	187
Symbolic violence “It’s got to be exposed one way or another”	197
Disregard: “We still get looks”	201
Chapter Summary	203
Chapter 7: Narrating the Psychosocial Consequences of Dispossession.....	204
Psychic Harm: “It’s burnt in our Brain, how we was Treated, Like Animals”	206
Summary	218
Community Fragmentation: “No one Listens Anymore”	218
Summary	229
Intergenerational Impacts: “Our Kids are Carrying What We’ve Been Through”	229
Summary	238
Chapter Summary	238
Chapter 8: Narrating Resistance, Survival and Cultural Continuity.....	240
Individual and Interpersonal Strategies	242
Storytelling, Resistance, and Survival	247
Concealed stories of oppression: “Noongars have a way of laughing”	247
Resistance stories: “They couldn’t kill the spirit” .	252
Cultural Continuity and Survival	261
Cultural knowledge and enactment: “Culture is not dead”	262
Connection with country: “It’s still Noongar country”	270

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Kinship: “We are all connected”	275
Chapter Summary	280
Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion	282
The Circuits of Dispossession in Post-Colonising Australia	283
Psychosocial Suffering: A Consequence of Dispossession	287
Resilience, Resistance, and Survival of People and Culture	290
Storytelling, the Recovery of Historical Memory, and Decolonisation.....	292
Naming social realities, reframing issues and challenging wilful ignorance.....	293
Reclaiming voice, history, identity, culture and community	297
The Utility of Narrative and the Circuits Framework for Examining Oppression and Resistance	305
Whiteness, Allies and a Decolonising Standpoint	309
Limitations and Future Research	312
Conclusion	315
References.....	318
Appendix A: The Bush Babies Project in Other Towns	378
Appendix B: Honouring Our Elders Exhibition Flyer	382
Appendix C: Ethics Approval.....	383
Appendix D: Support Letter from Community Arts Network WA	384
Appendix E: Details of Fieldwork	386
Appendix F: Information to Participants and Informed Consent.....	389
Appendix G: Semi-structured Interview Schedule	394
Appendix H: Example of Summary of Elders’ Storytelling.....	397

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Appendix I: Initial Coding Scheme	402
Appendix J: Research Process	404

List of Figures

Figure 1. The original portrait of Tom (Source: CAN)	106
Figure 2. The second portrait of Tom (Source: CAN).....	107
Figure 3. Noongar Elder Winnie McHenry at the exhibition (Source: CAN)..	110
Figure 4. Bush Baby data sources	146
Figure 5. Three broad community narratives.....	158
Figure 6. The circuits of dispossession past and present	160
Figure 7. The consequences of dispossession: “This is where it all stems from”	205
Figure 8. Narrating resistance and survival	241
Figure 9. Cultural continuity and survival	262

List of Tables

Table 1: Bush Baby sources and participants.	149
---	-----

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

The Australian Post-colonising Context

A broad interdisciplinary body of research has highlighted how Australia's history of colonisation and ongoing relations of power continue to shape and constrain everyday lifeworlds, subjectivities, and intersubjective relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Australia (e.g., Hattam & Atkinson, 2006; Land, 2015; Maddison, 2011, 2013; Moreton-Robinson, 2000, 2004). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to fare worse across all social, economic, and health indicators—with a lower life expectancy, poorer educational outcomes, and higher rates of suicide, incarceration, and unemployment (Anderson, Baum, & Bentley, 2007; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2015; Carson, Dunbar, Chenhall, & Bailie, 2007). Walter (2010a) noted that, in the era of neoliberalism, the everyday lived realities of Aboriginal people as a social group, are characterised by disregard from the broader Australian community, absences from spheres of influence at all levels, a socioeconomic position of poverty, and dispossessions (see also Walter, 2009). On the other side of the domain of Aboriginality (Walter, 2010a), is the taken for granted, power, privilege, and normativity of whiteness (Applebaum, 2016; Frankenberg, 1993; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Moreton-Robinson, 2004) that characterise settler colonial societies such as Australia (Maddison, 2011, 2013; Maddison & Brigg, 2011).

Critical scholars of race, whiteness, and Indigeneity (e.g., A. Bell, 2014; Maddison, 2011; Moreton-Robinson, 2004; Quayle & Sonn, 2013; Smith, 1999), have highlighted how, in settler colonial contexts, Aboriginal experiences of coloniality and racialised oppression are often silenced minimised, or denied and the longer history of colonisation including the systematic dispossession of Aboriginal people erased from the national consciousness. Furthermore, as noted by Walter, Taylor, and Habibis (2011), many non-Indigenous Australians live their lives in “an Indigenous free zone” (p. 9) —socially and spatially

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

separated from Indigenous Australia (see also Atkinson, Taylor, & Walter, 2010). Thus, knowledge of Aboriginal histories, culture, identities, and belonging, including representations of strength and resilience as opposed to dysfunction, damage, and despair (Walter, 2010a), is also generally limited in the broader Australian cultural landscape (Koerner, 2013, 2015). Indeed, Walter (2010a) noted the invisibility of Aboriginal people except as social problems, in which case they are hyper-visible.

Different authors have therefore advocated the need to challenge the symbolic and structural violence of whiteness as dispossession (Moreton-Robinson, 2009). Non-Indigenous authors have expressed the need to move beyond white guilt (Maddison, 2011), to create a pedagogy of post-indignation (Hattam & Atkinson, 2006), of forging ethical white subjectivities cognisant of the historical injustices perpetuated against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Kowal, 2011), and of decolonising solidarity (Land, 2015). Such approaches have problematised the exclusive focus on the Aboriginal Other and the construction of Indigenous Australia as a “theater of pathology” (Nicoll, 2008, pp. 57-58), and thus as ‘the problem’ in need of being ‘fixed’. As noted by Moreton-Robinson (2009), the “discourse of pathology is a powerful weapon deployed by patriarchal white sovereignty to gain support from its white citizens for the exercising of its power” (p. 77). Instead such approaches emphasise relationality of self and other, within matrices of power and privilege. Laubscher (2006), a man of colour from South Africa, discussed the need to take a performative position against racism and sexism:

Instead of an exclusive focus on the other, one also needs to ask reflexive and introspective questions about oneself – about the position one occupies in matrices of power and privilege and the extent to which such positions inform one’s practices, actions and beliefs. As such, I cannot claim to be non-racist if I am white, or non-sexist if I am a male, but rather make non-racism and non-sexism a project within

which I constantly re/situate myself, and within which I continuously take up a performative position. (p. 211)

This involves recognising the historicity of contemporary relations of power and privilege, the relationality between us (coloniser and colonised), and the interconnectedness between structures and lives (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009). It also means recognising that while identities and subjectivities are constituted within longer histories and relations of power, there are always possibilities for contestation and resistance. Such writing has therefore advocated the critical interrogation of histories of colonialism and racism to understand the present, heal from the past, and co-create an alternative socially just future (Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2011, 2015; Sonn & Baker, 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2012). Such tasks are advocated as central to the longer-term processes of decolonisation and liberation.

Decolonisation and Liberation

Decolonisation is an iterative and unfinished project that seeks to “address the impacts of colonial capitalism, racism and Eurocentrism” (Glover, Dudgeon, & Huygens, 2010, p. 355). Importantly, decolonisation requires both structural and psychological work, and often begins with making visible “how colonization privileges the colonizers while exploiting and disadvantaging all others” (Glover et al., 2010, p. 355). Glover, et al. (2010) discussed the different tasks of decolonisation for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. For them, decolonisation is “a process that helps indigenous people to identity as members of a racial group systematically oppressed by a dominant culture, enabling them to take action towards social transformation” (p. 355). For members of coloniser groups, decolonisation involves coming to “acknowledge [our] personal participation in the structural and cultural racism that maintains [our] group’s economic and cultural dominance (Nairn, 2000)” (p. 355). In the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, the different tasks for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, has been referred to as the co-intentional decolonisation strategy (Huygens, 2011,

016). For Segalo, Manoff and Fine (2015), the critical project of decolonisation “involves contesting the dominant stories and hegemonic representations”; embracing “ways of thinking that have been denied and silenced”; and showing how “challenges of the present need to be understood in their historical material context” (p. 2-3). This involves engaging with stories from the margins, the subaltern stories, to learn about the experience of colonality/oppression, implications for individuals, families, and communities, and possibilities for resistance and liberation (Dutta, Sonn, & Lykes, 2016; Quayle, Sonn, & van den Eynde, 2016; Sonn & Baker, 2016; Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013).

Decolonisation is a process aimed at liberation of the oppressed and oppressors alike (Huygens, 2011). As noted by Maritza Montero (2007), a central figure of the liberation paradigm in psychology, “liberation is defined as a praxis that has its point of departure in oppressed people” (p. 525), who have historically been made invisible owing to historic, cultural, and social conditions. Liberation as “an ethical-critical-empowering and democratizing process” (Montero, 2007, p. 525), is aimed at unearthing, reclaiming, and strengthening the resources of socially excluded groups to contribute to transformation, thereby rescuing their potential, which is thwarted in contexts of social suffering and oppression. While liberation psychology has its roots in Latin America, it has increasingly been taken up in diverse contexts, including the Philippines (Enriquez, 1992), and in Core Capitalist Countries, including in the United Kingdom (Burton & Kagan, 2005, 2009), Ireland (Moane, 2009, 2011), New Zealand (O’Connor, Tilyard, & Milfont, 2011), and Australia (Sonn & Lewis, 2009). As noted by Moane (2009), liberation is necessarily a collective process, with relationships and relatedness being of central importance (see also Montero, 2007):

It is through interaction with each other, with discourses and the state that oppression is enacted and liberation is attained. Interpersonal relationships, group and community

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

contexts, and acting in solidarity are examples of relational processes involved in liberation that are the opposite of the isolation and fragmentation that accompany oppression. (Moane, 2009, p. 141)

Reflecting the understanding that knowledge is produced in relationship for the purpose of transformation, the ethics of relatedness is of central importance in liberation psychology praxis (Montero, 2007). Liberation oriented approaches to psychology have highlighted different strategies for community based interventions. These approaches are typically characterised by being participatory, democratic, empowering, and critical (Montero, 2009; Montero, Sonn, & Burton, 2017). Recognising the situated nature of knowledge (Montenegro, 2002) and driven by relational ethics, liberation approaches seek to elevate the voices of the marginalised as a means of examining and challenging exclusionary processes, practices, and discourses, but also in representing, and restoring ways of knowing, doing, and being that have been subordinated and systematically eroded.

Writing in the context of community arts practice, Sonn and Quayle (2012) identified three broad interrelated strategies mobilised as part of community psychological interventions informed by the liberation paradigm:

- Working together with a view to raise critical awareness about sources and processes of exclusion and identifying and reclaiming strengths that can form the basis for resilience and action.
- Fostering the creation of social settings in which people can come together to create partnerships across social and cultural divides and gain access to networks and resources.
- Generating counter stories and representations and engaging in the deconstruction of dominant ideologies as part of the process of promoting broader level social inclusion. (p. 268)

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

The creation of opportunities and settings for Aboriginal stories and storytelling to challenge deficit discourse, misrepresentations, and absences (Walter, 2010a), and contribute to processes of cultural reclamation, renewal, and healing has been advocated in Australia and elsewhere as part of the decolonisation agenda (e.g., Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Lavalee & Clearsky, 2006; Smith, 2012). Community based arts and cultural practice has been one approach taken to increase opportunities for participation, voice, and empowerment of marginalised communities (Bell & Desai, 2011; Dutta et al., 2016; Sonn & Baker, 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2012; Stein & Faigin, 2015). Examination of such approaches is of particular interest to researchers within community psychology given the sub-discipline's core values of empowerment, liberation, and social justice (Montero et al., 2017; Orford, 2008). The current research follows on from a longer-term collaboration with the Community Arts Network (CAN), Western Australia (see Sonn & Quayle, 2012, 2014) that my Principal Supervisor established in the late 90s and which I later became involved in.

Community Arts and Cultural Development and Indigenous Empowerment

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) has been one methodology mobilised to contribute to Indigenous empowerment (Kasat, 2013; Sonn & Quayle, 2012). CACD “is a process that builds on and responds to the aspirations and needs of communities through creative means. It is participatory and inclusive, and uses multiple modes of representation to produce local knowledge” (Sonn, Quayle, & Kasat, 2015, p. 89). In CACD work, “community artists, singly or in teams, use their artistic and organizing skills to serve the emancipation and development of a community, whether defined by geography (e.g., a neighborhood), a common interest (e.g., members of a union) or identity (e.g., members of an indigenous group)” (Adams & Goldbard, 2002, p. 8).

Sonn and Quayle (2014) framed the collaborative relationship that has been established with CAN, as critical community practice (e.g., Henderson, 2007), which

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

involves, "action based on critical theorizing, reflection, and a clear commitment to working for social justice through empowering and transformative practice" (Henderson, 2007, p. 1). In previous research undertaken with CAN, Quayle and Sonn (2013) examined the everyday understandings of barriers to partnership that differently positioned people hold, specifically, representatives of local government and Noongar people across four Wheatbelt towns (Quayle & Sonn, 2013; see also Green & Sonn, 2008). This research was guided by Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings, 2003) and whiteness studies (Frankenberg, 1993), and used discourse analysis. The aim was to problematise the exclusive focus on the Aboriginal Other, recognising that only by attending to the relationality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Australia, could the everyday lifeworlds or limit situations of Aboriginal people be transformed and the intersubjective space between us narrowed.

This work has involved thinking through how, as community psychology researchers and practitioners, we can contribute to the creation of receptive social environments (Campbell, Cornish, Gibbs & Scott, 2010) for the psychological and structural transformation necessary for Indigenous empowerment (Sonn & Quayle, 2012). In addition to this project, this collaboration has involved documenting the processes that foster empowerment, the psychosocial outcomes of participation, and the ways power can be reinscribed in these spaces despite the aims to decolonise (Green & Sonn, 2008; Sonn, Drew, & Kasat, 2002; Sonn & Green, 2006; Sonn, Quayle, & Kasat, 2015). As iterative and generative reflective practice (Bishop, Sonn, Drew, & Contos, 2002), CANs practice with Noongar people has, over time, come to be characterised by a more explicit "focus on cultural renewal and reclaiming, which is understood as central to the development of positive individual and collective identities, and the process of healing" (Sonn et al., 2015, p. 100).

Researcher Positioning

I am a non-Indigenous, white settler Australian woman. Throughout my studies and research in community psychology, I have come to recognise the taken for granted power, privilege, and normativity that comes with whiteness, and how as a beneficiary of colonial dispossession, I am implicated in the cultural genocide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2003; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015), Critical Indigenous Theory (Martin & Mirraoop, 2003; Moreton-Robinson, 2009; Rigney, 1999; Smith, 2012), whiteness studies (Frankenberg, 1993; Green et al., 2007; Levine-Rasky, 2016; Moreton-Robinson, 2004), and writing on race and epistemologies of ignorance (Mills, 2007; Sullivan & Tuana, 2007) have provided important conceptual resources in the ongoing, performative project of being a white critic of whiteness (Probyn, 2004).

I came to this research with the aspiration of contributing in some way to the broader task of closing the intersubjective space that exists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Australia. I understood this as necessarily involving disruptions into whiteness (Moreton-Robinson, 2003) and specifically the pervasive wilful ignorance of Australia's ongoing history of Aboriginal dispossession, and its implications for the present—for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. I was interested in exploring the potential role of community psychology researchers and practitioners in this space, through collaboration with community arts organisations. The current research was conducted alongside a CACD storytelling project, Bush Babies, delivered by CAN, as part of their broader Rekindling Stories on Country strategy with Aboriginal, Noongar people in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia (WA). Noongar people are the traditional owners of the South West corner of WA and represent one of the largest Aboriginal cultural blocks in Australia (South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council [SWALSC], 2017a).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Rekindling Stories on Country has evolved from CANs sustained engagement and ongoing praxis in the Wheatbelt region of WA. Rekindling Stories on Country came in response to requests from Noongar people who wanted to capture, celebrate, and share the stories of Noongars Elders, and create an archive for current and future generations. Specifically, the Rekindling Stories on Country strategy aimed to create opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and cultural transmission (CAN WA, 2013; CAN WA, 2014a). Recognising that Aboriginal histories and ways of knowing, doing, and being in the world have often been left out of the national story, this strategy also aimed to create a platform for Aboriginal, Noongar voices to be shared with a broader national and international audience (CAN WA, 2013, 2014a, 2017a).

The Bush Babies project originated with Noongar Elder Winnie McHenry. It began with the simple idea of honouring Noongar Bush Babies and the Noongar midwives who delivered them. Since its beginnings in 2010, it has been delivered in numerous towns across the Wheatbelt, taking different shape in response to the stated aspirations of Noongar people in each of the towns (see Appendix A). The central thread across each of the Bush Baby projects has been capturing, celebrating, archiving, and elevating stories of Noongar people, and Elders in particular. These were stories about being born in the bush, and/or growing up on reserves, in missions, and on the fringes of towns, as well as stories about culture, country, and family—stories about what it means to be Noongar.

A shift in focus. I began this research interested in examining the potential role of community arts in transforming relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in post-colonising (Moreton-Robinson, 2003) Australia. I was interested in exploring how through CACD practice, Aboriginal stories and storytelling could decentre whiteness and be the starting point for critical dialogues of race and coloniality within communities, as well as how it could foster the psychosocial wellbeing for Aboriginal people. Therefore, the research

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

initially sought to examine the experience of participating in CANs Rekindling Stories on Country project/s for differently positioned people, that is, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people across different age groups. The Bush Babies project ultimately became the central focus.

CAN staff, in particular Bush Babies Project Manager Michelle White, and the Noongar staff based at the Narrogin office, Marcelle Riley and Geri Hayden, played a central role throughout the research process. They functioned as an informal reference group that guided the development of the research and supported me in ensuring that the research adhered to cultural protocol and was culturally safe (Walker, Schultz, & Sonn, 2014). For example, they told me when it was appropriate to begin data collection, and who I can and should speak to.

Given the initial broad focus on the meaning of participating in the project for different people, as part of the research process, I interviewed Noongar Elders, artists and facilitators. I also interviewed non-Indigenous people who were involved in the Bush Babies project in Narrogin as artists and facilitators, and collected survey data from participants and attendees of the Bush Babies Honouring our Elders portrait exhibition. While I started out wanting to explore the meaning of the project for different people, and research methods were employed to do this, the process of undertaking the research and what people were telling me, ultimately led to the decision to make the Elders' stories the central focus of the thesis. In retrospect, this idea of centring the Elders' stories seems obvious given the focus on Rekindling Stories on Country, which has been developed in response to the stated requests of Noongar people.

In listening to research participants as well as CAN project facilitators, the focus of the research ultimately shifted from an examination of the potential role of community arts both within and beyond Aboriginal communities, to a narrower focus on the Elders' stories

and what they can tell us about the history, continuity, impacts, and the various responses to oppression. The creation of opportunities and settings for Aboriginal storytelling was recognised as the most important aspect of the project(s), and so it was the stories being told, that the research needed to examine. The research thus became an extension of the platform for Rekindling Stories on Country, with the stories understood as a site to examine and challenge power (Sonn et al., 2013). The research came to be a process of bearing witness (Fine, 2006) to the Elders' stories.

Therefore, the current research aims to explore the stories shared by Aboriginal Elders as part of the Bush Babies project. In particular, the focus is on the narratives that Elders use to explain the past, present, and possibilities for the future. The research questions are: 1) what are the narratives through which Aboriginal people in Western Australian give meaning to their past, present and future; 2) what are the key themes in these stories; and 3) what strategies are evident in how they construct their identities and sense of self?

Thesis Structure

Chapter Two focuses on the history of colonisation in Australia and the contemporary circumstances of Aboriginal peoples' lives. I discuss the central role of race and racism in colonisation, before outlining policies of protection and assimilation with a particular focus on Western Australia where the research was carried out. I then discuss some of the positive shifts in our more recent history including the official apology to the Stolen Generations in 2008. Despite these positive shifts, entrenched Aboriginal disadvantage remains an ongoing reality in Australia (Walter, 2010a; Zubrick et al., 2010). The coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000), and the lens of whiteness (Frankenberg, 1993; Green et al., 2007; Moreton-Robinson, 2000) are discussed as important theoretical and conceptual resources for understanding the legacy and continuity of this history in the present.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In Chapter Three, I review the literature on oppression, resistance, and approaches within community, critical, and liberation psychologies aimed at fostering liberation. This chapter will discuss how the deleterious effects of oppression, and colonisation specifically, have been theorised including through concepts such as internalised oppression, lateral violence, and historical trauma. Some scholars have expressed concerns around psychologising the effects of structural power relations, and deflecting attention from the ongoing structural and cultural violence inflicted on Indigenous peoples. Critical scholars have also emphasised the need to avoid a focus on woundedness or damage centred research, and to recognise the resistance, resilience, and survival of Indigenous peoples. The chapter then explores the literature on liberation, focusing particular attention on contextualist approaches including storytelling and the recovery of historical memory aimed at promoting the psychosocial wellbeing of Indigenous communities. Such approaches have recognised stories and storytelling as sites to examine and challenge power as part of a transformative psychosocial praxis.

In Chapter Four, I introduce the Wheatbelt town of Narrogin where the research was conducted, and discuss some of the issues facing the Noongar community in this town, which contributed to CAN establishing a presence in the town. I then introduce the creative and participatory methodology of CACD, which characterises the work of Community Arts Network. Finally, I describe CANs Rekindling Stories on Country strategy and Bush Babies focusing on the Narrogin iteration of the project.

Chapter Five outlines the epistemological positioning, methodological approach, research methods, and data analysis process. The research was qualitative and epistemologically informed by contextualist constructionism (Madill, Jordan, & Shirley, 2000) and critical theoretical approaches to race, whiteness, and colonisation (Adams & Salter, 2011; Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2011, 2015; Smith, 1999). The research adopted the

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

methodology of narrative inquiry. As noted by Clandinen and Rosiek (2007) “narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honoring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding” (p. 42). The second part of the chapter focuses on the research methods used to gather and analyse the Bush Babies stories. I discuss the research process, and the central role of CAN Noongar staff throughout the research. Bush Baby stories were collected through project activities and outputs, archival sources, and conversational interviews with four Elders. Data analysis was informed by Rappaport’s (2000) conceptualisation of personal stories, community narratives, and dominant cultural narratives, as well as Bell’s (2010) conceptualisation of concealed and resistance stories, and writing on counter-storytelling. Following data analysis of the Elders personal stories, three broad community narratives were constructed, which captured the ways in which Elders were narrating what it means to be Noongar and in explaining the connections between past, present, and future.

The findings are presented over three chapters. In Chapter Six, the focus is on the historical mechanisms of dispossession, including practices of child removal, as well as the continuity of structural, cultural, and interpersonal forms of violence in the present. The Elders drew on collective historical memory but also their own living memories of control, segregation, and the forceful removal of culture, to tell of the circuits of dispossession in their lives; they explained how “life was put on [them]”. Importantly however, they emphasised that “it’s still going on”.

In Chapter Seven, the focus is on the way Aboriginal Elders spoke about the psychosocial consequences of this history and its continuities in the present. The deleterious impacts of dispossession, was conveyed in the Elders’ storytelling. The Elders discussed how “It’s burnt into our brains, how we was treated, like animals”, thus pointing to the effects at the level of individual subjectivities. The Elders also told how “No-one listens anymore”,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

because of the fragmentation caused to culture and community. Finally, the Elders emphasised that their “kids are carrying what [they have] been through”, which is indicative of the cumulative intergenerational effects of this history. These impacts highlight the psychic and relational wounds produced within conditions of social suffering (Frost & Hoggett, 2008; Kleinman, Das, & Lock, 1997).

Chapter Eight presents the community narrative, “we survived, we’re still here”. This chapter details the various ways in which Noongar people responded to oppressive realities, including the individual, cultural, and communal resources that have continued to play a central role in what Indigenous people have referred to as survivance (Vizenor, 1999, 2008). This chapter outlines the individual, interpersonal, and discursive strategies of resistance and survival, but also the continuity and survival of Noongar people and culture.

Chapter Nine is the discussion and conclusion. This chapter summarises the findings, and discusses the key insights in relation to critical community psychology practice, including the roles of research and researchers in promoting liberation in historical, sociocultural, and political context.

Chapter 2: Australia's Ongoing Colonial History

Colonialism, the “systematic domination of one territory by another” (Moane, 2011, p. 36), has taken different forms geographically, culturally, and historically. Australia, as a settler colonial nation, has a history marked by the systematic dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from land, culture, language, community and family through frontier violence and assimilationist policies, practices, and discourses (Maddison, 2013; Moreton-Robinson, 2009; Walter, 2010a). This colonial history is similar to the colonial experience in other parts of the world and especially other settler colonies including New Zealand, Canada, and the United States of America where the colonisers have not left, where they remain institutionally and culturally dominant, and where the Indigenous population constitutes a numerical minority of the population (Durie, Milroy, & Hunter, 2009). This chapter discusses some of the contemporary issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and provides an overview of the history of colonisation in Australia, including policies of protection and assimilation, with particular focus on the Western Australian context.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia

The first inhabitants on the land that came to be known as Australia were named Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by the colonisers (Dudgeon, Mallard, Oxenham, & Fielder, 2002). They constitute the oldest living culture, and are made up of many diverse nations. In 2011, there was an estimated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of 669,900 constituting 3% of the total population (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2011). Of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, 90% identified as Aboriginal, 6% as Torres Strait Islander, and 4% as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ABS, 2011).

Noongar people of south-west Western Australia. Noongar people are the traditional owners of the south west corner of Western Australia. They are one of the largest Aboriginal cultural blocks in Australia, “made up of 14 different language groups: *Amangu*, *Yued/Yuat*, *Whadjuk/Wajuk*, *Binjareb/Pinjarup*, *Wardandi*, *Balardong/Ballardong*, *Nyakinyaki*, *Wilman*, *Ganeang*, *Bibulmun/Piblemen*, *Mineng*, *Goreng* and *Wudjari* and *Njunga* (which may be spelt in different ways)” (South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council [SWALSC], 2017a, About Noongar, para. 2¹).

Noongar country (i.e., *Noongar boodja*) is made of the entire southwestern part of Western Australia; it “extends from north of Jurien Bay, inland to north of Moora and down to the southern coast between Bremer Bay and east of Esperance” (SWALSC, 2017b, Connection to country, para. 1). This area encompasses much of the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, the state capital Perth, the regional cities of Bunbury and Albany, and hundreds of kilometres of coastline. Within Noongar boodja, there are six different regions or Native Title Claim groups, namely: *Yued*, *Gnaala Karla Booja*, *Ballardong*, *Wagyl Kaip*, *Whadjuk* (Metro Claim Group), and *South West Boojarah*² (Host & Owen, 2009; SWALSC, 2017c³). Narrogin is located in the *Gnaala Karla Booja* region.

Archaeological evidence suggests that Noongar people have lived in the south-west corner of Western Australia for over 45,000 years (SWALSC, 2017a). Noongar people “have a deep knowledge and respect for... country, which has been passed down from... Elders” (SWALSC, 2017b). *Moort* (family), *boodja* (land) and *Kaartdijin* (knowledge) are central to

1 SWALSC is “The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council a native title service provider the Noongar people... SWALSC works with members to progress resolution of the Noongar native title claims, while also advancing and strengthening Noongar culture, language, heritage and society” (SWALSC, 2016, para. 1). Kaartijin Noongar: Sharing Noongar knowledge is a website administered by South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. The aim is to share the richness of Noongar “knowledge, culture and history in order to strengthen...community and promote wider understanding” (<http://www.noongarculture.org.au/>).

2 The South West Native Title Settlement is a landmark Native Title settlement and will be the most wide-ranging native title proposal in Australia to date. The South West Settlement involves exchanging native title for a negotiated package of benefits. To find out more about the settlement, see: <https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/lanu/south-west-native-title-settlement/Pages/default.aspx>

3 For an interactive map of the six Noongar regions, see South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (2016): <http://www.noongar.org.au/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Noongar culture and identity (L. Collard, 2007; L. Collard, Harben, & van den Berg, 2004; SWALSC, 2017d).

To be Noongar is to belong; it is to have connection to our boodja- country, our moort- family, and to kaartdijin- knowledge. To be Noongar is to be a river person or a coastal person or just from the bush. It is to have pride and to survive. We need to celebrate it- the journey. Ask a Noongar person what our identity means to us and invariably we will talk about the stories. The stories are part of the kaartdijin passed down from the Elders and moort (family). They tell of how to survive in the bush. They are campfire stories of the stars and the seasons. (SWALSC, 2017d, Identity, para. 2-3)

There are approximately 30,000 Noongar people living in the south west of Western Australia (Government of Western Australia, 2017).

Ongoing disadvantage. The entrenched disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across a range of social, health and economic indicators, is well established (e.g., Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2015; Carson, Dunbar, Chenhall, & Bailie, 2007). For example, for the 2010-2012 period, estimated life expectancy at birth for Indigenous males was 69.1 years, which was 10.6 years lower than non-Indigenous males, and for Indigenous females, it was 73.7 years, which was 9.5 years lower than non-Indigenous females (AIHW, 2014a, 2015). In Western Australia, the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous males widens to 15.1 years for males and 13.5 years for females (AIHW, 2014a). Suicide rates for Indigenous Australians are also 2.6% higher than that of non-Indigenous Australians (Department of Health and Ageing, 2013). Indigenous people are taking their lives at a younger age, with the majority of Indigenous suicides occurring before the age of 35. For males, the rate of suicide for those aged 25-29 was four times the rate of non-Indigenous suicide. For females, the rate of suicide

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

for those aged 20-24 was five times the rate of non-Indigenous females (Department of Health and Ageing, 2013). As noted by (former) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda,

We have seen a problem that was close to non-existent a generation ago explode into an epidemic that is devastating families and communities right across the top end of Australia. Some of these communities have become places with some of the highest rates of youth suicide and self harm in the world. (People, Culture, Environment, 2014, p. 4)

Pat Dudgeon discussed some of the key contributing factors to Indigenous suicide. Specifically, she identified the

brutal history of colonization, the inter-generational trauma left by Stolen Generations policy, and ongoing racism, combined with the everyday realities in many Aboriginal communities, such as unemployment, poverty, overcrowding, social marginalization, and higher access to alcohol and drugs. (People, Culture, Environment, 2014, p. 5)

The issue of overrepresentation in the criminal justice system is another part of the everyday reality of many Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal people make up 27% of the national prison population, despite constituting only 2% of the population aged 18 years and over (ABS, 2015). In 2013, the rate of imprisonment for Indigenous prisoners in Australia was 15 times higher than for non-Indigenous prisoners (ABS, 2013). In Western Australia, the rate of imprisonment for Indigenous people was 21 times higher (ABS, 2013). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are also over represented in the juvenile justice system. The AIHW (2012) reported that in the 2010-2011 period, Indigenous young people aged 10–17 were 24 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in detention; they constituted 39% of juveniles in detention. More than 25 years after the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCADIC) (1987-1991), the rate of Indigenous imprisonment

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

has in fact increased, pointing to a national crisis in the criminal justice system. As noted by Weatherburn (2014), Indigenous peoples in Canada and New Zealand, also have high rates of contact with the criminal justice systems, but in Australia, the situation is much worse. Mistreatment of Aboriginal youth while in detention has also been highlighted. In July 2016, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Four Corners program broadcast a report on youth detention in the Northern Territory titled 'Australia's shame' (Ferguson, Meldrum-Hanna, Fallon, & Worthington, 2016). This report exposed the mistreatment of youth, and in particular, Aboriginal youth at the Don Dale detention centre, ultimately leading to the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017).

Employment and income is another area where we see the entrenched disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (AIHW, 2015; Walter, 2009; Walter & Siggers, 2007). In the 2012-2013 period, the rate of unemployment was 4.2 times higher for Indigenous compared to non-Indigenous Australians, with 21% of 15-64 year olds Indigenous peoples unemployed (AIHW, 2015). Based on census data, the AIHW (2015) reported that Indigenous people had a lower average weekly income and were underrepresented in the highest income bracket. Indeed as expressed by Walter (2010a), "Aboriginal people are expected, and expect, to be poor" (p. 130). Importantly, present day circumstances need to be understood in the context of the longer history of colonisation, and in particular policies of protection and assimilation, which have had far reaching impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Before outlining the policies of protection and assimilation, I first discuss the central role of 'race' and racism in colonisation.

Brief Historical Background

Racism and colonisation. As Teo (1999) explained, "the modern concept of race was constructed pseudo-scientifically within the context of European colonisation and conquest in

order to justify within a systematic ideology, inhumane practices” (p. 18). It was not until the mid-to-late twentieth century that traditional biological or ‘scientific’ definitions of ‘race’ were challenged by understandings of ‘race’ as materially and ideologically reproduced through sociohistorical processes. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994) introduced racial formation theory to highlight “the historical construction of racial categories, the shifting meaning of race, and the crucial role of politics and ideology in shaping race relations” (p. 13). Rather than viewing race as an essence or seeing it as a mere illusion, ‘race’ was instead understood as a social concept— an “unstable and ‘decentered’ complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle” (p. 15). Omi and Winant argued that “Race is... a pre-eminently socio-historical concept” (p. 11), and so the meanings ascribed to ‘race’ and racial categories must be understood in the specific social relations and historical context of their making. Racial formation was used to describe this process whereby “social, economic and political forces determine the content and importance of racial categories, and by which they are in turn shaped by social meanings” (p. 12).

Peruvian sociologist, Quijano (2000) similarly argued that ‘race’ as a social concept was used to legitimate relations of domination and subordination, which were established through conquest first in the America continent and then throughout the rest of the world. According to Quijano, the codification of differences between the conquered and the conqueror (i.e., Europeans and Euro/Americans) through the idea of ‘race’ enabled “the constitution of a new structure of control of labour and its resources and products” (p. 534). This new structure of power, control and hegemony depended upon the exploitation and subordination of large groups of people largely based on skin colour and other phenotypic traits. It was through the notion of race that

conquered and dominated peoples were situated in a naturalised position of inferiority, and as a result, their phenotypic traits as well as their cultural features

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

were considered inferior. In this way, race became the fundamental criterion for the distribution of the world population into ranks, places and roles in the new society's structure of power. (Quijano, 2000, p. 535)

Fanon (1963/2004) discussed a Manichean psychology as the basis for racist ideology. Within this worldview, the world is divided: 'us' and 'them', 'good' and 'bad', 'white' and 'black' (see also Bulhan, 1985; Moane, 2011). According to Fanon, this psychological worldview developed as a necessary condition given the systematic and institutionalised violence central to maintaining colonial domination. Fanon argued that it was essential that the coloniser see the world in 'black' and 'white' to justify the poor treatment of the 'Other'. Albert Memmi (1974/2003) identified racism and terror as the key tools of colonisation. He saw the process of labeling as central to maintaining relations of colonial power. The colonised were labeled with negative traits such as 'lazy', 'evil', 'backward', 'uncivilised', 'unreliable' and 'irresponsible' as a means of justifying their social positioning and mistreatment by the coloniser. The colonisers in contrast were 'civilised', 'intelligent' and 'brave' – the positive inverse of the negative 'Other'. This labeling process involves stereotyping and depersonalisation (i.e., constructing the colonised as an undifferentiated, homogenous group), leading to the objectification and dehumanisation of the colonised in order to legitimate or justify their brutal treatment by the coloniser.

In the Australian context, Aboriginal scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2004) has described the many negative ways that Aboriginal people have been represented historically, including as "treacherous, lazy, drunken, childish, cunning, dirty, ignoble, noble, primitive, backward, unscrupulous, untrustworthy and savage" (p. 76). Importantly, as noted by Hook (2004), racism is not simply about constructing differences around a set of physical features (e.g., skin colour):

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Racism, very importantly, is also a set of separations that come to be implemented at higher levels—those of cultural, morality, psychology—and it is the ability of racism to motivate difference (and superiority/inferiority) at a variety of different levels, which makes it so durable, so resistant to change. (p. 129)

Similarly, as noted by Moane (2011), following military invasion and occupation, colonial modes of control become more pervasive and more subtle, focusing on control of economic, political and symbolic systems. Over time, the modes become institutionalized and shrouded by ideology such that it becomes difficult for both the dominants and the subordinates to recognize them. (pp. 35-36)

Based on a review of writing of the literature on oppression for various groups, Moane (2011) proposed six mechanisms of control characteristic of colonisation and patriarchy, which have significant implications for psychological functioning: violence, political exclusion, economic exploitation, cultural control, control of sexuality, and fragmentation. Based on research in settler colonial societies including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States, and South Africa, Judy Atkinson (2002) discussed colonialism as encompassing three forms of power abuse or violence. She identified physical violence involving “invasion, disease, death and destruction” (p. 59), structural violence involving “enforced dependency, legislation, reserves and removals” (p. 65), and psychosocial dominance, involving “cultural and spiritual genocides” (p. 69).

Atkinson (2002) described three distinct periods defining the relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers’. The first period of frontier violence and invasion, she argued, has typically been followed by “the intercession of well-meaning but often ethnocentric and paternalistic philanthropic and religious groups” (p. 58). The final period, which Atkinson notes has been as harmful as the first two, has involved the reassessment by Governments of its responsibilities in regards to Indigenous peoples. Atkinson, amongst

others (e.g., Maddison, 2009; Watson, 2009), argued that the ongoing and increasing intrusion of state interventions into the lives of Indigenous people has produced dependency, dysfunction, and retraumatisation. Y. Clark (2000) categorised the policies defining the relationship between Government and Aboriginal people in the Australian context into four overlapping periods of protection (1840s-1950s), assimilation (1950s-1970s), integration (1967-1970s), and self-determination and self-management (1970s). From the 2000s, the focus became mutual obligation and shared responsibility (Bishop, Vicary, Browne, & Guard, 2009; K. Collard et al., 2005).

The protection era. The frontier violence, disease, and dispossession of the first period of invasion caused a dramatic decrease in the Indigenous population, leading to the ‘protection’ era (Atkinson, 2002). The protection era (1840s-1950s) saw Aboriginal people moved to Church controlled reserves or missions⁴; others lived on cattle stations or in fringe camps and were under the surveillance of local police, or farmers who were able to exploit them for cheap or unpaid labour (Haebich, 2000). At this time, Aboriginal people were thought of as a ‘dying race’, and so the most that non-Indigenous Australians could do was “smooth the dying man’s pillow” (Bates 1944, as cited in van Krieken, 2012, p. 127). During the ‘protection’ era, Aboriginal people came under special Government Acts, were denied civil rights and attempts were made toward ‘civilising’ and indoctrinating them into Christianity (Haebich, 2000). Reflecting white supremacist ideology, their Indigenous culture was viewed as primitive and inferior.

4 Reserves and missions are places that Aboriginal people were forcibly relocated to, with missions typically run by churches and reserves run by government, and sometimes churches (see AIATSIS, 2016). There were several church missions on Noongar country, including Wandering Missions, Roelands Mission, and New Norcia. Children were also taken to government settlements such as Moore River Native Settlement and Carrolup Native Settlement (SWALSC, 2017f). For further details see: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/missions/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In Western Australia, State government instituted *the Aborigines Act, 1905* (WA), which was similar to other protection policies across the country, with its stated purpose being “to make provision for the better protection of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia” (p. 51). This Act classified Aboriginal people into three legal categories, as outlined below:

(1) ‘Aboriginal natives’ – Aborigines of full descent and ‘half-castes’ (the offspring of an Aboriginal parent and a non-Aboriginal parent of any racial background or children of such persons) married to ‘Aboriginal natives’ or who associated with ‘Aboriginal natives’; (2) ‘Half-castes’ who did not associate with ‘Aboriginal natives’ and ‘half-caste’ children under sixteen irrespective of lifestyle and associations; (3) Aborigines of a suitable degree of civilization to qualify for exemption. (Haebich, 2000, p. 219)

As noted by Haebich (1988), the 1905 Act

laid the basis for the development of repressive and coercive state control over the state’s Aboriginal population. It set up the necessary bureaucratic and legal mechanisms to control all their contacts with the wider community, and to enforce the assimilation of their children and to determine the most personal aspects of their lives. (p. 83)

Central to this act were controls over employment, movement, personal and family life, and penalties were imposed for offences against the Act. For example, the Act made it possible for ‘prohibited areas’ to be declared so that Aboriginal people without a permit could be arrested and removed; segregated Aboriginal institutions could be established on reserve land; Aboriginal people could be removed

to any reserve or district without due process of court or appeal mechanism; police and justices of the peace could order Aborigines out of the town; protectors and police

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

could order Aborigines to move their camps from one area to another. (Haebich, 2000, p. 220)

The Chief Protector was made the legal guardian of all Aboriginal children until the age of 16, managed the property and earnings of Aboriginal people, and his permission was required for any marriage between Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal men, amongst other paternalistic measures of control (Haebich, 2000).

In the Wheatbelt region during this era, Noongar people were segregated in fringe camps away from white settlers (Haebich, 2000). While these camps “provided a pool of Aboriginal seasonal workers for local farmers and domestic workers for the town” (Haebich, 2000, p. 252), Noongar people were restricted from using services in towns including hospitals and schools. In 1912, “Aboriginal children were expelled from state schools throughout the Wheatbelt” (Haebich, 2000, p. 252) following demands from parents for the expulsion of Noongar students in Katanning out of fear of “physical and moral contagion” (p. 252). This was justified under the *Education Act 1893* (WA), which left the inclusion of Aboriginal students to the discretion of non-Indigenous people in the towns, who could protest if Aboriginal people attended the school (Haebich, 2000).

A.O. Neville was the Chief Protector of Aborigines in WA from 1915 until 1940 (Haebich, 2000). Neville advocated segregation and the strict implementation of the 1905 Act. As noted by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) (1997) “protests from non-Indigenous people in the south about the presence of Aboriginal camps on the edges of towns”, led to the establishment of “isolated self-contained ‘native settlements’ run by the government” (p. 91). Neville introduced the ‘Native Settlement Scheme’, which was aimed at Aboriginal children of mixed descent. Neville believed that “until the children are taken...and trained apart from their parents no real progress towards assimilation is to be expected” (Neville, 1947, p. 176, as cited in Haebich, 2000, p. 259). As part of this

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

settlement scheme, Aboriginal children of mixed descent “were to be physically separated from their families on the settlements, receive a European education, be trained in domestic and stock work and then sent out to approved work situations” (HREOC, 1997, p. 91). It was believed that this process would result in the acceptance of ‘half-caste’ children by non-Indigenous people as well as the loss of identification with their Aboriginality ‘for their own good’ (Haebich, 1988). Underlying the scheme was the idea of biological absorption, which was enshrined in the *Native Administration Act, 1936*⁵ (WA), and was heavily influenced by the rhetoric of eugenics (Ellinghaus, 2003). Essentially the *Native Administration Act 1936* (WA) extended the powers so that

virtually any child of Aboriginal descent could now be taken forcibly from his or her family and placed in a government institution to be trained in the ways of ‘white civilisation’ and ‘society’. The Commissioner of Native Affairs, not their parents, had total control over their lives until they reached the age of twenty-one. From this age any person of ‘quarter-caste’ or less was prohibited by law from associating with persons deemed to be ‘natives’. In this way they were to be forced to live in the white community, although no measures were introduced to force white people to accept them. (Haebich 1988, p. 351)

There were several church missions in the South West of Western Australia, including Wandering Mission, Roelands Mission, and New Norcia. There were also a number of government settlements such as Moore River Native Settlement and Carrolup Native Settlement, where children were taken (SWALSC, 2017f).

The *Native (Citizenship Rights) Act 1944* (WA), “AN ACT to provide for the acquisition of full rights of citizenship by aborigine natives”, enabled Aboriginal people to

⁵ This is also known as the *Aborigines Act Amendment, 1936* (WA)

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

become citizens of their own country. However, to do so, they were required to have “dissolved tribal and native associations except with respect to lineal descendants or native relations of the first degree”, and have shown they had “adopted the manners and habits of a civilised life” for a period of two years (*Native Citizenship Rights Act, 1944*, p. 89).

Successful applicants were issued a Certificate of Citizenship if they met these criteria, which they were required to present on demand. These certificates provided them the legal rights of Europeans however they could easily be revoked (Haebich, 2000; SWALSC, 2017e).

The assimilation era. The period from 1950s to the 1970s saw the official policies and discourse move from absorption to assimilation, with the aim being to assimilate Aboriginal people into the wider ‘Australian’ way of life (Y. Clark, 2000). In 1951, some of the ‘native settlements’ were transferred to mission control, and “financial arrangements were made with them for the placement of removed children” (HREOC, 1997, p. 96). For example, Carrolup and Moore River missions in Western Australia became Marribank and Mogumber native missions respectively (HREOC, 1997). From the 1950s schools were opened to Aboriginal people (HREOC, 1997).

The removal of children to missions still occurred but their removal was more likely to be under the *Child Welfare Act 1947* (WA) rather than the *Native Administration Act 1936* (WA) (HREOC, 1997). In principle, children could only be removed in cases of neglect or destitution; however this requirement made little impact on the number of children removed in practice and this period actually saw an increase in the number of Aboriginal children placed in missions reflecting a renewed commitment of government to the task of assimilation (HREOC, 1997). As noted by the HREOC (1997), the “definition of destitution could be applied to the situation of many Aboriginal families with few material resources whose lifestyle was the subject of constant surveillance by government officials” (p. 97). Further, what constituted ‘neglect’ was also “interpreted in a climate of assimilation which

denigrated the worth of Aboriginal lifestyles” (p. 97). From 1968, Aboriginal pastoral workers were entitled to equal pay (HREOC, 1997). Aboriginal families who were living and working on these pastoral stations were subsequently evicted, and these families settled on “the outskirts of towns in conditions of dire poverty”, where they “were extremely vulnerable to intervention by ‘the welfare’” (HREOC, 1997, p. 98).

From assimilation to self-determination to practical reconciliation. As noted by Y. Clark (2000), the 1967 National Referendum initiated the shift towards self-determination and self-management. In this referendum, over 90% of the Australian public voted to change the Australian Constitution to give the Commonwealth the power to legislate for Indigenous Australians, and to remove two negative references to Indigenous people. Before this time, Indigenous affairs were exclusively a state responsibility (Cunningham & Baeza, 2005). The Indigenous civil rights movement played a central role in the movement towards self-determination (see Attwood & Markus, 1999). The policy of self-determination, underpinned by a commitment to empowering Indigenous people to claim back the land, allow more indigenous input into policy making, and to put an end to racially discriminatory practices, was officially introduced in 1972 by the Whitlam Labour government. As part of this commitment, the Whitlam government introduced the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*.

Numerous other significant events and actions have occurred since this time. For example, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCADIC) (1987-1991), and the National Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families (HREOC, 1997), highlighted the social injustices of past policies and practices, and outlined hundreds of recommendations for change. One of the recommendations from the report of the RCADIC was for a process of reconciliation, which led to the *Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act 1991*. The movement for reconciliation reflected an acknowledgment of the ongoing failure in government policy to adequately

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

recognise and address entrenched Aboriginal disadvantage and the specific cultural, social, and economic needs of Aboriginal people. Another significant event came in 1992 when, after a long legal battle by Eddie Mabo, the High Court overturned the legal doctrine of *terra nullius* (i.e., land belonging to no one). This was recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were here when the British invaded, and thus, of the land rights of the first inhabitants. The Mabo decision paved the way for the introduction of Native Title legislation in 1993 (*Native Title Act 1993*).

Self-determination remained government policy until the election of Liberal leader John Howard in 1996 on the conservative policy platform of ‘Practical Reconciliation’, and antipathy towards an Indigenous rights agenda (Altman, 2004). For Howard, the former Keating government had emphasised symbolic reconciliation at the expense of practical outcomes (Altman, 2004). As noted by Walter (2010b), with the rise of neoliberal policy in the mid-1990s, “self-determination went from being the ‘solution’ to being the ‘problem’ of Indigenous Australia” (p. 100). The emphasis in policy making became one of ‘mutual obligation’, which “asserts that the provision of government assistance is not simply a matter of right or entitlement, but something that must be reciprocated by the citizen through meeting a range of obligations and responsibilities” (HREOC, 2002, p. 33). As noted in the 2001 Social Justice report (HREOC, 2002),

Mutual obligation encourages a picture of irresponsible people failing to meet their duties to society despite the support and commitment shown to them. Practical reconciliation similarly creates a picture of the Government as concerned about achieving concrete outcomes in areas such as health and education, as opposed to addressing symbolic measures with the implication that the latter are irrelevant to improving the day-to-day livelihoods of Indigenous people. It seeks to discredit and close down debate about issues that do not fit within this framework, such as a formal

apology or a treaty, even where they are perceived by Indigenous people to be of central importance to their advancement. (p. 52)

Walter (2010b) noted that the “abandonment of self-determination as the official philosophy underpinning the relationship between Indigenous people and the state...manifested in the 2005 demise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission⁶ (ATSIC)” (p. 100; see also Cunningham & Baeza, 2005).

Lowitja O'Donoghue (2003), who was the inaugural Chairperson of ATSIC, summed up the ideological effect and implications of Howard's approach to Indigenous affairs, when she noted,

First World countries have developed some very complicated and subtle ways of demonstrating a belief in rights, while at the same time continually ignoring or denying them. The way we do this in the Western world is to claim that there is nothing to stop any individual achieving whatever they want to. And that the various systems that we have in place are fair. (para. 2-3)

Further, she asserted that

Being regarded as a problem (rather than a person) is part of a dehumanising process. It not only dehumanises the people who have become marginalised and oppressed, but it also dehumanises those who have learnt to think in these ways. (para. 8)

O'Donoghue (2003) described Howard's approach to 'practical reconciliation', as “a welfare model, a Band-Aid model, not one seated in a fundamental recognition of the rights and entitlements of Australia's first peoples” (para. 15). Significantly, as Prime Minister (1996-2007), John Howard refused to offer a formal apology to the Stolen Generations – a formal

6 ATSIC was a Government body that formally involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the processes of government affecting their lives (see Cunningham & Baeza, 2005). ATSIC was established in 1990 as part of the government's attempts to address Indigenous disadvantage.

government apology was one of the recommendations of the Bringing Them Home report (HREOC, 1997).

The Bringing them Home Report and the apology to the Stolen Generations. The National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (HREOC, 1997) found that from 1910-1970, between one in ten and three in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were forcibly removed from their families and communities, and that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have been affected by these policies. The report concluded that policies and practices of child removal amounted to genocide, as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide:

When a child was forcibly removed that child's entire community lost, often permanently, its chance to perpetuate itself in that child. The Inquiry has concluded that this was a primary objective of forcible removals and is the reason they amount to genocide. (HREOC, 1997, p. 190; see also Tatz, 1999)

As noted by Barta (2008), the conclusion that the systematic and widespread removal of children from their families amounted to genocide has not been well received in Australia (see Macintyre & A. Clark, 2004, on the history wars). Barta explained this resistance to the report's conclusions, in the following way:

There is a deeply seated impulse in Australian society to separate problems of Aboriginal life and death in the present from the European attitudes to Aboriginal life and death in the past. That is where the problem of recognizing genocide lies: it means recognizing a relationship of genocide with Aboriginal people since the beginning of European settlement. (p. 209)

One of the recommendations from the Bringing them Home report included an official Government apology. In 2008, former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd finally delivered

an official apology to the Stolen Generations. Barta (2008) argued that the 2008 apology to the Stolen Generations buried this history of genocide, because it was “framed within what has come to be called ‘reconciliation’ ” (p. 210), which he argued has “become the official ideology within which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians can now ‘move on’ ” (p. 210). The problem with this, he suggested, is that “it does not recognize the depth of their historical trauma or give them a national memorial” (Barta, 2008, p. 210). He argued,

the survivors know why genocide was buried in the national apology. The nation—the Australia constructed on their suffering—is not ready to face the historical truth of its foundation or the ways the original dispossession contributed to the destruction of not just one people, but many peoples who have disappeared during the two centuries of European triumph. (Barta, 2008, p. 210)

For Barta (2008), “The turning of all eyes to the future is in the great Australian tradition of averting them from the uncomfortable truths of a triumphant past” (p. 210). Along similar lines, Koerner (2013, 2015) has argued that particular narratives of Australian history, particularly those highlighting the abhorrent treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are highly contested within Australian society. In her research with white Australians, Koerner (2013) identified a delimited understanding of colonial history and an inability to link this with the present. She argued that the normative discourse reflects “white settler Australians investment in the denial of Indigenous sovereignty to protect white settler Australian claims to national sovereignty” (p. 29).

Short (2012) has also written about official acts of remembrance and acknowledgment of past injustices within the context of reconciliation in Australia. Short argued that while symbolic actions including Keating’s 1992 Redfern Speech⁷ and Rudd’s 2008 official

⁷ Paul Keating became the first Australian Prime Minister to publicly acknowledge that European settlers were responsible for the destruction caused to Australian Aboriginal communities, in what came to be known as the Redfern park speech, or the Redfern address.

apology to the Stolen Generations were not without value, they were “considerably diminished by the positively colonial, and inherently unjust, contemporary political context in which they were made” (p. 293). Short highlighted, for example that the Northern Territory *National Emergency Response Act 2007*⁸ (NT) (‘The Intervention’), which was denounced by the United Nations as racially discriminatory, was in place at the time of the apology. Therefore, for Short (2012), “The apology... imagined Australia as post-colonial when no meaningful structural or functional change to the colonial order has occurred” (pp. 301-302). Twenty years since the release of the Bringing them Home report, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation (2017) have released an action plan for healing, which has reported the continuing effects of the Stolen Generations.

Closing the gap? In 2007, all governments in Australia committed to ‘Closing the Gap’, with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) setting specific targets and timelines in the areas of health, education, and employment. This came in response to the 2005 Social Justice report (HREOC, 2005) by then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Tom Calma, who asserted the need for the government to commit to achieving equality in the areas of health and life expectancy within 25 years. The targets set out in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement related to life expectancy, infant mortality, access to early childhood education in remote communities, education (i.e., reading, writing and numeracy achievements), year 12 attainment, and employment outcomes. The 2017 Closing the Gap report (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2017), noted that only one of the seven targets is on track to be met, specifically, the target to “halve the gap in year 12 attainment in 2020” (p. 7). As stated in the report, the percentage of

8 ..The Intervention was a package of changes to welfare provision, law enforcement, land tenure and other measures, introduced by the Australian Federal Government under Howard, which required the suspension of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (see Altman & Hinkson, 2007 for more on the intervention). This intervention continues under the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012*.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

“Indigenous 20-24 year-olds who had achieved Year 12 or equivalent increased from 45.4 per cent in 2008 to 61.5 per cent in 2014-15” (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2017, p. 7).

Durie et al. (2009) noted that while other settler colonial societies have sought to facilitate Indigenous empowerment and self-determination through treaties, significant investment in bicultural education, and designated political representation, “none of these have occurred in Australia which remains intransigently resistant to supporting real indigenous autonomy” (p. 45). Australia is the only Commonwealth nation that has not negotiated a treaty with the First People of the land (Durie et al., 2009). Currently, there is bipartisan support for a referendum on Indigenous recognition, that is, to change the constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Recognise, 2017). However there is debate within the broader Australian Indigenous community about the merits of constitutional recognition, with many emphasising the need for a treaty instead or in addition to constitutional recognition (Williams, 2012). On 26 May 2017, the First Nations National Constitutional Convention adopted the Uluru Statement from the Heart (Referendum Council, 2017). This convention followed dialogues across Australia with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on their views on constitutional recognition. As noted in the Statement,

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future. These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness. (para. 6-7)

The Statement called for

constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country. We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination. We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history. In 1967 we were counted; in 2017 we seek to be heard. (para. 8-12)

The Continuity of Colonial Power

As this overview has highlighted, the nation continues to struggle “to come to terms with past misdeeds and the burdens of the past in the present” (Short, 2012, p. 293). As noted by Krieg (2009), “colonisation was not a moment – but is an ongoing experience” (p. 30). The continuity of colonial oppression has been understood using the concept of the colonality of power (Quijano, 2000). Quijano (2000) argued that the power relations established through colonialism and inextricably tied to the social construction of ‘race’ and processes of racialisation remain firmly in place despite “The mythology about the decolonization of the world” (Grosfuguel, 2007, p. 220). Such mythology, according to Grosfuguel (2007) “obscures the continuities between the colonial past and current global colonial/racial hierarchies and contributes to the invisibility of ‘coloniality’ today” (p. 220). Grosfuguel described colonial situations as “the cultural, political, sexual, spiritual, epistemic and economic oppression/exploitation of subordinate racialized/ethnic groups by dominant racialized/ethnic groups with or without the existence of colonial administrations” (p. 220). Drawing on Quijano’s writing on colonality of power, Maldonado-Torres (2007) wrote,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and everyday. (p. 243)

Therefore, coloniality pervades the taken for granted and everyday world, as well as more formal and institutionalised settings; it is inscribed through relations of exploitation and domination as well as through the production of subjectivities and knowledge (Grosfuguel, 2007).

Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2003) has opted for the term ‘post-colonising’, “to signify the active, the current and the continuing nature of the colonising relationship” (p. 38). With its history of Anglo-Celtic dominance, whiteness has been used as a lens to theorise coloniality. Informed by Frankenberg (1993), Moreton-Robinson (2000) noted,

Whiteness in its contemporary form in Australian society is culturally based. It controls institutions that are extensions of White Australian culture and is governed by the values, beliefs and assumptions of that culture. Whiteness confers both dominance and privilege; it is embedded in Australian institutions and in the social practices of everyday life. It is naturalised, unnamed, unmarked and it is represented as the human condition that defines normality and inhabits it. (p. 172)

Moreton-Robinson (2004) has interrogated, from an Aboriginal woman’s standpoint, the relationship between knowledge, representation, and whiteness, asserting, “Aborigines have often been represented as objects — as the ‘known’. Rarely are they represented as subjects, as ‘knowers’” (p. 75). Her argument is that whiteness assumes the status of an epistemological *a priori*:

Whiteness as an epistemological *a priori* provides for a way of knowing and being that is predicated on superiority, which becomes normalised and forms part of one’s

taken-for-granted knowledge. The existence of those who can be defined as truly human requires the presence of others who are considered less human. (pp. 75-76)

For Moreton-Robinson (2004), whiteness, as a regime of power, determines what representations or knowledge is valued, and what is not. She wrote, “the universalisation and normalisation of whiteness as the representation of humanity worked to locate the racialised other in the liminal space between the human/animal distinction” (p. 77). As noted by Moreton-Robinson, in a context of whiteness/coloniality, “racial superiority becomes a part of one’s ontology, albeit unconsciously, and informs the white subject’s knowledge production” (p. 77). Importantly, whiteness is not merely about skin colour; rather it is about the “discursive practices that, because of colonialism and neocolonialism, privilege and sustain global dominance of white imperial subjects’ (Shome 1999:107)” (p. 78).

Representing an Aboriginal theoretical framework, Maggie Walter (2010a) has also highlighted the continuity of the colonial power relationship in the Australian context. Used to describe the everyday lived reality of Aboriginal people in the era of neoliberalism, the domain of Aboriginality encompasses four distinct but interrelated components: socioeconomic position, dispossession, absences, and disregard. As discussed by Walter (2010a), Aboriginal people are the poorest and most disadvantaged group in Australia, across all social-economic indicators. In terms of absences, Walter writes of the social and spatial separations of Aboriginal people, noting that “Most non-Indigenous Australians live their lives within an Indigenous-free zone: an option not available for most Indigenous Australians” (p. 130). Walter also discussed the physical and figurative invisibility of Aboriginal people from spheres of influence at all levels, noting that Aboriginal people are absent from the nation’s view of itself, “except as usurpable cultural icons” (p. 130).

Disregard is the third domain, which speaks to the over-visibility of Aboriginal people as social problems, and the normalisation of disrespect for Aboriginal people (Walter,

2010a). She speaks of how “the casual denigration of Aboriginal people is twisted into the daily fabric of the nation’s conversations” (p. 130) (see also Kessar, 2006). The final domain of dispossession captures the ongoing dispossessions of Aboriginal people of land, culture, and for many, family. Further Walter (2010a) has noted a sense of fatalism that sometimes exists within Indigenous communities, reflecting the dispossession of Indigenous people from a sense of hope and optimism for an alternative future. As noted by Walter, the “dramatically circumscribed life chances and the hard daily reality of this generation and previous ones have become a normalized aspect of Indigenous life. We are too often dispossessed of a conception of a different future” (p. 131). For Walter (2010a), the harsh daily realities of Aboriginal peoples’ lives are understood as not only the remnants of Australia’s past history, but also the ongoing nature of the colonial power relationship.

As these arguments have shown, while the biologic-scientific concept of race has been shown to be a myth, after holding material and ideological currency for centuries ‘race’ continues to be a salient and pervasive force within the globalised and purportedly post-colonial and post-racial world (Quijano, 2000; Teo, 1999). As expressed by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2006),

Although races, as social categories such as class and gender, are socially constructed and thus permanently unstable categories of human identity and action, after they emerge in any society they organize diverse forms of hierarchy that produce social relations of domination and subordination. (p. 65)

He continued,

The engine that makes races—and race relations—socially real is that in ‘racialized social systems’ the race ascribed the superior position receives economic, political, social, and even psychological ... advantages while the race—or races—ascribed the inferior position receives disadvantages. (p. 65)

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In turn, these groups become social collectivities with different interests. As noted by Bonilla-Silva (2006), “the dominant race tends to defend, justify, or accept the racial order, whereas the other race, or races, attempt to change their position through various means” (p. 65).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed some of the social issues that continue to impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. These issues were contextualised within the longer history of colonisation and racism, including policies of protection and assimilation. The chapter discussed the policies of protection and assimilation, focusing on the Western Australian context. This was followed by a discussion of some of the significant events and actions that have sought to address Indigenous disadvantage. Finally, the chapter introduced the concepts of the colonality of power and whiteness, which have been used to theorise the continuity of asymmetrical power relations, reflected in what Walter (2010a) described as the domain of Aboriginality.

Chapter 3: Psychosocial Impacts of Oppression and Approaches to Liberation

The previous chapter sketched the history of colonisation in Australia, and the circumstances of Aboriginal lives in contemporary times. As discussed, colonisation as a system of oppression has entailed a variety of mechanisms of control such as direct violence, control of culture, fragmentation, political exclusion, economic exploitation, and sexual exploitation (Moane, 2011). Aboriginal scholar Judy Atkinson (2002) discussed colonisation as involving physical violence, covert structural violence, and psychosocial dominance. Critical scholars have highlighted the central role of race and racism in colonisation (Teo, 1999; Quijano, 2000), and the ongoing nature of the oppressive systems of inequality established through colonisation and underpinned by the ideology of white supremacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013). The power, privilege, and normativity of whiteness (Frankenberg, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2004) was discussed as a way of understanding the reproduction of various forms of inequality experienced by Aboriginal people. These inequalities have been conceptualised by Walter (2010a) using the domain of Aboriginality, which is marked by absences, disregard, dispossession, and socioeconomic deprivation.

Understanding and contesting ongoing structural violence, which produces and normalises “conditions of misery, inequality, exploitation, marginalization, and social injustices” (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996, p. 130), has been recognised as central to promoting community psychology’s core goals of social justice, empowerment, and liberation (Dutta, Sonn, & Lykes, 2016; Orford, 2008; Watts & Serrano-García, 2003). This chapter first discusses how oppression has been conceptualised in the academic literature. The chapter then explores the different conceptualisations of the various impacts of oppression, with a particular focus on the

experience and effects of colonisation and cultural imperialism for Indigenous peoples. While the deleterious effects have been well documented, many scholars have problematised frameworks that medicalise and individualise the processes and effects of oppression (e.g., Dutta et al., 2016; Smail, 1995, 2001; Stevens, Duncan, & Hook, 2013; Stevens, Duncan, & Sonn, 2013; Tuck, 2009). The final part of the chapter will review contextualist approaches and methods such as storytelling and the recovery of historical memory (Martín-Baró, 1994), that have been advanced in critical race theory, Indigenous methodologies, and liberation psychology, as tools to help improve the psychosocial wellbeing of Indigenous peoples and communities.

Theorising Oppression

A broad body of interdisciplinary work has sought to highlight the everyday ways in which structural violence is perpetuated, resisted, and challenged (Dutta et al., 2016; Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2011, 2015; Teo, 2015). Generally, oppression is understood as both a state and process, involving psychological and political dimensions, and characterised by victimisation, as well as agency and resistance (Prilleltensky, 2003; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996). From this perspective, power is not viewed as a monolithic force that one group has and another does not; instead power is understood as relational, dispersed, and pervasive (Foucault, 1991). Therefore, where there is power there is always resistance, and resistance can take various forms (O’Neill, 1994; Scott, 1990).

In his seminal work, peace and conflict scholar, Johan Galtung (1969) offered an extended concept of violence, identifying direct (easily recognisable) and indirect (i.e., structural) forms of violence—the violence triangle. Galtung (1969) understood violence as “the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could be and what is” (p. 168), and noted that the threat of violence is also

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

violence. Within this conceptualisation, the unequal distribution of resources and of the power to distribute resources was recognised as a form of violence— structural violence, which Galtung interchangeably referred to as social injustice. Indirect or structural violence “is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (p. 171). Structural violence results in the avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs.

In community psychology, Prilleltensky (2012) has linked conditions of justice and injustice, to differential wellness outcomes. He noted the connections between optimal conditions of justice and thriving, suboptimal conditions of justice and coping, vulnerable conditions of injustice and confronting, and persisting conditions of injustice and suffering. Within this model, Prilleltensky identified procedural and distributive justice at the personal, interpersonal, organisational, and communal levels. Social psychologist, Morton Deutsch (2006) identified five forms of injustice involved in oppression, namely cultural imperialism, procedural injustice, distributive injustice, retributive injustice, and moral exclusion. In conditions of structural violence, these various forms of injustice are present, with implications for psychological wellbeing.

Galtung (1990) employed the notion of cultural or symbolic violence to refer to “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence—exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics)— that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (p. 291). Galtung wrote, “The culture preaches, teaches, admonishes, eggs on, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them (particularly not exploitation) at all” (p. 295). Several others have written about symbolic power and symbolic violence in this way. For example, Bourdieu

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

(2000) emphasised the processes of dehistoricisation and universalisation, which serve to naturalise social power relations, and reflect the denial or forgetting of the specificity that has produced these relations. Similarly, in his anthropological research on social suffering, Farmer (2004) asserted that the architects of structural violence rely upon erasing history, a process achieved subtly and incrementally. As noted by Farmer, “an imbalance of power cannot be erased without distortion of meaning” (p. 309). He discussed the erosion of social awareness evident in modern psychology and other disciplines, achieved through the process of desocialisation including the erasure of historical memory.

Similarly, Collins (2000), writing on the matrix of domination, identified four interrelated domains of power that shape intersecting systems of oppression: structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal. In relation to the hegemonic domain, Collins wrote,

This is the cultural sphere of influence where ideology and consciousness come together. The hegemonic domain links the structural, disciplinary, and interpersonal domains. It is made up of the language we use, the images we respond to, the values we hold, and the ideas we entertain. And it is produced through school curricula and textbooks, religious teachings, mass media images and contexts, community cultures, and family histories. (p. 9)

In his work examining the relationship between cognition, society, and discourse, van Dijk (1998) proposed a critical theory of ideology, which he described as a “joint psychological—sociological account of the social mind in its social (political, cultural) context” (p. 6). Van Dijk defined ideologies as

the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group.

Ideologies allow people, as group members, to organize the multitude of social

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

beliefs about what is the case, good or bad, right or wrong, for them, and to act accordingly. (p. 8)

Further, he noted that ideologies also influence what is accepted as true or false. Operating at the macro level of social structure and the micro level of everyday social practices, ideologies function not only to make sense of the social world but also to regulate it. Informed by this approach, van Dijk (2000) defined racism as “a complex system of social inequality” involving

ideologically based social representations of (and about) groups... group members mental models of concrete ethnic events... everyday discriminatory discourse and other social practices... institutional and organisational structures and activities... power relations between dominant white and ethnic minority groups. (p. 93)

The reproduction of structural violence in everyday, taken for granted ways is further captured in writing on civilised oppression (Harvey, 1999), where oppression is conceived as

embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutions and rules, and the collective consequences of following those rules. It refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often-unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions, which are supported by the media and cultural stereotypes as well as by the structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms. (Young, 1990, p. 41)

Fine (2006) contends that oppression must be understood as “structural, institutional, interpersonal and intrapsychic; outrageous and civilized; cultivated in the media, the market and the academy” (p. 85).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Extending on the concept of symbolic violence, different authors have discussed epistemic and epistemological violence. Post-colonial feminist scholar, Gayatri Spivak (1988), used the concept of epistemic violence to refer to the subjugation and silencing of non-western ways of knowing, doing, and being (see also Smith, 1999). Epistemic violence undermines a group's ability to speak and be heard, and contributes to processes of Othering and dehumanisation. Extending on the work of Spivak, Teo (2010) proposed the concept of epistemological violence to refer to the possibility for violence inherent in the interpretation of social-scientific data about the Other. Teo argued that epistemological violence occurs "when empirical data are interpreted as showing the inferiority of or problematizes the Other, even when data allow for equally viable alternative interpretations" (p. 295). In particular, he highlighted the epistemological violence involved in empirical race psychology, where interpretations result in detrimental outcomes for racialised groups.

Fine and Ruglis (2009) introduced the circuits and consequences of dispossession and privilege, a framework that brings together critical theorising of oppression and its change, and can be applied in diverse settings with different groups and forms of domination/subordination. The circuits' framework is a way of thinking about and investigating how "structures, histories, and dynamics of injustice travel into communities and bodies" (p. 228). Informed by a broad body of interdisciplinary writing on oppression, the circuits' framework advocates the need to understand the interconnectedness between structures and psyches, the relationality of the oppressed/oppressor, the dialectic of oppression and resistance, and the historicity of power relations (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009).

The dynamics of dispossession and privilege are complex, involving multiple forms of violence, requiring multiple levels of analysis and sites for action to effect

change (Moane, 2011; Prilleltensky, 2012). In the following section, I discuss how the psychosocial impacts of colonial and racialised oppression have been conceptualised within the literature. First, I discuss the concept of internalised oppression and the implications for individuals, and communities. I then discuss concepts of trauma, vulnerability, and woundedness, which have been mobilised by Indigenous peoples to describe the damaging and cumulative impacts of colonisation and cultural imperialism that continue to be felt across generations.

Internalising Oppression: Effects for Individuals and Communities

Oppression is both political and psychological, with the dominant group exercising power through “restricting access to material resources”, but also by instilling “in the subordinated persons or groups, fears or self-deprecating views about themselves” (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996, p. 130). Jones (2014) also noted that oppression refers to the “physical constraints of freedom and control—over one’s body, and opportunities for access to life sustaining and affirming assets—but also the psychological meaning of selfhood, collective identity, and self-worth” (p. 283). Numerous authors across different disciplines have discussed how oppression gets under the skin, or as noted by Moreton-Robinson (2004), becomes part of one’s ontology. This has been theorised through the notion of internalised oppression (David, 2014; David & Derthick, 2014; Tappan, 2006), colonial mentality (David, 2011; David & Okasaki, 2006) or psychological oppression (Bartky, 1990; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996), understood as both a mechanism and impact of oppression.

As noted by Hook (2004, 2005), the work of Afro-Caribbean, psychiatrist, philosopher and revolutionary, Frantz Fanon (1952/2008; 1963/2004) has been particularly important in highlighting the inextricable connection between socio-

political and historical forces and human psychology. Fanon (1952/2008) described the internalisation or epidermalization of an inferiority complex in a racist world, resulting in what he described as the psychic alienation of the black man. Memmi (1974/2003), who wrote about the psychological impacts of colonialism for both colonised and coloniser, recognised “the bond between colonizer and colonized” as both “destructive and creative. It destroys and re-creates the two partners of colonization into colonizer and colonized. One is disfigured into an oppressor...the other into an oppressed creature” (p. 89). Memmi (1974/2003) argued that the “mythical and degrading portrait ends up being accepted and lived with to a certain extent by the colonized” (p. 87) – the colonised come to believe that their inadequacy “makes them unable to assume a role in history” (p. 94). Similarly, Biko (1978/2004), writing in the context of apartheid South Africa, suggested “So negative is the image presented to him that he tends to find solace only in close identification with the white society” (p. 32). Hook (2004) cautioned that this must be understood within “a context in which the white subject has—in relative terms—everything and the black man or woman has nothing” (p. 117). As Hook explained, this desire is the result of “real material, economic, cultural and socio-political conditions that continuously celebrate and empower the white subject and continually denigrate and dispossess the black man or woman” (p. 117).

Feminist scholar Bartky (1990) described psychological oppression in the following way:

To be psychologically oppressed is to be weighed down in your mind; it is to have a harsh dominion exercised over your self-esteem. The psychologically oppressed become their own oppressors; they come to exercise harsh

dominion over their own self-esteem...psychological oppression can be regarded as the “internalization of intimations of inferiority. (p. 22)

Jones (2014) noted that oppression produces “other-ness that one recognizes, feels, and internalizes...” (p. 281). Jones also highlighted that members of oppressed groups necessarily live in two worlds: “the world of their existence and the world of the oppressor” (p. 286), a status Du Bois (1903/2012) described as double consciousness. Similarly, Atkinson (2002) wrote,

Cultural genocide not only works to destroy the cultures of oppressed peoples, it also eradicates the sense of worth, of self-worth, and of well-being in individuals and groups so that they are unable to function from either their own cultural relatedness, or from the culture of the oppressors. They feel in a world between, devalued, and devaluing who they are. (p. 71)

As noted by Jones (2014) “the feeling, or even the illusion of control and feelings of self-worth”, which are central to psychological wellbeing, are undermined through internalised oppression, with self-destructive consequences (p. 283). Importantly, Jones emphasised that internalised oppression is not inevitable, stating, “If we refuse to let others define our reality and humanity, capability, and potential, then we need not internalize the negative messages that are delivered routinely in our society and ongoing encounters” (pp. 285-286).

Gonzalez, Simard, Baker-Demaray and Iron Eyes (2014) wrote about internalised oppression and Indigenous peoples in North America and suggested that “internalized oppression exists in self-defeating thoughts, the lack of connectedness to ancestral family, the spirit, the self, the family, the extended family, the community, the nation, the environment” (p. 33). The authors described internalised oppression as “belief systems etched in negative stereotyping” (Gonzalez et al., 2014, p. 33), and

noted that it involved buying into the negative stories that Indigenous peoples have been told about themselves: “It is internalizing the ‘not as good’ mentality because of either the indirect or direct messages given by society to conform” (p. 33). The internalisation of negative social scripts is the predictable, but not inevitable result of the experiences of Indigenous peoples, being continuously “invalidated, unsupported, unacknowledged, and placated by society at large” (p. 34). As suggested by Young (1990), “those living under cultural imperialism find themselves defined from the outside, positioned, placed, by a network of dominant meanings they experience as arising from elsewhere, from those with whom they do not identify, and who do not identify with them” (p. 59). They are marked out as an inferior or deviant ‘Other’, but are at the same time invisible – their experiences and interpretations of the social world are not recognised or reflected in dominant culture.

Social psychologist Erica Apfelbaum (1999) discussed the process of de-grouping or fragmentation, achieved through what she described as cultural and historical uprootings/genocides. She noted that the “the destruction of a cultural heritage, combined with the disappearance of the community’s traditions and its own ways and means for expressing them...” (pp. 270-271) robs the group of its internal supports. David and Derthick (2014) discussed how the internalisation of inferiority, where group members come to devalue their group membership and reject their culture, prevents group members from connecting with one another, and can create intragroup conflict. Similarly, Krieg (2009) writing about the experience of collective trauma in Australian Aboriginal communities emphasised the destructive impact of this history for “connectedness, collectivity, and relationships” (p. 30).

The concept of lateral violence (Australian Human Rights Commission [AHRC], 2011; Y. Clark & Augoustinos, 2015; Cripps & Adams, 2010) has been

increasingly taken up to understand some of the issues that arise in conditions of oppression. The concept originated in the writing on colonialism and its effects, including the work of Frantz Fanon (1952/2008, 1963/2004) and Paulo Freire (1970), and it has since been applied to Indigenous communities internationally (AHRC, 2011; Archibald, 2006a), women (Miller, 1986), and to the issue of bullying in the nursing profession (Roberts, 1983). Aboriginal educator on lateral violence, Richard Frankland argued,

Lateral violence comes from being colonised, invaded. It comes from being told you are worthless and treated as worthless for a long period of time.

Naturally you don't want to be at the bottom of the pecking order, so you turn on your own. (Korreen Enterprises, n.d., para. 4)

Former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda (AHRC, 2011) understood lateral violence as “a product of a complex mix of historical, cultural and social dynamics”, that produces behaviours that can include “gossiping, jealousy, bullying, shaming, social exclusion, family feuding, organisational conflict and physical violence” (p. 8). He identified “powerlessness, the diminishment of traditional roles, structures and knowledge, attacking and undermining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and humanity, creating conflict about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity” (AHRC, 2011, p. 8), as contributing to lateral violence within Aboriginal communities. The significance of this problem facing Aboriginal communities in Australia is evident in the strong focus on the issue in the 2011 Social Justice Report (AHRC, 2011). The notion of lateral violence has been identified by Indigenous peoples as useful in naming and making sense of issues affecting their communities, which have their roots in the history of cultural genocide, and ongoing inequality. However, Y. Clark and Augoustinos

(2015) have cautioned against the use of the term (particularly ‘violence’), given the stigma that Aboriginal communities already face.

William and Nicola Butler proposed the notion of lateral love in response to the issue of lateral violence (Lateral Love Australia, n.d.; see <http://laterallove.com.au/about/>). They noted that central to challenging lateral violence is increasing awareness of the true history of colonisation in Australia including the systematic and deliberate fragmentation it has caused to the human spirit, through lateral violence (Lateral Love Australia, n.d.). Making connections between the past, present, and possibilities for the future in this way, facilitates critical consciousness or conscientisation, “the process whereby individuals and groups achieve an illuminating awareness of the socioeconomic, political, cultural, and psychological factors that determine their lives and their capacity to transform that reality” (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996, p. 139). Conscientisation is central to resistance and liberation (Freire, 1970; Montero, 2007; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996).

Intergenerational Impacts: Trauma, Vulnerability and Woundedness

Indigenous peoples have also utilised the language of trauma to understand and contextualise their experiences (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017; Archibald, 2006b, 2006b; Gone, 2013; Krieg, 2009; Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). In the Australian context, Atkinson (2002) has written about the ‘trauma trails’ within Aboriginal families and communities. Informed by Baker (1983), Atkinson discussed psychosocial dominance as constituting cultural and spiritual genocides, and suggested, “Aboriginal people would call this the greatest violence, the violence that brings the loss of spirit, the destruction of self, of the soul” (p. 69). She wrote,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Cultural and spiritual genocide occurs when oppressors believe that the oppressed are non-persons, with no culture or identity as human beings, or with culture and identity that is inferior. They deny the oppressed the right to a separate identity as a group or as individuals within the group...By defining Aboriginal people as non-persons and to continue to do so across the colonising histories, the oppressors justified their behaviours, and in turn, the oppressed came to believe this about themselves. It was this belief that enabled authorities to remove Aboriginal children from their families, among many dehumanising and oppressive acts. (p. 69)

The notion of psychosocial dominance and cultural/spiritual genocides captures the harms of colonisation and cultural imperialism for individuals and communities.

Atkinson (2002) discussed the effects of cultural/spiritual genocides using the notion of trauma, and described the cumulative effects across generations of Aboriginal families, noting how “fragmented and fractured identities contribute to the continuing escalation of violence between people. The future therefore feels meaningless, and people articulate their felt sense of powerlessness and lack of life purpose in violent acts on themselves and others” (p. 263). Her work highlights the deleterious effects for relationships and communities, and how these problems cascade over generations, growing more and more complex.

Atkinson (2002) emphasised that the feelings or behaviours stemming from the experience of “traumatisation are the natural and predictable reactions of normal people to abnormal experiences” (p. 52). Her work shows how collective experiences of trauma, seep “slowly and insidiously into the fabric and soul of relations and beliefs of people as community” (p. 53). As noted by Atkinson, the fact that supportive family is the best prescription for recovery from trauma underscores the

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

“tragedy and criminality of the wilful destruction of Aboriginal family systems by the governments of Australia” (p. 78). Atkinson thus emphasised the importance of rebuilding Aboriginal families as part of a whole-of-community approach to addressing violence and trauma in Aboriginal communities.

Helen Milroy (2005) discussed the various mechanisms through which the trans-generational effects of trauma are perpetuated, including “the impact on the attachment relationship with caregivers; the impact on parenting and family functioning; the association with parental physical and mental illness; disconnection and alienation from extended family, culture, and society” (p. xxi). Continuing exposure to “high levels of stress and trauma including multiple bereavements and other losses” as well as “the process of vicarious traumatisation” (Milroy, 2005, p. xxi), further exacerbate these issues. Further, Milroy noted that children are impacted by effects of past trauma through “ill health, family dysfunction, community violence, psychological morbidity and early mortality”, even if they are protected from stories of the traumatic experiences that their ancestors have suffered under colonisation, racism, and assimilation (Milroy, 2005, p. xxi; see also Kirmayer, Gone, & Moses, 2014).

Shaw (2012), drawing on his own family history, has also shown how Aboriginal people have been rendered vulnerable through disempowerment and dispossession. He wrote that he “grew into an understanding that current issues, such as domestic violence, high rates of imprisonment, suicide, child abuse and neglect, are rooted in vulnerability, which is itself rooted in the history of invasion into Aboriginal people and Culture” (p. 14). Shaw emphasised that “the removal of the right of Aboriginal people to care for their own children is crucial in understanding the relationship between past policies and current issues, because it irreparably damaged

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

the social fabric of Aboriginal family life” (p. 14). Dudgeon and Walker (2015) have similarly discussed how “colonial disruptions to domains of family, spirituality, land and culture have...produced a profound sense of grief and a deep longing to reconnect with their cultural heritage and ancestry” (p. 281).

Erikson (1976) discussed collective trauma as a “blow to the basic tissues of social life that damage the bonds attaching people together and impairing the prevailing sense of community” (p. 233). Krieg (2009) applied the concept of collective trauma to Aboriginal communities in Australia. The experience of collective trauma has been associated with deep mistrust of self and others, substance misuse, self-directed violence and suicide, violence against women, leadership crisis, among other signs and symptoms (Krieg, 2009; Ratnavale, 2007). Krieg argued that the concept of collective trauma enables us to see “traumatized communities as something more than assemblies of traumatized persons...without unduly pathologising feelings, behaviours or individuals” (p. 30).

The effects of trauma for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia echoes work in other colonial contexts. For example, Duran and Duran (1995) used the notion of a ‘soul wound’ to describe the destructive legacy of histories of colonisation and the continued impacts on the psychology of Indigenous peoples in North America. The concept of historical trauma has also been used to name and interpret colonial histories and the ongoing legacies of these histories for the colonised (Duran, Duran, Brave Heart, & Yellow Horse-Davis, 1998). As noted by Mohatt, Thompson, Thai, Kraemer and Tebes (2014), historical trauma is distinct from intergenerational trauma, which refers to “the specific experience of trauma across familial generations, but does not necessarily imply a shared group trauma” (p. 128). Brave Heart (2003) described historical trauma as the “cumulative emotional

and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences” (p. 7). These concepts have been applied to understand and contextualise issues of suicide, violence, and substance misuse within Indigenous communities (e.g., Brave Heart, 2003; Duran et al., 1998; Duran, Firehammer, & Gonzalez, 2008; Kral, 2012). Internalisation of oppression or the adoption of a colonial mentality (David & Okazaki, 2006), a destructive and insidious consequence of colonisation (Gonzalez et al., 2014), are thus understood as a possible manifestation of historical trauma, cultural/spiritual genocides (Atkinson, 2002), or soul wounding (Duran & Duran, 1995).

Importantly, Denham (2008) has emphasised the need to distinguish between the notion of historical trauma and historical trauma response. He noted that historical trauma refers to “the precipitating conditions or experiences”, while, the historical trauma response, speaks to “the pattern of diverse responses that may result from exposure to historical trauma” (p. 391). Denham asserted the need to be cognisant of the various responses to historical trauma, which can include expressions of suffering, but also, and importantly, expressions of resilience and resistance, that is, “non-pathological outcomes following exposure to trauma” (p. 410).

While these are important developments aimed at naming and addressing the effects of oppression, there has been debate over the use of concepts such as internalised oppression and the language of trauma in Indigenous contexts. Specifically, critical scholars have expressed concerns around psychologising the effects of structural power relations, and deflecting attention from the ongoing structural and cultural violence inflicted on Indigenous peoples (N. Clark, 2016; Kirmayer, Gone & Moses, 2014). Another concern has been that a predominant focus

on damage, deficit, and despair may prevent us from seeing the resistant and resilient responses of Indigenous peoples (Lavallee & Clearsky, 2006).

The Dangers of Mental Health Language

In community psychology, Smail (1995, 2001) warned against the risks of psychologising the effects of structural power relations (Orford, 2008). Hagan and Smail (1997) criticised the tendency of psychology to apply intrapersonal explanations that fail to recognise the importance of material power. From their view, this resulted in the “moralizing of power and powerlessness”, whereby people are “encouraged to feel a sense of personal responsibility for their social position and a sense of shame for their failure to cope” (Orford, 2008, p. 38). Hook (2004) has also discussed how applied psychology has largely depoliticised human experience by reframing problems that arise in conditions of oppression to problems of the isolated individual. Similarly, Adams and Kurtiş (2012) noted, “one of the most harmful consequences of mainstream social science is the propagation of individualistic or atomistic constructions of social reality that remain silent about collective or geopolitical forces” (p. 23).

Along similar lines, Tappan (2006) has problematised the way in which internalised oppression and internalised domination is viewed “almost exclusively as internal, deep, unchanging, psychological qualities or characteristics of the oppressed, on the one hand, and the privileged on the other” (p. 2116). He emphasised that the forces and mechanisms that reproduce privilege and oppression extend beyond the individual psychological level. Similarly, Pyke (2010) problematised the overemphasis in psychological analysis on “how the subordinated can enhance their feelings of self-esteem”, which she suggests places responsibility on the oppressed to solve the problem as if it was of their making (p. 554). Krieg (2009) expressed

concern about labelling human suffering in clinical or medical terms because of the potential for behaviours arising in conditions of suffering to be perceived as personal weaknesses.

Kirmayer et al. (2014) proposed the need to rethink the application of the construct of historical trauma to Indigenous peoples, and in particular, problematised the analogy to the Holocaust that has been made (e.g., Churchill, 2004). As noted by the authors, the original motivations for the use of the concept in Indigenous contexts were to “contextualize Indigenous health problems as forms of postcolonial suffering” (Kirmayer et al., 2014, p. 300). This was recognised as important in terms of de-stigmatising Indigenous people, to free them from paralysing self-blame, and also as a means of legitimating “Indigenous cultural practices as therapeutic interventions in their own right” (p. 300).

Problematising the analogy between what they described as “post-colonial Indigenous survivance (Vizenor, 1999)” and the Holocaust, the authors argued the social, cultural, and psychological contexts differ immensely with the continued suffering of Indigenous peoples reflecting “not so much past trauma as ongoing structural violence” (Kirmayer et al., 2014, p. 299). As noted by Smith (1999), “imperialism still hurts, still destroys and is reforming itself constantly” (p. 19). In the Australian context, Krieg (2009) has similarly emphasised that “colonisation was not a moment—but is an ongoing experience with multiple persistent contemporary traumatizing events continuing to impact daily on Aboriginal families and communities” (p. 30).

Kirmayer, Simpson, and Cargo (2003) have warned how the framing of issues in mental health language may “deflect attention from the large scale, and to some extent, continuing assault on the identity and continuity of whole peoples” (p. 597).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Lavallee and Clearsky (2006) have criticised what they call a focus on woundedness for similar reasons. Specifically, they argued, that such a focus “sustains a denial of responsibility by the current systems and how they affect Aboriginal health” (p. 4), and asserted the need to understand how “the impact of racism, oppression, colonisation and assimilation continue to implicitly derail a decolonized Aboriginal vision of health” (p. 5).

N. Clark (2016) has argued against “medical and individual definitions of trauma” (p. 1), stating that by focusing on trauma as an individual health problem, possibilities for a more critical and historically contextualised understanding of social problems are foreclosed. N. Clark positioned trauma discourse, policies, and practices as the “new colonial frontier” (p. 1; see also Andermahr, 2015 on decolonising trauma studies). Along similar lines, Joseph Gone (2008) has problematised mental health discourses as “western cultural proselytization” (p. 310). He wrote,

It may be that the missionary, military, and anthropology vanguard of the historic ‘White Indian’ encounter has been displaced of late by the professional psychotherapists or credentialed counselors of the behavioral health clinics who, armed with their therapeutic discourse and their professional legitimacy, are using a more shrewder way than the old style of bullets to resolve the age-old ‘Indian problem’. (p. 312)

Gones’s (2008) work has highlighted the “cultural politics of ongoing discursive encounters between dominant and subjugated knowledges” (p. 313) (see also Gone, 2007). Further, his work has shown the central importance of Indigenous knowledges and cultural practices in processes of healing from historical trauma (Gone, 2011, 2013).

Writing from the Canadian context, Eve Tuck (2009) has also argued for the need to avoid “damage centred research” in Indigenous contexts (p. 409). She described damage centred research as “research that intends to document people’s pain and brokenness to hold those in power accountable for their oppression” (p. 409). While the intentions of the research may be valid, she suggested that such research risks reinscribing simplistic, deficit centred understandings of Indigenous peoples as “depleted, ruined, and hopeless” (p. 409). Tuck urged Indigenous people and communities to refuse complicity in their categorisation “as only damaged, as only broken” (p. 422). Tuck (2009), drawing on Vizenor (1999; 2008), emphasised the need for research that celebrates their survivance, which is more than simply surviving. Vizenor (1999) discussed survivance as “moving beyond our basic survival in the face of overwhelming cultural genocide to create spaces of synthesis and renewal” (p. 53). Krieg (2009) similarly emphasised that a focus on damage can blind us to the strengths and the resilience of Aboriginal communities, that is, the ways in which they have remained resilient and resisted oppression. Cherry (2001) discussed the need to counter psychology’s story in First Nations Communities, noting the lack of “explicit mention of systemic factors or a psychology of resistance and survival in introductory textbooks” (p. 83) (see also Adams & Salter, 2011; Salter & Adams, 2013).

Critical scholarship on suicide in Indigenous contexts has also been helpful in challenging the medicalising of issues that have their roots in histories and continued experiences of social suffering (e.g., Kral & Idlout, 2015; Wexler & Gone, 2012, 2015). For example, Colin Tatz (2005), writing in the Australian context, criticised the way in which Aboriginal suicide is constructed as a mental health problem. This medicalisation, he argued, has prevented the problem from being properly understood

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

in historical, social, and political context. Similarly, Wexler and Gone (2012, 2015) identified three core problems in mainstream approaches to suicide prevention in Indigenous contexts (see also Alcántara & Gone, 2007; Wexler & Gone, 2012; Wexler, White, & Trainor, 2015). Firstly, they problematised the framing of suicide as a psychological rather than a social issue, warning that such an approach reduces “complex experiences of sociocultural phenomena to individual pathology devoid of relevant context” (Wexler & Gone, 2012, p. 804). Instead, they argued, suicide in Indigenous communities should be understood as an expression of historical, cultural, community and family disruptions—“the terminal outcome of historic oppression, current injustice, and ongoing social suffering” (Wexler & Gone, 2012, p. 801). Indeed, Indigenous suicide has been explained in relation to the experience of cultural loss and social disruption (Wexler, 2006), and historical trauma (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998; Duran, 2006; Evans-Campbell, 2008). Similarly, in Australia, Hunter and Milroy (2006) discussed Indigenous suicide as stemming from

the complex interplay of historical, political, social, circumstantial, psychological, and biological factors that have already disrupted sacred and cultural continuity; disconnecting the individual from the earth, the universe and the spiritual realm—disconnecting the individual from the life affirming stories that are central to cultural resilience and continuity. (p. 150) (see also Silburn et al., 2014)

Wexler and Gone (2012, 2015) also troubled the focus of mental health intervention rather than social intervention, and the provision of suicide prevention from health systems as opposed to community projects. Wexler and Gone (2012, 2015) asserted that approaches to suicide prevention in Indigenous contexts should be focused on the development of locally designed decolonising projects, given that

community activism and cultural engagement has been shown to contribute to lower suicide rates and improved wellbeing outcomes (see Chandler & Lalonde, 1998; Wexler, 2014).

Psychosocial suffering. Given these concerns, some authors have preferred the concept of social suffering (Farmer, 2009; Kleinman, 1997; Kleinman, Das & Lock, 1997; O’Loughlin & Charles, 2015). Frost and Hoggett (2008) applied a psychosocial perspective to the concept of social suffering (Bourdieu, 1999). Focusing their analysis on the internalised injuries of class and the implications for the welfare subject, they discussed social suffering as “the lived experience of the social damage inflicted in late capitalist societies on the least powerful and the intra psychic and relational wounds that result” (p. 440). From this perspective, “both inner worlds of psychic suffering and outer worlds of social structural oppression are constitutive of such subjects, their capacity for agency, and the forms of agency that are possible” (p. 440). For Frost and Hoggett, the experience of social suffering is “inscribed on the body: the low self-esteem, low status, lack of social capital and lack of power to direct one’s life” (p. 452). Segalo (2013) and Candib (2002) have similarly discussed how suffering is embodied. Individuals can respond with “dysfunctional defences” or “adaptive forms of coping” (p. 449). They noted that, when dysfunctional defences, like alcoholism or drug abuse, dominate, “the individual’s response to suffering causes further suffering to both self and others”, which they described as ‘double suffering’ (p. 449). For example, issues of lateral violence can be understood as an example of ‘double suffering’. The concept of social suffering is useful because it recognises the psychosocial harms produced by structural inequalities and power relations, including the fragmentation of

communities and the erosion of individual and collective self-esteem, without psychologising or individualising these issues.

Summary. So far this chapter has explored how oppression, and its reproduction, has been conceptualised (e.g., structural, symbolic/cultural, and epistemic violence), and well as how the psychosocial impacts of these various forms of violence for individuals, communities, and across generations, have been understood (e.g., internalised oppression, lateral violence, and historical trauma). In the preceding section, I discussed some of the cautions that different scholars have issued about the use of concepts including internalised oppression and the language of trauma. In particular, critical scholars have emphasised the need to ensure that the concepts and labels we use to name the effects do not individualise, medicalise, or psychologise issues produced in and by conditions of social suffering (N. Clark, 2016; Kirmayer et al., 2003, 2014; Krieg, 2009). Moreover, they have problematised the deficit orientation, and stressed the need to also pay attention to the resilience, resistance, and survival, or what Vizenor (1999) has called survivance, and of creating spaces for Indigenous peoples to tell their stories (Lavallee & Clearsky, 2006). The remainder of the chapter focuses on community-based approaches aimed at promoting liberation in contexts with histories of colonisation and racism and ongoing structural, cultural, and epistemic violence.

Community-Based Approaches to Liberation

Given histories of colonisation and cultural imperialism, critical scholars have advocated the need to create spaces and opportunities for the retrieval, reclamation, and renewal of subjugated knowledges and practices. For example, Smith (1999), in her influential work *Decolonizing Methodologies* discussed storytelling, testimony, and reclaiming, as important strategies for decolonisation:

Coming to know the past has been part of the critical pedagogy of decolonization. To hold alternative histories is to hold alternative knowledges. The pedagogical implication of this access to alternative knowledges is that they can form the basis of alternative ways of doing things.... Telling our stories from the past, reclaiming the past, giving testimony to the injustices of the past are all strategies, which are commonly employed by Indigenous peoples struggling for justice. (p. 34)

She wrote of the “very powerful need to give testimony to and restore a spirit, to bring back into existence a world fragmented and dying” (pp. 29-30). Smith (1999) outlined 25 decolonising projects for Indigenous peoples including claiming, testimonies, storytelling, celebrating survival/survivance, remembering, connecting, revitalising and regenerating. Wilson (2004) has similarly argued that Indigenous knowledge recovery is Indigenous empowerment.

In the Latin American context, Martín-Baró (1994), articulated three urgent tasks for a liberation psychology, namely, the recovery of historical memory, de-ideologising common sense and everyday experience, and “utilizing the peoples virtues” (p. 31). For Martín-Baró, “liberation can only come from a praxis committed to the suffering and hopes of peoples...” (p. 32). Recovery of historical memory involves mobilising resources that nurture identity, facilitate pride in belonging, and can foster the process of conscientisation (Freire, 1970). Montero (2007, 2009) identified participatory approaches including Participatory Action Research and biographical methods (e.g., life histories and narratives, autobiographies, field-notes) as predominating the methods of the psychology of liberation (see also Montero, Sonn, & Burton, 2017). These approaches facilitate de-naturalisation, de-habitation,

de-ideologisation and de-alienation, which is central to conscientisation (Montero, 2007, 2009). As outlined by Montero (2009), biographical approaches enable

a form of historic recuperation obtained by way of critical reflection revealing the meanings and relations hidden by the censorship of forgetfulness or oblivion that protected the people from sorrowful memories of painful facts thereby impeding them from confronting these events... (pp. 74-75)

Central to such calls, is recognition of the constitutive role of stories as symbolic resources in identity and community making processes. Indeed, if symbolic resources in the form of stories, narrative, and discourse play a role in the perpetuation of relations of domination and subordination through structural (Galtung, 1969), cultural (Galtung, 1990), and epistemic violence (Spivak, 1988), stories and storytelling can also be mobilised as a form of resistance, to promote liberation (Sonn & Baker, 2016; Sonn et al., 2013).

Stories and Storytelling. Critical scholars in various disciplines and substantive domains have taken up narrative approaches to identity, empowerment, and social change (e.g., Bell, 2010; Frosh, 2003; Gergen & Gergen, 2010; Rappaport, 2000; Stewart, 2011). Within such approaches, storytelling is understood as an ontological condition of social life (Somers 1994); it is through stories that “we learn about the world, passed down from generation to generation through the family and cultural groups to which we belong” (Bell, 2010, p. 16). It is through exposure to and engagement with the stories or cultural tools/resources (Tappan, 2006) that are available, that we make sense of self, other, and the social world around us. Stories are resources (Thomas & Rappaport, 1996), which, because of longer histories of colonisation and racism and ongoing asymmetries of power, are unevenly distributed; some groups have more power to make meaning stick. It follows then, that stories and

storytelling are a site for examining and contesting structural violence (Clandinen & Rosiek, 2007; Dutta et al., 2016; Sonn et al., 2013; Stewart, 2011; Thomas & Rappaport, 1996).

Various authors within psychology have emphasised the value of examining the narratives people draw on in constructing their lives in sociocultural context. This work has necessarily been interdisciplinary in nature (Stevens et al., 2010). For example, Frosh (2003) advocated a critical psychosocial approach, that examines the “psychosocial as a seamless entity” (p. 1547), with notions that are usually distinguished as separate entities (e.g., individual and society), understood instead as intimately connected, and indeed, making each other up. As asserted by Frosh (2003),

subjects are constructed by and in power; that is, they are constituted by social forces that lie outside them, in the workings of the world. But this does not mean that subjects have no agency; rather, their agentic status is what they are produced with, and it enables them to take hold of power and use it. (p. 1552)

In line with this argument, informed by the writing of James Wertsch (1994), Tappan (2006) advanced a mediated action perspective to understand oppression and privilege. Similar to Frosh (2003), he argued the necessity of challenging an “exclusively individualistic view and an exclusively systemic/structural view” (p. 2139). He asserted the need to meet in the middle, which the concept of mediated action enables. Central to this perspective is recognition of “the pervasive and insidious role that systemic forces, in the form of cultural tools and resources (ideologies, images, stereotypes, scripts, etc.), play in promoting and promulgating both oppression and privilege” (Tappan, 2006, p. 2139). These cultural tools and resources, Tappan argued, have significant long-lasting implications, “depending on when and how they are appropriated (both mastered and owned)” (p. 2139). Thus, in

line with Jones' (2014) assertion that if we can learn the negative scripts, we can also unlearn them, Tappan, emphasised the need to intervene into the symbolic context of meaning making, unmaking, and remaking. The focus thus becomes the cultural resources that shape and constrain identities, subjectivities, and intersubjective relations between people.

In advancing a decolonising standpoint, Reyes Cruz and Sonn (2011) emphasised the importance of repositioning the way in which community psychology has engaged with culture “as ‘some-thing’, as static, an essence, that exists outside of the observer” (p. 205). The authors highlighted advances in postcolonial studies, critical psychology and cultural studies, which emphasise the “way in which social categories emerge, are negotiated and sustained within relations of domination” (p. 205). Kral, Ramírez García, Aber, Masood, Dutta, and Todd (2011) also argued for a more explicit engagement with culture in community psychology. The authors distinguished between cross-cultural approaches to cultural psychology, where culture is approached as a variable, and “the more countercultural anthropological cultural psychology” (p. 54). They advocated for this approach, given “its emphasis on subjectivity, intersubjectivity, reflexivity, narrative, and the community’s point of view” (p. 54).

Squire (2000) also advanced a psycho-cultural approach to psychology which focus on “the mutually determining relationships between subjects and culture, and on ‘culture’ as a matter of symbolic, theoretical and everyday activities carried out by psychologists, as well as by the people they study” (p. 13). This ‘new cultural psychology’ (Griffin, 2000) was described by Walkerdine (2000) as a “hybrid endeavour, which takes arguments from cultural studies and remakes them, producing

a third space, a constructive blend of the psychological and the cultural which neither psychology nor cultural studies can do without” (p. 174).

In line with these calls for engaging with the sociocultural and for a critical interdisciplinary approach with emancipatory aims, Weis and Fine (2012) have advocated for critical bifocality. They noted,

We need research that can peer behind the drapes that hides the strategic coproduction of privilege and disadvantage, revealing the micro practices by which privilege and structural decay come to be produced, sustained, reproduced, embodied, and contested, even if safe spaces can protect a few for a while, from the acid rains of oppression. (p. 175)

Weis and Fine (2012), warn against the danger of separating “lives or safe spaces or even conditions tagged as social problems from global and local structures” (p. 175). They went on to state: “We cannot reproduce the conceptual firewalls separating present from past, resilience from oppression, achievement from opportunity, progress from decline” (p. 175). A critical bifocal research design deliberately places ethnographic and narrative material “into a contextual and historic understanding of economic and social formations” (p. 186). Nesting lives within structures and histories, this framework seeks to overcome the structure/agency split, the simplistic reliance on safe spaces, and “the at times over determinism of a wholly structural focus” (p. 196).

Gergen and Gergen (2010) have advocated the use of narrative approaches, which share a concern with “stories as vehicles for rendering the self and world intelligible” (p. 728). As noted by Stewart (2011), narratives are “constituted by and constitutive of social meanings, contexts and relationships” (p. 194). In community psychology, Rappaport (1995) and colleagues (e.g., Thomas & Rappaport, 1996)

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

linked narrative theory with the empowerment social agenda, emphasising that the “ability to tell one’s story, and to have access to and influence over collective stories, is a powerful resource” (p. 802). Rappaport (2000) emphasised the role for community psychology in supporting individuals and groups to turn tales of terror to tales of joy. Stewart (2011) emphasised the crucial role of narrative and voice in creating empowering settings. As noted by Stewart, “narrative and voice, can help us build new forms of relationships across diverse populations and social positions to conceptualize and create better settings and worlds” (p. 203).

Echoing the work of Rappaport (2000), Hammack (2008, 2011) advocated a narrative approach to cultural psychology in his work with Israeli and Palestinian young people. Connecting the individual and sociocultural context, theoretically through the concept of identity, Hammack (2008) proposed a cultural psychology framework that explores “the relationship between master narratives and personal narratives of identity” (p. 222). Hammack was particularly concerned with examining the ways in which individuals engage with social structural realities, as well as how structures of social life manifest in individual subjectivity. An “enculturated, socially situated, and fully contextualized person”, is central to this approach (p. 240), with people understood as engaging in a dynamic way with ideology and discourse, which are internalised “in the form of a life-story narrative” (p. 241). Specifically, Hammack defined identity as “ideology cognized through the individual engagement with discourse, made manifest in a personal narrative constructed and reconstructed across the life course, and scripted in and through social interaction and social practice” (p. 223).

Sonn and Fisher (1998) conceptualised alternative settings as a space of resistance and community resilience for marginalised groups, specifically South

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Africans who were designated 'coloured' under Apartheid. The authors noted the ways in which communities create settings away from the dominant group where they are able to protect and maintain valued aspects of identity and culture (i.e., symbolic resources), within a broader context within which they are devalued. Sonn and Fisher pointed to the possibilities of narrative analysis as "a technique for understanding the myriad of ways in which groups respond to adversity" (p. 468).

More recently, Case and Hunter (2012) proposed the counterspaces framework to conceptualise and investigate responses to oppression, and in particular, the person environment transactions that foster adaptive responding. Within this framework, the authors recognised the role of "narrative identity work, acts of resistance, and direct relational transactions" (p. 262), as contributing to self-enhancement within counter-spaces. The framework was informed by Rappaport's (2000) approach to narrative. Within the domain of narrative identity work, they highlighted the creation and maintenance of oppression narratives, resistance narratives, and reimagined personal narratives. They argued that oppression narratives are important as they "affirm and privilege the individual's subjective experience of oppression" (p. 263); resistance narratives, articulate "the strength and capability of setting members to overcome oppression" (p. 264), and reimagined personal narratives, as an individual level construct, "re-craft individual identities which have been mis-represented and demeaned through dominant cultural narratives" (p. 263). Narrative identity work is also an interpersonal process, with shared narratives functioning to strengthen community, and to foster the bonds of solidarity.

Case and Hunter (2012) also identified acts of resistance, which function to enhance the self-concept of marginalised groups. Like alternative settings (Sonn & Fisher, 1998), counterspaces provide members opportunities "to think, feel and act in

ways that are consonant with their own identities but that are typically devalued by the larger society” (p. 265). Within counterspaces or alternative settings, marginalised groups can enact cultural practices including rituals, dress, and language. In addition, counter-spaces provide opportunities for members to engage in behaviours aimed at an explicit critique of the oppressive conditions characterising their lifeworlds. When members of counter-spaces engage in either type of behaviour (i.e., affirmation and critique), they are understood as engaging in acts of resistance. These acts of resistance foster individual and community identity, sense of community, solidarity, and support. Finally, Case and Hunter (2012) use the domain of direct relational transactions to refer to “the processes by which more direct and routine relational transactions (e.g., communication) between counterspace members facilitate adaptive responding” (p. 266). They noted this can include social support but also the social transmission of strategies (behavioural and cognitive) to respond to the experience and consequences of oppression.

Montero et al. (2017) also discussed the importance of cultural practice and enactment in liberation-oriented work. They noted that “engagement with culture is part of the de-colonial critique” in both liberation psychology and community psychology (p. 156). Cultural practice and enactment involves developing and affirming, “knowledge about health, wellbeing and healing, based on cultural wisdom, as well as histories and social, spiritual, and cultural knowledge and practices” (p. 156). The authors pointed to the work by Indigenous scholars in Australia (Dudgeon, Milroy & Walker, 2014), and Aotearoa/New Zealand (Nikora, 2007), as key examples of approaches where cultural practice is understood as central to “processes of community construction and reconstruction” (p. 156).

Indigenous people, resilience, resistance, and survival. Indigenous scholars and their allies have also taken up these narrative approaches to identity, empowerment, and social change, with stories and storytelling recognised as an important cultural practice for Indigenous peoples. For example, Australian Aboriginal scholar, Karen Martin (2001) discussed the significance of stories and storytelling, stating, “Stories have power and give power” (p. 46).

Stories are our law. Stories give identity as they connect us and fulfil our sense of belonging. Stories are grounding, defining, comforting and embracing. Stories vary in their purpose and content and so Stories can be political and yet equally healing. They can be shared verbally, physically or visually. Their meanings and messages teach, admonish, tease, celebrate, entertain, provoke and challenge. (p. 45)

Ramirez and Hammack (2014) proposed a “resilient-strength-based approach to narrative identity development” (p. 112), as a means of countering and complementing the historical trauma discourse. As noted by Ramirez and Hammack, Indigenous peoples necessarily “negotiate the cultural and psychological legacy of colonialism as they construct coherent, purposive individual and communal narratives” (p. 113). Gonzalez et al. (2014) wrote,

To talk about internalized oppression among indigenous Peoples is to tell a story, many stories. Stories about loss. Stories about suffering. Stories about pain. Stories of genocide and destruction. But there are also stories of survival. Stories about resilience. Stories about pride. And yes, stories about healing. (p. 32)

The authors emphasised that as Indigenous peoples they “want to talk about who [they] are, where [they] come from, and the great trauma that [they] have

survived and continue to face so that [they] can learn to heal together” (p. 32). From this perspective, healing necessitates recognition and acknowledgment of the impacts of the historical trauma experience. Indigenous stories and storytelling is understood as central to learning and understanding colonial histories and legacies, and in constructing identities in the present.

Along similar lines, Mohatt et al. (2014) reframed historical trauma as a public narrative “that connects histories of group-experienced traumatic events to present day experiences and contexts, including the contemporary health of a group or community” (p. 129). In applying a narrative framework to the notion of trauma, they emphasised that they do not wish to deny the “veracity of past traumatic events” (Mohatt et al., 2014, p. 130). Rather, they aim to emphasise how trauma becomes part of the contemporary cultural narrative, because people use “narratives to express both individual and collective identities and to situate themselves in social contexts” (p. 130).

Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips and Williamson (2011) have argued for the need to rethink the concept of resilience in Indigenous contexts. For them resilience is understood “as a dynamic process of social and psychological adaptation and transformation” (p. 85). Resilience can be identified across levels of individuals, families, communities, or larger social groups and “is manifested as positive outcomes in the face of historical and current stresses” (Kirmayer et al., p. 85). In their work with Indigenous peoples of North America, Kirmayer et al. (2011) have emphasised the role of stories of identity and transformation (personal and collective) in fostering resilience, across the varying levels of the person, community, and collective. For Kirmayer et al. (2011), in line with Ramirez and Hammack (2014), resilience is viewed as residing “in the ways we have of narrating our lives” (p. 85).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

They noted that collective forms of narrative “help people make sense of their experience and construct a valued identity but also ensure the continuity and vitality of a community or a people” (Kirmayer et al., 2011, pp. 85-86). The authors suggested that narrative resilience

has a communal or collective dimension, maintained by the circulation of stories invested with cultural power and authority, which the individual and groups can use to articulate and assert their identity, affirm core values and attitudes needed to face challenges, and generate creative solutions to new predicaments. (Kirmayer et al., 2011, p. 85-86)

Moorhead and LaFromboise (2014) have similarly emphasised that “if more resilience stories were told, people would reconnect with a sense of pride in their cultural identities and cultural practices” (p. 148). For Lavalley and Cleary (2006), resilience is self-determination, and the focus should be on how, as Aboriginal people, they can reclaim their past, present and future. In troubling the focus on woundedness, Lavalley and Cleary emphasised the “tacit resilience found in their Aboriginality” (p. 5), and argued that the gaze should be focused on the system and its insidious influence upon the collective identity of Indigenous peoples, as part of the process of conscientisation (Freire, 1970). The authors noted that while many Aboriginal people are already aware of the oppressive forces at work in their everyday lives, they need the “opportunities to tell their stories” (p. 5).

N. Clark (2016) has also stressed the importance of centring images of strength, resilience and resistance, against the predominant stories of risk and harm. She discussed the importance of spaces for “reframing and restorying their behaviors as resistance to larger colonial systems, instead of the mental health labels they are invited to carry and identify with” (p. 9). N. Clark asserted the “need to develop

models for addressing violence that are aligned with Indigenous values, Indigenous paradigms and epistemologies and that are based in strengths, resistance, and survivance” (p. 11). Lui, Lawson-Te Aho, and Rata (2014), in their introduction to a special issue on an Indigenous psychology of self-determination and cultural healing, have similarly discussed the importance of creating identity spaces for First Nations people, where “social relations among First Nations people are valued as the source of psychological creativity and generativity” (p. 143).

Central to these arguments is the recognition of how Indigenous peoples’ stories, in documenting lived experience, can provide a perspective advantage into whiteness, but also point to everyday forms of resistance. For example, Smith (2012), points to the ‘shared language’, ‘the talk’ that Indigenous peoples have developed, and that is reflected in political discourses, humour, poetry, music, and storytelling:

Indigenous peoples as an international group have had to challenge, understand and have a shared language for talking about the history, the sociology, the psychology and the politics of imperialism and colonialism as an epic story telling of huge devastation, painful struggle and persistent survival. We have become quite good at talking that kind of talk, most often amongst ourselves, for ourselves and to ourselves. ‘The talk’ about the colonial past is embedded in our political discourses, our humour, poetry, music, story telling and other common sense ways of passing on both narrative of history and an attitude about history. (p. 20)

James Scott (1990) in his work on the hidden transcript argued for the need to recognise the everyday low profile acts of resistance to domination, which he named *infrapolitics*. He argued that, “Every subordinate group creates, out of its ordeal, a ‘hidden transcript’ that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the

dominant” (p. xii). Informed by the work of Scott (1985) on the weapons of the weak, O’Neill (1994) has written about the role of storytelling about encounters with whites for Native Americans living on the Flathead Indian reservation in Montana. She wrote about three types of stories of encounters with whites— those that are amusing, serious or dangerous. O’Neill (1994) argued that amusing encounters were common in conversations, noting that the

source of their humor lies in the depiction of the weird ways in which white people think and act. Whites are weird when they are unable to trust Indians or to treat them as fully human- a situation that is usually attributed to the ignorance of those whites about Indians and the Flathead way of life. (p. 110)

In the Australian context, different authors have also emphasised the role of Aboriginal humour in resistance and survival (see Duncan, 2014). For example, Huggins (1987) wrote that “Humour allows for relief and pleasure and this helps to explain why it has been notably present among people who seem to outsiders to have little to laugh about ... things can be so funny, yet so deadly serious” (p. 8).

In contrast to the funny stories met with amusement, O’Neill (1994) identified stories about serious encounters. These stories also highlighted “the crazy ways of whites”, but “involved a direct cost to Indians and seemed to stem not from ignorance but from deliberate disrespect” (p. 111). Stories about dangerous encounters about institutionalised discrimination evoked the most negative responses, and included stories about the harsher sentences given to Native American offenders, or the fact that the school system has language programs that include French or Spanish, but not the traditional languages of the peoples of the area. For O’Neill (1994), storytelling was a form of resistance; “a creative and potentially empowering act in the service of

the construction of a positive group identity for members of the Flathead Indian community” (p. 95).

Mobilising stories and storytelling: Creative and participatory

methodologies. The power of stories and storytelling has been mobilised within participatory and creative methodologies informed by liberation psychology and cultural psychology frameworks, as a means of decolonising psychological science (Adams, Dobles, Gómez, Kurtiş & Molina, 2015), and contesting structural violence (Dutta et al., 2016; Segalo, Manoff, & Fine, 2015; Sonn & Baker, 2016; Sonn et al., 2013; Stevens et al., 2013). For example, in their work on the Apartheid Archive Project (AAP), Sonn, Stevens and Duncan (2013) discussed storytelling as a “tool for critical, participatory, and socially transformative praxis” (p. 295). For Sonn et al., stories provide “an opportunity to explore the mundane and routine ways in which social structures penetrate social relations in everyday settings and in particular, a means to understand the historical and continued exercise of, and responses to, racialised power relations” (p. 296). As noted by Stevens, Duncan, and Sonn (2010), the AAP aims to provide opportunities for analysing and understanding the past and its continuities in the present,

but also creates spaces for an imaginary in which we can construct new individual and collective identities, subjectivities and positionalities that may offer up alternatives to the highly binaried and racialised social relations that continue to characterise contemporary South African society. (p. 14)

Stevens et al. (2010) identified the reclamation of history, forging collective memories and alternative subject positions, citizen participation and the creation of intercommunal spaces, as central goals of the AAP.

Watkins and Shulman (2008) used the term liberation arts to describe work that seeks to “resurrect resources to transform oppressive structures of language and society and to de-ideologize understandings” (p. 234). Liberation arts create spaces for “resymbolizing and resignifying the world...” (p. 234). As noted by Watkins and Shulman, liberation arts “begin processes of dialogue and imagination that strengthen individuals and communities to engage their past, present, and future” (p. 264); liberation arts are participatory, creative, dialogical, performative, rupturing, decentring, communicative, transformative and consciousness-raising. Watkins and Shulman discussed the use of liberation arts practices for counter-memory and counter-memorial, which are important for disrupting dominant narratives, and “awakening to silences” (p. 233).

Lykes, Blanche and Hamber (2003) used Participatory Action Research and photography and storytelling techniques with groups of women in the post-conflict contexts of Guatemala and South Africa. In the case of Guatemala, photography and storytelling was utilised as a means for community members to create a collaborative dialogue through the exploration of their different experiences of the past. The South African project aimed to “create contexts for public witnessing and performances that exposed the atrocities of apartheid to the wider community” (p. 88). The different projects sought to bring “personal stories of suffering, into public discourse” (p. 88), as part of the process of constructing new identities and creating new futures. Adams and Kurtiş (2012) have also drawn on a liberation psychology approach to highlight “the critical importance of collective memory practices (i.e., ‘recovery of historical memory’) as tools for re-imagination of community (i.e., ‘models of identification’) that are conducive to reconciliation, collective action, and social justice” (p. 18).

Also in post-Apartheid South Africa, Segalo (2013) reported how through making personal embroideries, women were supported to express their stories and embodied experience; they could “document their stories, pains, voices, struggles, subjectivities and dreams...” (p. 65). Segalo argued that embroidery provided a platform for the women to voice their suffering, which had previously been silenced. The embroideries also provided a counter-narrative to discourses of ‘emancipation’ and ‘equality’ in post-apartheid South Africa, as they highlighted persistent inequalities experienced in their everyday lives. As noted by Segalo, Manoff and Fine (2015), the critical project of decolonisation requires the creation of “spaces where bodies, affect, rage, struggle, imagination can breathe” (p. 19).

In South Africa, Seedat (2015) has discussed oral history as the enactment of critical community psychology, with the act of storytelling understood as a dynamic process involving interpretation, reflection, and interrogation. For Seedat, oral history projects facilitate “expressions of individual and collective narratives, the affirmation of social agency, and the restitution of a marginal community’s own generative narratives of past and contemporary realities” (p. 23). Seedat discussed the recovery of “informal knowledge” as a means of eliciting and collecting silenced and subjugated stories, and as a process of “reclaiming and reasserting lost collective biographies, agency, identity, and authenticity” (p. 32). Seedat emphasised that in the project he was reporting on, the process of “making narratives” was driven by the community, with the community positioned as “the real knowers and legitimate bearers of collective and individual narratives and memories” (p. 33).

The important role of storytelling and collective memory practices, have also been advocated as part of the process of healing from historical trauma for Indigenous peoples. Archibald (2006a), in her report for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Canada, identified Aboriginal values and worldview, personal and cultural safety, and capacity to heal (i.e., skilled healers, therapists, Elders or volunteers), as key elements to effective healing programs (see also Castellano, 2006). Archibald (2006a) outlined “three pillars of healing” from historical trauma, namely “reclaiming history, cultural interventions, and therapeutic healing” (p. 16). The first pillar, reclaiming history, involves learning about past policies and practices, for example, the Residential school system in Canada and the long lasting impacts for First Nations peoples. Understanding history is conceptualised as “a catalyst for healing”, and as paving “the way for mourning what was lost” (Archibald, 2006a, p. 16).

The second pillar focuses on “activities that engage people in a process of recovering and reconnecting with their culture, language, history, spirituality, traditions and ceremonies” (Archibald, 2006a, p. 16). Such work strengthens self-esteem and a positive cultural identity. In their report to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Kishk Anaquat Health Research (2006) similarly emphasised the importance of creating opportunities for cultural reinforcement and celebration, as a “way of reclaiming what was lost personally, spiritually and linguistically” (p. 43). In the Australian context, Feeney (2009) also identified processes of cultural renewal as promising healing practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Feeney emphasised the need for programs that facilitate cultural renewal and strengthen cultural identity, support healing rituals, and that educate about the legacy of the Stolen Generations, for example through research and/or community arts. Remembrance activities and mourning, and land-based activities, were also recognised as contributing to processes of cultural renewal, and thus as important healing practices (Feeney, 2009).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

The final aspect of this healing framework encompasses the variety of holistic and culturally relevant therapies and healing interventions that are used by communities in recovering from historical trauma, often in combination with western or alternative therapies (Archibald, 2006a). Traditional approaches to healing can include sweat lodges, healing and sharing circles, the medicine wheel, and counselling by Elders (Archibald, 2006a; see also Gone, 2009, 2013, 2016). Archibald emphasised that individuals can participate in the three aspects of healing, and can move back and forth between them (see also Archibald, 2006b; Castellano, 2006; Feeney, 2009; Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004 on healing from historical trauma).

As previously discussed, Atkinson's (2002, 2008) work on violence and trauma within Australian Aboriginal communities has highlighted how the experience of layered traumatisation can create "cycles of painful abuse and self-abuse...conflicts of identity, and a devaluing of their Aboriginal cultural and spiritual heritage" (p. 106). Yet her work also points to the possibilities for healing. Atkinson's approach centred the role of storytelling in the process of healing from trauma, and in particular, the need to recreate song lines. Atkinson developed the *We Al-li* program, which aims to foster the process of healing through sharing culture and regenerating spirit. *We Al-li* means fire (*We*) and water (*Al-li*) in Woppaburra language (Atkinson, 2013), which carries important symbolic meaning (see Atkinson, 2002). This program aims to provide opportunities for the exploration of personal and collective stories in a culturally safe environment (Atkinson, 2002). Specifically, the program sought to enable individuals to recognise their personal story as part of a collective story. Atkinson (2008) used Story, to refer to "a personal or collective history, a narrative or description of life events, which allow us to make meaning of our lives" (p. 104). *We*

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Al-li incorporates activities such as the construction of genograms (i.e., diagrams of intergenerational stories), and the practice of *dadiri*, which was described by Miriam Rose Ungunnerr (1993) as “a special quality, a unique gift of the Aboriginal people. It is inner deep listening and quiet still awareness—something like what you call contemplation” (as cited in Atkinson, 2002, p. 16). As noted by Atkinson (2008), “Finding our Stories of Relatedness is necessary for us to understand who we are...as Indigenous Australians, seeking healing from layered traumatisation...” (p. 103). Importantly, Atkinson emphasised that all Australians must engage in educational work of exploring questions relating to the self-other relationship.

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, Baltrán and Begun (2014) have discussed narrative as an important cultural practice in Indigenous communities. In particular, they explored the use of digital storytelling as part of healing from historical trauma. The authors discussed the value for people of finding and sharing their story, of seeing their stories reflected in the stories of others, and of the supportive environment created through such projects, which fosters feelings of safety, freedom, and interconnectedness. Informed by liberation psychology, the authors conceptualised digital storytelling as a transformative process (see also Wexler, Eglington & Gurbium, 2014 on digital storytelling in Indigenous contexts).

Wexler, White, and Trainor (2015) discussed an empowering community storytelling approach to suicide prevention in Indigenous communities in North America. Informed by an ecological transactional framework, the authors emphasised how, through community based approaches, community and cultural protective factors in Indigenous communities can be mobilised and strengthened. For Lawson Te Aho (2014), the act of storytelling facilitates healing because it raises critical consciousness about the history and continuing impacts of this history in the present.

Further, it provides testimony to the resilience of previous generations, including “knowledge of the strategies previous generations employed to survive the brutalizing effects of colonisation” (p. 181). Hartmann and Gone (2014) have emphasised the importance of community perspectives on community problems and suitable interventions. The authors explored how two influential medicine men interpreted the historical trauma discourse in their own unique ways. One Elder made use of the historical trauma discourse to emphasise the spiritual perspective on distress. The other made use of the concept to highlight the ongoing systemic oppression and need for socio-structural change. The authors emphasised the importance of constructive and critical reflection on emerging discourses by and with Indigenous communities.

In Australia, Indigenous led social justice organisation People, Culture, Environment produced the 2014 Elders’ report into Preventing Indigenous Self-harm and Youth Suicide. The report provides insights from Elders and community leaders from communities across Australia affected by suicide, into the causes and solutions needed to address the issue of suicide. As noted by Dudgeon, after years of unsuccessful ‘top-down policymaking’, Elders’ “are crying out to be heard and to be involved in healing their communities and giving young Indigenous people their inheritance of cultural knowledge, identity and strength” (People, Culture, Environment, 2014, p. 7). For example, one Elder, Baydon William from the Northern Territory said, “It’s important for young people to listen to the Elders to make their spirit strong. When the Elders speak to you, their words feed your soul and give you strength” (p. 35). Indeed, connection with culture, country, and kinship has been identified as protective factors for Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing (Zubrick et al., 2014).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Importantly, these stories are not only important within Aboriginal communities for processes of healing and cultural maintenance and renewal, but also for challenging the silencing of histories of dispossession and ongoing structural violence. For example, in Canada, Dion and Dion (2004) have developed an approach for teaching about oppressive histories and challenging taken for granted ways of knowing about Aboriginal people, called the Braiding Histories Stories (see also Dion, 2009), designed for use in the classroom (grades 7-12). As described by the authors, these stories are

vivid memories of events that occupy a prominent place in our perspective and understanding of our situation. They both inform and reflect who we are.

Although the stories have everything to do with us.... they call Canadians to attend to a story that many would rather forget. (p. 16)

In (re)telling these stories as Aboriginal people, they are both witness and testifier “bearing witness to the stories of our ancestors and giving testimony as survivors of the policy of forced assimilation” (p. 17). They continued,

With our testimony, we are wanting to convey to others, to elicit in others the desire to listen and (re)member, to listen and acknowledge that which has happened. Ultimately we hope that our stories will be a form of commemoration that will be made personal. We want them to enter into the living memory of our readers to transform how they understand themselves and their relations with First Nations people. (p. 18)

Their aim was to offer readers an alternative listening position for their readers, and they asked readers to accept responsibility for hearing the stories – to listen responsibly. This means rethinking current understandings of Aboriginal people in response to hearing stories that they previously may not have had access to.

The role of stories and counter-storytelling has also been central to the mobilisation of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in the field of education. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) discussed counter-storytelling as a methodology of CRT, which centres on “telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told” (p. 26). Bell (2010) has demonstrated the importance of stories, and the methodology of storytelling for social change in her Storytelling Project Model, which aims to create counter-storytelling communities through the arts (see also Bell, 2009). Bell identified stock stories, and three types of counter stories: concealed, resistance, and emergent/transforming stories. Delgado (1989), a prominent critical race theorist, discussed the importance of attending to peoples stories as a means of responding to macrosocial oppression:

Stories about oppression, about victimization, about one’s own brutalization—far from deepening the despair of the oppressed, lead to healing, liberation, mental health... Storytelling emboldens the hearer, who may have had the same thoughts and experiences the storyteller describes, but hesitated to give them voice. Having heard another express them, he or she realizes, I am not alone. (p. 2437)

Delgado (1989) also emphasised the effects on the oppressors of hearing these stories, and of the possibilities for generating new stories. The role of counter-stories and counter-storytelling has also been advanced in critical approaches in psychology (e.g., Bamberg & Andrews, 2004; Salter & Adams, 2013). As noted by Harris, Carney and Fine (2001), counter- stories “re-veal the very bones and skeletons of domination, re-cast the workings of subordination and re-tell the history of how things came to be” (p. 14).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the need to understand oppression as “structural, institutional, interpersonal and intrapsychic; outrageous and civilized; cultivated in the media, the market and the academy” (Fine, 2006, p. 85). The impacts of oppression for the oppressed, and of colonisation for Indigenous peoples specifically, have been discussed using various concepts including internalised oppression (David, 2014), lateral violence (AHRC, 2011), soul wounding (Duran & Duran, 1995), historical trauma (Duran et al., 1998), and spiritual and cultural genocides (Atkinson, 2002). These understandings are important in highlighting the root causes of issues facing Indigenous peoples in the historical but ongoing acts of structural, cultural, and epistemic violence. Yet some have cautioned that these concepts run the risk of psychologising or medicalising issues of social suffering, and of failing to recognise the various resistant and resilient ways in which individuals and groups respond to adversity, or what Vizenor (1999, 2008) called Indigenous survivance.

Contextualist approaches, including storytelling and the recovery of historical memory (Martín-Baró, 1994) have been recognised and advocated as integral to facilitating the process of consciousness-raising that is central to overcoming oppression across various levels (Freire, 1970; Montero, 2007, 2009; Prilleltensky, 2012). Creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to tell their stories has been advocated as important not only for Indigenous peoples in their own healing and processes of cultural maintenance and renewal, but also because these stories can be mobilised to counter the silencing of histories of dispossession and the connections between past and present lived realities.

The current research aims to explore the stories shared by Aboriginal Elders as part of a Community Arts and Cultural Development project, Bush Babies, which I

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

will introduce in the following chapter. In particular, the focus is on the narratives that Elders use to explain the past, present, and possibilities for the future. Specifically, the research questions are: 1) what are the narratives through which Aboriginal people in Western Australian give meaning to their past, present and future; 2) what are the key themes in these stories; and 3) what strategies are evident in how they construct their identities and sense of self?

Chapter 4: The Bush Babies Project in Narrogin

This chapter introduces the town of Narrogin in the rural Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, where the Aboriginal Noongar community have experienced high levels of community distress reflected in issues of suicide, racism, and feuding (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009; Davies, 2010; McGuire et al., 2013). These issues of individual and community distress contributed to the decision by the Community Arts Network (CAN) Western Australia to establish a Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) presence in the town beginning in 2010 (Kasat, 2013; Palmer, 2013). The agency's commitment to work throughout Noongar country also comes "in response to the many invitations and requests by communities to help bring Noongar culture to national and international audiences" (CAN WA, 2014a, p. 8). CANs Rekindling Stories on Country strategy currently underpins their work with Noongar communities across the Wheatbelt, and includes the Bush Babies project (CAN WA, 2013, 2014a).

Western Australia's Wheatbelt

The Wheatbelt region is one of nine regions of Western Australia, covering an area of 154, 862 square kilometres across 43 local government authorities (Department of Regional Development, 2014). The 2011 census data estimated the highly dispersed population of the Wheatbelt to be 129,438, with Northam (6,580), Narrogin (4,219), Merredin (2,897), York (2,387), Moora (1,822) and Jurien Bay (1,507), the main urban centres (ABS⁹, 2011). Narrogin is a town in the Wheatbelt South, 192 kilometres southeast of Perth.

9 ABS QuickStats (Gazetted Locality) were used to ascertain the population counts (see: <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/quickstats>).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Given that the Indigenous population constitute three percent of the total Australian population, and 3.7% of the West Australian population (ABS, 2011), some of the towns in the Wheatbelt have a relatively large Indigenous population, with most identifying as Aboriginal, and specifically Noongar. Approximately 9.3 per cent of Narrogin's population identified as Indigenous (ABS, 2011). In the next section I discuss some of the issues reflecting individual and community distress within the Noongar community of Narrogin that led to CAN establishing a presence in the town.

Challenges Facing the Noongar Community of Narrogin

The entrenched disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people in Australia more broadly and Indigenous people in other settler colonial societies (Archibald, 2006b; A. Bell, 2014; Czyzewski, 2011; Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2014), is evident in these Wheatbelt towns as microcosms of broader Australian society. In the southern Wheatbelt town of Narrogin, the Noongar community has experienced high levels of individual and community distress as reflected in the issues of suicide, family feuding, and racism (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009; McGuire et al., 2013).

In 2008 the community of Narrogin was confronted with the suicide of six young Noongar men in a period of six months as well as many incidents of attempted suicide (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009; see also Guest, 2009; Hayward, 2008a). In October 2008 in response to the suicides, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice and Race Discrimination Commissioner Tom Calma, with Equal Opportunity Commissioner of Western Australia, Yvonne Henderson, visited Narrogin to meet with more than 200 community members in a private

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

meeting (Hayward, 2008b), organised by Oxfam who stepped in to fill “a dangerous void” (Sonti, 2009, para. 5). Following this community meeting, Calma commented,

What I heard today was a cry of desperation from this community for help from government...People told me that mental health of the community was under attack from the long-term stress of living in situations of disadvantage and racism. Needless to say, feelings of hurt and despair within the Narrogin Aboriginal community have come to a critical point. (AHRC, 2008, para. 3-6)

Speaking about the causes of Aboriginal suicide, Calma stated that, “racism is probably one of the greatest contributors, but also the feeling of worth within a person’s self, and control over their lives...” (Boase, 2008, para. 14). He also criticised the media, which he believed, continued to demonise the Aboriginal community (Boase, 2008; Davies, 2010). This sense of despair within the community was understood as contributing to alcohol and drug use, which in turn was a contributing factor to suicide (e.g., Buck, 2008; Hayward, 2008a; Guest, 2008).

The issue of racism within the town and the schools was publicised in local Western Australian newspapers in 2008 and 2009. Across media coverage, connections were made between experiences of racism, and the sense of hopelessness and despair that leads to drug and alcohol abuse and suicide. In June 2009, West Australian newspapers reported issues of racial tension at the senior high school, stating that “Parents of Aboriginal students in the town of Narrogin...have kept up to 25 children at home because of what they claim are racial slurs against indigenous students” (“Police called to high school amid racism claims”, 2009, para. 2; “Narrogin racism row leads to school boycott”, 2009, para. 3: see also Guest & Barrass, 2009; Lampathakis, 2009a, 2009b).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In November 2009, the Narrogin Noongar community made national headlines following feuding that “flared into a riot” (Spencer, 2009; see also de Garis, 2009; Rickard, Spencer & Hobbs, 2009; Washborne & Bolton, 2009). Following the feuding and subsequent media reporting of the incidents, Davies (2010) conducted a journalistic study of Narrogin’s feuding families to get a better understanding of the complex issues underlying the feuding that were missed in media reporting. Davies reported that the, “escalation of the Narrogin dispute into physical violence indicates a level of crisis, a need for something to be done to help the community deal appropriately with its distress, its passions and its differences” (p. 20). Following her research, Davies asserted that there “are at least three generational levels of disagreement in town that all split along family lines” (p. 25).

In the wake of the suicides, accusations of racism at local schools, and the ongoing issues of feuding within the community, Narrogin was one of the sites selected for the Senate Select Committee¹⁰ into Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities in 2009 (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009¹¹). One of the pressing concerns expressed by Noongar people at the public hearing was with the poor state of health including mental health and the need for appropriate and culturally specific, Aboriginal controlled medical services. Noongar academic Associate Professor Ted Wilkes commented on the state of health for Noongar people in the south-west:

I have been working in data for nearly 20 years, collecting data on Aboriginal health at the national and at the state levels, and I can tell you that the data about the south-west of Western Australia and the Noongar population is so

10 Select committees are temporary committees, established by the Senate to deal with particular issues.

11 To access the transcript see:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Former_Committees/indig/hearings/index

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

stark that it hits you between the eyes and makes you ask, 'What's going on in the south-west of Western Australia? (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009, p. 25)

Wilkes emphasised that while racism and suicide is not unique to Narrogin, racism and suicide do seem to happen more than in other places.

Narrogin has continually come into the limelight because there have been issues...around racism and racial conflict... Narrogin is not unique; it happens in other places too- it is just that it seems to happen more in Narrogin. The number of suicides here is out of kilter with what is expected in any community. As Noongar people we hear about the attempted suicides and we hear on the grapevine that they are still going on- there are problems down in Narrogin. (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009, p. 30)

Aboriginal psychologist Darryl Henry, one of the witnesses at the hearing, described 'the pool of distress' that leads to suicide:

When you look at the great wheels that run through our communities- wheels in terms of disturbance and hurt- there are family violence, child sexual abuse and neglect, suicide, the endless grieving, the dispossession and powerlessness, the multilayered layers of trauma that exist for our people. That is not just to say that is all we are. We are survivors and strong and alive... But they are real and they provide the pool of distress...

(Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009, p. 34)

Henry went on to discuss the experiences of distress within the community using the notion of intergenerational trauma:

What happens to a man or a woman or a child here who is in that state of collective despair... that powerless state. What happens to that person when a

situational crises arises; or when the seed of a mental pathology start to open or where through drug and alcohol use, self-abuse, itself both a cause and a symptom, starts to arise; or where from within any one of the dark secrets of racism and hurt starts to open up from the past? We are talking about intergenerational trauma, to put a technical term on it. (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009, p. 35)

Similarly, Wilkes commented, “It seems to me that, we have got a big population of very depressed people– oppressed people as well– we are not looking after them” (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009, pp. 30-31).

Importantly, witnesses emphasised the need to understand the current issues within the Noongar community against the longer history of Government policies and practices impacting Aboriginal people that have been inherently racist. Professor Wilkes made particularly scathing comments regarding the issue of racism in the town of Narrogin and on Noongar country more broadly, and highlighted the need to understand the historical experiences of Aboriginal people.

The indifference towards Aboriginal people in this little pocket is stark. It is different than in other places... the racism that exists within the south-west, throughout Noongar country, is very covert. We do not see it anymore, but our fathers and mothers copped it pretty sweet. They used to have to wear dog collars¹². They were not allowed in the streets after six o’clock. Okay, that is not the case anymore, but there is still that little bit of covert racism that you do not really see out front. Let me assure you whitefellas that it is there. Sometimes I say to myself, ‘It must be only us blackfellas who can pick up racism because we are the people living on the margins’. (p. 25)

12 Citizenship certificates are often described by Noongar people as ‘dog tags’, which Wilkes is probably referring to here.

For Wilkes, “There is a distinct lack of what might be called compassion or tolerance” (p. 35), and this leads to “a diminished knowledge base” (p. 35). Wilkes thus emphasised,

This is about saying to wadjula¹³ people, ‘we haven’t extinguished our sovereign rights yet and you mob need to come back to us and you need to talk to us about what these rights are’... we have had so many of our rights taken away from us and we have been made to feel so diminished... (pp. 35-36)

The National Empowerment Project (2014) is a “universal strategy to promote social and emotional wellbeing and reduce community distress and suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities” (para. 1). In 2013, the National Empowerment Project produced a research report based on their work in Narrogin, which highlighted many of the same issues facing the Narrogin Noongar community as those evident in 2009. The most common issues impacting Noongar people as identified by participants, from most significant to least, were: ‘feuding/conflict’, ‘racism/discrimination’, ‘substance abuse’, ‘youth issues’, ‘health issues’, ‘employment/education’, ‘tragic events’, and ‘communication issues’ (McGuire et al., 2013, p. 36).

The most common issue mentioned by participants as affecting individuals, families and the community, was feuding, which is often connected with substance abuse. The authors noted that even during the consultation process, separate meetings had to be held to avoid conflict between families that had been split by the conflicts. The next most dominant theme was “racism/discrimination and a sense of injustice” (p. 37), with participants reporting experiences of many different forms of racism;

¹³ Wadjula (or wadjela) is the Noongar word for white person.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

“overt and covert; and personal and systemic” (p. 37). For example, one participant noted that, “The ignorance of the wider community to understand and be compassionate to the Nyoongar situation is non-existent” (p. 37). Another commented, “Narrogin (the non-Aboriginal population) just wishes all the Aboriginal people would disappear” (p. 37). Comments reflecting racism at a more systemic level included: “There is not enough representation of Aboriginal people in councils or decision making government departments like housing and employment to give them a chance to make changes in their lives” (p. 38).

There were also significant concerns about young people including “the lack of suitable activities for them and the likelihood of incarceration” (p. 38), substance abuse, health, particularly mental health, and the lack of employment and education opportunities. Communication issues identified included concerns about Facebook becoming another medium through which community disharmony is exacerbated, the lack of communication between the Noongar community and the broader Narrogin community and within the health sector, and a lack of respect for Aboriginal people.

The challenges facing the Noongar community of Narrogin, as highlighted in media reports (e.g., Boase, 2008, Davies, 2010; Guest, 2008), the Inquiry (Commonwealth of Australia, Senate, October 8, 2009), and by the National Empowerment Project (McGuire et al., 2013), must be understood against the longer history, outlined in the previous chapter.

In 2009, Community Arts Network of WA was approached by a local Wheatbelt development organisation to develop Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) work with the Noongar community of Narrogin (Kasat, 2013). In the next section, I introduce CACD, and CAN, before describing the Rekindling Stories on Country strategy and the Bush Babies project.

Community Arts and Cultural Development

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) is a creative and collaborative approach to inspire individuals and communities to explore and express their own unique culture. It is a global field “with a decades-long history of practice, discourse, learning and impact” (Goldbard, 2006, p. 20). There are different labels used to describe community arts and cultural development practice. For example, Goldbard (2006), who describes the work as Community Cultural Development (CCD), also identified the labels community arts, community animation, community-based arts, cultural work, and participatory arts projects. In Australia, the Arts Council officially adopted the label ‘Community Cultural Development’ in 1987 (Goldbard, 2006). The Australia Council for the Arts (2017) currently use the more encompassing term, Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD), noting that it “is the creative processes and relationships developed with community to make the art that defines it, not the art form or genre” (para. 4) (Community Arts Network of WA also use CACD). For Arlene Goldbard (2006) CCD

describes the work of artist-organizers and other community members collaborating to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communications media. It is a process that simultaneously builds individual mastery and collective cultural capacity while contributing to positive social change. (p. 20)

The Community Cultural Development Network (ccd.net)¹⁴, a national network, described it as “a unique practice that works creatively with communities on their own ground, on their own issues, through cultural practice” (Kuppers, 2007, p. 220). CCD is a process characterised by community involvement at every level, but

¹⁴ This network is administered by Community Arts Network, South Australia.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

with no set methods as such. There are many different ways in which CACD works are made, developed, and shared; action research is central to the process (Goldbard, 2006).

Goldbard (2006) explains the term CCD in the following way. The *Community* aspect highlights that it is a participatory approach involving collaboration between artists and other community members. The focus on the *cultural*, as opposed to simply on community arts, reflects the broad range of tools and forms that are used “from aspects of traditional visual- and performing-arts practice to oral-history approaches...to use of high-tech communications media, to elements of activism and community organizing...” (p. 21). Finally, *development* is indicative of the “dynamic nature of cultural action, with its ambitions of conscientization and empowerment” (p. 21). CCD work is understood as inevitably responding “to current social conditions: the work is grounded in social critique and social imagination” (Goldbard, 2006, p. 22).

Within this approach culture is understood as “the fabric of signs and symbols, language and image, customs and ceremonies, habitations, institutions, and much more that characterize and enable a specific human community to form and sustain itself” (Goldbard, 2013, p. 11). As articulated by Goldbard (2013) “culture isn’t a matter of either/or, of hard-and-fast boundaries, but of permeable membranes exchanging influences that help to shape the whole” (p. 13). For Goldbard (2006), CCD “embodies a critical relationship to culture, through which participants come to awareness of their own power as culture makers, employing that power to build collective capacity, addressing issues of deep concern for themselves and their communities” (p. 142). Art is used by Goldbard (2013) to refer to “those artifacts and

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

experiences intentionally created to convey beauty or meaning, giving shape to concepts and feelings” (p. 14).

Adams and Goldbard (2002) and Goldbard (2006) articulated the central principles of CCD practice, including active participation in cultural life, diversity as a social asset, and equality of all cultures. Engaging in and through culture is argued to be less polarizing and as creating “deeper connections than other social-change arenas” (Goldbard, 2006, p. 43). The process of cultural expression is recognised as important as the product, and culture is viewed as dynamic, and changeable. Finally, artists are recognised as having a socially valuable role as agents of transformation (Goldbard, 2006). The guiding principles behind the funding of CACD projects, as articulated by the Australia Council for the Arts (2015) reflect these key principles: the activity is by with and for communities; the artists are highly skilled; and the activities reflect the energy and qualities of the community.

Goldbard (2006) identifies a variety of program models or forms that CCD practice can take including structured learning, dialogues, documentation and distribution, claiming public space and residencies. In terms of documentation and distribution, CCD work often involves unearthing “realities that have been obscured by suppression, denial or shame” (Goldbard, 2006, p. 64). In terms of claiming public space, driven by the knowledge that marginalised communities often lack public space for cultural expression, many cultural development projects aim to “improve the quality of local life by adding self-created amenities to their communities or by building visibility for their concerns” (Goldbard, 2006, p. 65).

Common themes in CACD work are history, identity, cultural infrastructure and organising (Goldbard, 2006). In terms of history, Goldbard (2006) asserts that a key thread in CCD work “has been to add human scale information and meaning to

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

the official record by sharing first hand testimonies and the artifacts of ordinary live” (p. 70). Therefore oral histories are often used. The reclamation of “folktales and other storytelling traditions from obscurity... to assert cultural continuity and use the wisdom of heritage to inform choices about how to move forward” (Goldbard, 2006, p. 71) is also often a central feature of CCD work. Goldbard argued that many projects “are predicated on a kind of reclamation work, with participants discovering and claiming their own ethics, gender and class identities as a way to recast themselves as makers of history rather than its passive objects...” (p. 72). Further, because marginalised or subordinated communities often lack cultural infrastructure, CCD projects are often aimed at stimulating “the flow of cultural information and resources” (p. 73). The final key thread across the work is organising, which highlights the “larger goals of social transformation and personal liberation” driving the practice (p. 75), which stands in “contrast to elite arts activity, which asserts the primary of arts for art’s sake” (p. 75).

Mills and Brown (2004) have distinguished between instrumental and transformational approaches to CCD. Instrumental approaches involve using the arts as a ‘tool’ for educating and raising awareness of particular issues. Whereas, transformational approaches use “creative activity to help determine policy, negotiate shared understandings and map out solutions” (p. 8). Kasat (2013) conceptualised CACD work along a continuum, from interpretive to transformative practices. Interpretive approaches are “when an artist works collaboratively with a community to express, represent and/or confirm its identity” (p. 109). She described transformative CACD as occurring when

collective art making, facilitated by an artist enables a group of people who are in some way marginalised, oppressed or discriminated against, to critically

reflect on and understand the way in which they exist in the world, their circumstances and their pain. (p. 110)

In Kasat's view, CACD has the potential to challenge "dominant narratives and help create different stories, whereby minority communities can be the protagonists of their reality and, from that reflection, hope can be envisioned (Freire 1985; Macedo 2011; Ife 2012)" (Kasat, 2013, p. 110).

Community Arts Network Western Australia. CAN engage in CACD practice "to inspire and mobilise communities to explore and express their unique culture through community arts" (CAN WA, 2013, p. 4). The agency aims to support communities through its three core areas of community arts (*CAN Productions*), training (*CAN Learning*) and advocacy (*CAN Doing*) (CAN WA, 2014a). CAN productions are aimed at engaging "communities and partners in a creative process to deliver both arts and cultural products, and a range of community development outcomes" (CAN WA, 2014a, p. 13). Underpinning the agency's practice are the values of respect for all people, cultures and the environment, social justice (i.e., engagement and participation for all), creativity (i.e., freedom to express identity and culture), and resilience (i.e., building community strengths) (CAN WA, 2014a). CANs approach to CACD emphasises the importance of involving the community in processes that help them document the past, understand and explore the present, and together imagine the future (CAN WA, 2014a).

Rekindling Stories on Country. The Rekindling Stories on Country strategy has emerged from CANs longer history of work with Noongar people in the Wheatbelt. Consistently, Noongar people have emphasised the importance of telling their stories in order to pass on knowledge of culture, history, and identity, to the younger generations. Elders have expressed the need to celebrate Noongar culture,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

heal wounds, and create better lives for future generations (CAN WA, 2012, 2013, 2014a). As reported in CANs (2014a) annual report these projects were “born out of the Elders’ request that their young people connect with their culture. ‘Our young people are dying,’ Elders told us, ‘They need their culture’” (p. 73).

As articulated in CANs (2013) Rekindling Stories on Country, Strategic Plan (2014-2019),

Rekindling Stories on Country is a platform where Noongar culture and language are acknowledged and celebrated in Western Australia and recognised nationally for their contribution to Australia’s cultural identity. Through the production of authentic and inspiring artistic work CAN is heralded for facilitating the flourishing of Noongar cultural expression, which is significantly impacting the lives of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the region and beyond. (p. 4)

The aims of Rekindling Stories on Country were to

- Create opportunities for cultural dialogue between Noongar Elders and young people that ensures intergenerational cultural transmission beyond the life of individual projects.
- Nurture the capability and resilience of the Noongar community to explore and express their unique culture.
- Produce excellent art, by with and for Noongar communities to share the work/s locally, nationally and internationally. (CAN WA, 2013, p. 4)

These communities can be fragile, challenging, and often fragmented (CAN WA, 2013; Kasat, 2013). Within this context, CAN aims to “facilitate the creation of meaningful and beautiful accounts of history by the Noongar people...bringing Noongar Elders and young people together to exchange stories- both traditional and

contemporary” (CAN WA, 2013, p. 10). As documented in CANs (2014a) annual report “With the passing of too many young people and too many Elders... we have renewed awareness of how important our heritage and culture is to our wellbeing and to our understanding of identity, self and community” (p. 9). As articulated in their annual report,

Through this strategy, we honour the stories and wisdom of Noongar Elders; work alongside young people and families to help them celebrate their culture with pride; facilitate intergenerational sharing and expression of Noongar language and culture; ... celebrate Noongar language and culture with local, state, national and international audiences; and address what’s been silenced and left out of Australia’s story. (CAN WA, 2014a, p. 13)

The Bush Babies Project. Bush Babies has been one of the central projects delivered as part of the Rekindling Stories on Country strategy in Narrogin. The Bush Babies project has been delivered in a number of towns in Western Australia since 2010. The project aims to tell the stories of Noongar Elders from across the Wheatbelt who were born in the bush and the midwives who delivered them (CAN WA, 2014b), using a variety of arts practices including photography, textile craft, oral history recordings, short film and portrait painting. These are stories about a time when Aboriginal people were not permitted to give birth in hospitals and as a result many Aboriginal Elders living today were born in reserves¹⁵, missions or on the outskirts of towns in tents, makeshift shelters or under the stars (CAN WA, 2014b).

15 Reserves and missions are places that Aboriginal people were forcibly relocated to, with missions typically run by churches and reserves run by government and sometimes churches (see AIATSIS, 2016). There were several church missions on Noongar country, including Wandering Missions, Roelands Mission, and New Norcia. Children were also taken to government settlements such as Moore River Native Settlement and Carrolup Native Settlement (SWALSC, 2017f). For further details see: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/missions/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

The Bush Babies project began with a simple idea. It was about creating opportunities for Noongar Elders, and/or their descendants, to share stories about what life was like on reserves, in missions, and living on the fringes of town. These stories are revealing of the impacts the 1905 Act on the lives of Noongar people, which remain in the living memories of Bush Babies and their families. The Bush Babies project began with Elder Winnie McHenry from Badjaling, a Noongar reserve outside of Quairading, who wanted to honour Noongar people born in the bush and the midwives who delivered them. In the first iteration of the project, CAN facilitated research visits to the State Library and scrapbooking and photography workshops that explored the history of the Bush Babies and their descendants¹⁶. Project Co-ordinator, Michelle White reflected on the development of the Bush Babies project:

I love the fact that it was originated by an Elder and it came from the community, the idea came from the community ‘cause a lot of the time projects come from people like myself who have a brilliant idea and then we look for a fit within the community like we think we know what the community wants and then we will try and find a fit, but this genuinely came from the ground up, it was Winnie McHenry saying... ‘I know that there are photos in there, I want to get them back, I want to repatriate them, I want to have a reunion, and I want to celebrate all the Bush Babies’. And such a simple idea, but it’s so powerful. (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014)

Since this time, the Bush Babies project has been delivered in different towns including Kellerberrin, Narrogin, Moora, Bunbury and Goomalling (see Appendix A). In each of the towns, CAN staff meet with the local Noongar community, show them

¹⁶ For more information, see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/bush-babies/>

examples of what they have done in other towns, and from there the community can decide what they want to do in their town. Michelle commented that she has “tried to let the community cherry pick what it is that works for them, and try and build the project around what will get traction in that community so it has been slightly different in each location” (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014). This research focuses on the Narrogin iteration of the Bush Babies project, which also included some activities in the town of Katanning (105 kilometres south of Narrogin).

The Bush Babies Project in Narrogin

In 2013, the Bush Babies project moved to Narrogin. CAN had initially planned to deliver digital media, storytelling, oral history, and craft workshops to support Noongar families in Narrogin and Katanning to tell their own Bush Babies stories (CAN WA, 2014b). Michelle recalled that during the development of the project in Narrogin, it became clear that the emphasis was going to be “catching the stories of those Elders who have not have not really had their stories properly collected before” (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014). The Honouring our Elders Portrait project and exhibition emerged as a central component of the Narrogin iteration of the Bush Babies project.

The Honouring our Elders portrait project. To commence the project in Narrogin, the Bush Babies photographs that had been taken as part of Bush Babies in Quairading and Kellerberrin were exhibited. At this exhibition, local non-Indigenous artist Graham Smith saw a photograph of Noongar Elder Hazel Winmar¹⁷, which was taken by Jared Seng. Hazel Winmar was also affectionately known as ‘Nanna Purple’ and she was the oldest known living Ballardong woman at the time. Graham was

17 ‘Nanna Purple’ whose photograph inspired the Honouring our Elders portrait exhibition, passed away at the age of 100 not long after the exhibition. Her family wanted her portrait to remain in the exhibition; they wanted her story to be shared as a means of honouring her memory.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

inspired to paint her portrait and sought permission to do so. This inspired the Elders Portrait project, which aimed to honour Noongar Elders by painting their portraits. Graham Smith had initially thought he would approach his artist friends to be involved in the project, however this did not eventuate, which he commented, “turned out to be a blessing” because it was “local people, local artists”, who painted the portraits, including some students from the local Tafe, the CY O'Connor Institute (G.Smith, personal communication, July 10, 2014). There was a mix of professional and student artists, Aboriginal/Noongar and non-Indigenous. As commented by Karen Keely, who teaches at the Tafe, the students ranged from 15 years old to 87 years:

We have a huge age range so we people in their 80s painting people in their 80s...it was a lovely thing to see I really liked that and particularly for people who were parenting in the 50s ah or born in the 1950s in this region or lived here or grew up in that time in this region um the attitudes that, it was hugely racist so for people who came, who have come through that time, who have come to now painting portraits of Aboriginal elders I think that's a major, major achievement. (K. Keeley, personal communication, July 11, 2014)

While the project began with a focus on babies born in the bush, not all the Elders who had their portraits painted were strictly speaking ‘Bush Babies’ with some born in hospitals. However, they all have memories of those times where Aboriginal people were not allowed into hospitals, amongst other aspects of control (Haebich, 1988, 2000).

There were a total of 16 Elders who had their portrait painted as part of the Honouring our Elders Portrait project and exhibition (CAN WA, 2014b). Noongar staff at the Narrogin office facilitated this process, informing CAN of who the Elders were. It was important that Elders were not overlooked, but not all Elders who were

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

approached wanted to have their portrait painted. The Elders who were painted were mostly from Narrogin however some were from other towns, including Winnie McHenry, the Elder from Badjaling/Quairading who inspired the original Bush Babies project and Hazel Winmar from Kellerberrin who inspired the Elders Portrait project. Two of the Elders had passed away before the project commenced, and were being honoured posthumously. Noongar artist Ross Storey wanted to paint their portraits to honour their memory as they were his Elders and he valued the cultural knowledge they passed onto him. Some of the Elders had multiple portraits painted. There were a total of 12 artists who participated including four professional artists and eight student artists, and two who identified as Noongar or Aboriginal.

The portraits show proud Noongar faces. Such representation is important in a context where Aboriginal people are constructed in a deficit manner and where it is often assumed that culture has been lost. The significance of the portrait for the Noongar Elders and the importance of how they were represented and thus how they may be remembered through the portrait was evident in the reaction of one of the Elders to his original portrait, which was painted by a non-Indigenous artist. Given time constraints of the project, the artist had not met the Elder (who was from another town): he had just been provided photographs of the Elder¹⁸. This was not a positive response. The Elder was angry and upset about the way he was represented in the portrait. As articulated in the Bush Babies catalogue and shared as part of the exhibition, Elder Tom

18 CAN recognise the need for and added benefit that the artist meeting the Elder as part of the process of painting their portrait. Unfortunately this was not the case for all the Elders and artists in this project, given the time constraints of the project and especially for Elders that did not live in Narrogin (e.g., those who lived in Kellerberrin while the artists were located in Narrogin).

was disappointed he was immortalised on a black background. A child of the stolen generation, he says he has spent too much of his life in darkness. He has fought to get out of the blackness, and into the light, and that's how he'd like to be remembered. (CAN WA, 2014b, p. 7)

Tom's response to how he was represented in the portrait is an important part of the story. The portrait was ultimately included in the exhibition, with the accompanying story about this not being how we wanted to be remembered. In considering if the portrait should be excluded from their exhibition based on the Elders response to it, CAN believed that the story of his response was extremely powerful, a pedagogical opportunity, and so chose to keep the original portrait as part of the exhibition, with his permission.



Figure 1. The original portrait of Tom (Source: CAN¹⁹)

¹⁹ Local artist Mike Beckwith painted the portraits of Tom (CAN WA, 2014b).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

As documented in the Bush Babies catalogue (CAN WA, 2014b), “Upon hearing that the painting made Tom feel sad, because he felt like he was being remembered in darkness, Mike took it upon himself to paint another portrait honouring Tom’s wishes to be immortalised on country” (p. 8). The second portrait of Tom captured him on country with his guitar. Tom has been part of CANs healing songs project (see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/healing-songs/>) and so this guitar and being on country symbolises his healing journey; how he has “fought to get...into the light” (CAN WA, 2014b, p. 7). This is an important story. It tells about the impact of policies of assimilation on this Elder’s life as a member of the Stolen Generations, which has been characterised by darkness. It also tells about his agency, his fight to overcome adversity and the central role country, culture, and sharing his story (through song) has played in his healing. This is also an important story because it highlights the tension between needing to represent the suffering and the trauma (symptom as history) and also needing to represent the resilient responses, the resistance and survival.

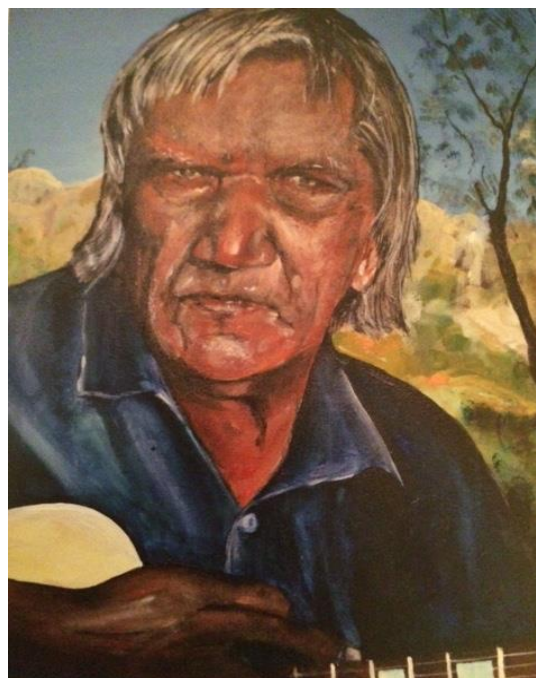


Figure 2. The second portrait of Tom (Source: CAN)

Storylines. As part of Bush Babies in Narrogin, CAN also organised staff from the Perth Library to visit schools in Narrogin and Katanning to introduce Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students to the Storylines database which is “an online archive for the State Library's digitised heritage collections relating to Aboriginal history in Western Australia” (State Library of Western Australia, 2016). As noted on the Storylines website, “It is envisaged that Storylines will become a central point for Aboriginal people who wish to access the State Library of Western Australia's extensive heritage collections, and a safe place to store records of people, place and history” (State Library of Western Australia, 2016). Students were able to search the archive for photographs of family members, towns, missions, reserves, sport, dance, food, and it was hoped that this would inspire intergenerational conversations about Noongar history, culture, identity, and belonging.

CAN had asked the school to encourage the students to ask their parents or grandparents to also attend these workshops or to ask about their family connections before the workshop. While not many parents and grandparents attended, CAN Noongar staff and the Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEO) at the schools who had knowledge of the family connections and history, were present. At the workshop at the primary school, one of the AIEO's (and local Elder) found a photograph of his father who is now deceased, which he had never seen.

Creating an archive of Bush Baby stories. Bush Babies in Narrogin also involved a focus on listening to, recording and archiving the stories of Elders about life on reserves, missions, and living on the fringes of towns. Elders' stories were shared with and recorded by CAN staff informally, but also more formally using digital storytelling, facilitated by Chronicle (see: <http://www.chronicle.net.au/>). Elders were asked to share their memories of those days or of being a Bush Baby, and what

it means to be a Bush Baby. This inspired conversations about the fact that Aboriginal people were not allowed in hospitals in those days, they were not allowed in towns after six o'clock, and of living on reserves which was typically described as a hard but happy life. It inspired stories of being taken from their families, or of somehow escaping this fate. It also inspired stories of cultural strength and survival. Some had stories to share about birthing places and cultural practices, while one Elder in particular, emphasised that she had not been told any stories about where she was born. One of the Elders, Janet, shared stories informally, but her *in situ* storytelling was not recorded. Fortunately, her Bush Baby story had been recorded as part of the cultural mapping pilot project *Gnaala boorong wangkiny wongi nidja nyini: Our spirit stories are still there* (CAN WA, 2012).

These stories were told, and most were recorded, either in the Elder's homes or on country at old birthing sites or the site of the old Noongar reserve, for example. Another person shared their story at Carrolup Mission. He emphasised his connection to this place given that generations of his family grew up there (CAN WA, 2014b). This was a very informal sharing of stories often occurring before or after the Bush Babies Project Manager photographed the Elder for the portrait project (with photographs of the Elders required for the artists to paint their portraits and to be displayed as part of the exhibition). The digital stories collected informally were used for, and published in part, in the Bush Babies Honouring our Elders Portrait exhibition catalogue (CAN WA, 2014b) and exhibition in Perth. The catalogue contained a short snippet of the lives of each of the 16 Elders whose portraits were painted. These were also presented alongside the portraits and photographs of the Elders as shown in Figure 3 and 4 below.



Figure 3. Noongar Elder Winnie McHenry at the exhibition (Source: CAN).



Figure 4. Artist Sharyn Egan with her portrait of Winnie McHenry (Source: CAN).

Chronicles storytelling workshop and digital stories. As part of the Narrogin iteration of the Bush Babies project, CAN commissioned Chronicle, a digital storytelling company, to run a two-day storytelling workshop at Narrogin Senior High

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

School with Elders and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander media studies students. Chronicles also set their storytelling caravan up at the Katanning Harmony Festival for Noongar people to share and record their Bush Baby stories to be later made into digital stories using photographs.

Prior to the day of the workshop, students were encouraged to ask their Elders if they have a Bush Baby story. On the day of the workshop, four Elders participated²⁰: Frank²¹, Caroline, Enid and Revel. The workshops involved storytelling circles where each Elder shared an aspect of their life stories that they felt important for the young people to hear, and perhaps also felt the need to voice. Students and others present (i.e., CAN staff, myself, Chronicles staff, school staff) could ask questions or share reflections on the stories. Students then broke off into smaller groups and could ask Elders more specific questions about aspects of their story they wanted to explore further, to produce a good three-minute story. Finally, the Elders recorded a short story, which the students then made into short films using photographs and newspaper clippings that Elders had brought in, that students had taken themselves, or that they found using the storylines archive. The Chronicles workshop at the high school was particularly valuable in highlighting what it was that the Elders wanted to share with the young people.

Chronicles also digitally recorded Bush Babies stories at the Katanning Harmony Festival on Sunday 9th March 2014. Some shared the story of where they were born or shared the Bush Baby story of their mother, for example. They shared stories about what it was like growing up in the 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s. They talked

20 The workshop began on the Monday. There had been a feud in Narrogin the weekend directly before this workshop, which had an impact on the numbers of students and Elders who attended.

21 Pseudonyms have been used to protect confidentiality of research participants. Pseudonyms have not been used for publicly available information, and for those who did not participate in interviews.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

about the racism as well as other aspects of life such as bush tucker and connection with place/country. The stories of tough lives were also revealing of the legacy of these policies for families including the intergenerational impacts of this history.

Informal conversations were also had with Noongar people at the festival.

Honouring our Elders exhibitions. A local exhibition, comprising paintings, photography, stories, short films/audio and hand-made baskets was held in Narrogin at the Nexis exhibition space from the 9th May- 2nd June, 2014, with the local launch of the project on May 8th. A participating artist commented that the stories recorded through Chronicles, made “a great soundscape”; “to stand there and look at the painting of the person and hear them talking at the same time, it was a lovely, it really made a nice connection for people who didn't know them at all” (N. Crossley, personal communication, July 11, 2014).

The exhibition then went to Perth, opening NAIDOC²² Week in July 2014 at the Western Australian Museum and the State Library of WA (see Appendix B for exhibition flyer). CAN supported the Elders, artists, and their families to travel from participating towns (e.g., Narrogin, Kellerberrin, Quairading) to attend the launch. Along with the portraits, the short films made by students as well as little snippets of each of the Elders and the artist who painted them, were on display. The Bush Babies portrait exhibition was displayed for a six-month installation in the Western Australian Museum’s community access gallery in the Perth Cultural Centre. The exhibition attracted more than 72,000 visitors (CAN WA, 2017a). The Honouring our Elders portrait exhibition was selected as part of the Art on the Move touring program, and travelled around WA in 2016 (see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/bush-babies-exhibition-set-to-tour/>). The Bush Babies project also received significant

22 NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee see: <http://www.naidoc.org.au/>

media coverage appearing on the Australian Broadcasting Networks, WA 7.30

Report, National Indigenous Television [NITV] news, and in local newspapers (see:

<http://www.canwa.com.au/media-center/in-the-media/>).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed some of the issues facing the Aboriginal community of Narrogin, leading to Community Arts Network establishing a presence in the town. I described the broad aims of community arts and cultural development work, and CANs Rekindling Stories on Country strategy, specifically. This strategy has developed from their longer history of work with Noongar people who have consistently emphasised the need to pass on their stories out of concern that this cultural knowledge and the central role that Elders play within Noongar communities, is being lost. I also described the Bush Babies project, focusing on the Narrogin iteration of the project. This project was a storytelling-based project, which created opportunities and spaces for Noongar Elders to share stories, and memories of growing up. In the next chapter, the methodology for this research and the methods for data collection and analysis will be outlined.

Chapter 5: Research Methodology and Methods

In this chapter, I outline the methodological approach that informed the research, and the methods used for data collection and analysis. Informed by the decolonising agenda of the liberation paradigm (Adams, Dobles, Gómez, Kurtiş & Molina, 2015; Montero & Sonn, 2009; Montero, Sonn, & Burton, 2017; Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013; Teo, 2015), this research brings together critical theoretical scholarship on race, whiteness, and colonisation (Adams & Salter, 2011; Frankenberg, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Rodricks & McCoy, 2015; Salter & Adams, 2013) and narrative inquiry (Clandinen & Rosiek, 2007; Gergen & Gergen, 2010; Goodley, 2012; Sparkes & Smith, 2013). The research utilised conversational interviews and archival materials to gather Noongar Elders' Bush Baby life stories. I first discuss how I came to be involved with Community Arts Network (CAN), and how the research focus on the Elders' stories came about. Following this, I situate the research epistemologically, before discussing the methodology of narrative inquiry. Finally, I discuss the processes of data collection and analysis.

From Researching Community Arts to a Focus on the Elders' Stories

I began the research with the aspiration of examining the role that community arts might play in improving relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in community settings, and its role in fostering identity and belonging for Aboriginal people within a context of ongoing disadvantage and racism (Glover, Dudgeon, & Huygens, 2010; Walter, 2010a). The original title for this dissertation was "De-racialising practices and identities to foster belonging: The role of community arts". I saw the centring of Aboriginal stories and storytelling through community arts and cultural development practice, as important in disrupting a wilful ignorance of an ongoing history of dispossession (Sullivan & Tuana, 2007). Stanner

(2009) pointed to this wilful ignorance when he described the great Australian silence— “a cult of forgetfulness practised on a national scale” (Stanner, 2009, p. 13). Recognising whiteness/coloniality as the site where change needs to happen, I wanted to examine how community arts might contribute to shifting understandings that white Australians hold and facilitate opportunities for intercultural dialogue and the development of mutual trust, respect, and recognition.

Ultimately, the research came to focus on the stories of Aboriginal Elders told as part of the Bush Babies project and in research interviews. After bearing witness to these stories (Fine, 2006), the focus of the research needed to shift; I needed to be accountable to the Elders and the stories they shared. This shift reflected a renegotiation based on the stories that Noongar Elders conveyed to me— it was a product of the relational epistemology that informed the research (Montero et al., 2017).

Grappling with white race privilege as a white woman in Australia, this shift to an explicit focus on the stories of Aboriginal Elders involved some trepidation, uncertainty, and discomfort. This discomfort is unavoidable and important, and comes with recognising the relationality of Aboriginal dispossession and white privilege and the way in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal identities, subjectivities, and relationships are constituted on very uneven ground. In engaging with and representing the Elders’ stories, I had (and continue to have) particular concerns around the politics of representation and research in Indigenous contexts as a cultural outsider (Alcoff, 1991; Aveling, 2013). Sullivan (2006) has written about white ontological expansiveness: the tendency for white people “to act and think as if all spaces— whether geographical, psychical, linguistic, economic, spiritual, bodily, or otherwise— are or should be available to them to move in and out of as they wish” (p. 10). As a

white person, I felt uncomfortable coming in, re-presenting the Elders' stories, that this was not my place, and these were not my stories to tell. This discomfort is indeed appropriate, as Sullivan has stated, "Lack of comfort and feeling of illegitimacy are entirely appropriate responses to the recognition that space is not racially neutral or empty and that white people do not have legitimate claim to all space" (p. 165).

Given the initial focus of the research, I collected data from other participant groups including Aboriginal adults and young people, and non-Aboriginal people involved; I conducted interviews, developed surveys, and collected archival materials (e.g., speech notes, media reports). While I do not ultimately present all the data collected from Aboriginal adults (artists, facilitators), and non-Aboriginal people as part of my analysis, speaking with these different people and engaging with these archival materials was an important part of the research process. It enabled me as the researcher to be guided by the Noongar people I was speaking with in terms of what they wanted the research focus to be, and in affirming the importance of the Elders' stories and what it was that they were telling me.

When it came to analysing 'the data' collected from Elders, I felt stuck, not knowing how best to tell these stories. Indeed, the word data itself was something that was problematised during supervision sessions. It was not data— they were people's stories; stories that I was privileged to hear, and that I felt a heavy responsibility in re-presenting (Alcoff, 1991). I needed to stay close to the personal stories. The Elders' stories that I was so privileged to hear, were powerful and moving stories and ultimately became the central focus of the thesis.

Yet, I hesitated in re-presenting the Elders' stories, as I struggled with the political implications of representating the stories, concerns about appropriation, and risks of being construed as a white saviour (Aveling, 2013). However, I felt

compelled to bear witness to these stories in order to shed light onto the mechanisms of oppression (Segalo, Manoff, & Fine, 2015; Shulman & Watkins, 2001; Watkins & Shulman, 2008), and making visible everyday forms of resistance, resilience, and survival (Kirmayer, Gone, & Moses, 2014; Ramirez & Hammack, 2014).

Critical and Contextualist Constructionist Research

It is important to situate the research within the broader debates about research and knowledge production. The current research brings a social constructionist orientation (Burr, 2015; Gergen & Gergen, 2013), the critical and ethical commitments of the liberation paradigm (Montero & Sonn, 2009; Montero et al., 2017; Teo, 2015) and a contextualised community psychology (Kingry-Westergaard & Kelly, 1990; Tricket, 1996; Trickett, Trimble, & Allen, 2014) together in a critical contextualist constructionism (Gemignani & Peña, 2007; Hosking, 2008).

Burr (2015) outlined four central tenets of social constructionism, namely, a “critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge”; the “historical and cultural specificity” of the ways we understand the world and concepts we use; and the assertions that “knowledge is sustained by social processes”, and that “knowledge and social action go together” (pp. 4-5). Stemming from these underlying assumptions, Burr identified anti-essentialism as one of the key differences between a social constructionist orientation and mainstream psychology. Where mainstream psychology constructs individuals as pre-existing and self-contained, social constructionism views identities as fluid and as constituted, socio-culturally and historically, through social processes and relationships (Burr, 2015; Gergen, 1985, 1997, 2011a, 2011b; Gergen & Gergen, 2013; Hosking, 2008).

Social constructionists assert that our knowledge is never a direct perception of a reality out there (Burr, 2015). While traditionally mainstream psychology has

sought to understand the ‘true’ nature of people and social life, social constructionists recognise the historical and cultural specificity of knowledge and thus turn their attention to understanding the historical “emergence of current forms of psychological and social life, and to the social practices, by which they are created” (Burr, 2015, p. 10). Further, rather than viewing language as “a route to internal psychological states”, social constructionists assert that it is through language that we construct our social and psychological worlds. It follows then that language is understood as a form of social action (Burr, 2015). Within social constructionism, the focus is on interaction and social practices, which refocuses “problems away from the pathologised, essentialist sphere of mainstream psychology” (Burr, 2015, p. 11). The focus is not on the nature of people or society, but on social processes because knowledge is conceptualised as something that people create and enact together (Burr, 2015; Gergen, 1997; Hosking, 2008).

In conversation with Cisneros-Puebla and Faux (2008), Gergen described different phases or faces of social constructionism – the deconstructive and the reconstructive. The deconstructive phase, Gergen argued, has defined the first 30 years of social constructionist dialogues, and has been characterised by critique, which has collectively sought to destroy the assumption of “ideological free knowledge” and instead emphasised “the social genesis of what we take to be factual, objective, real, valuable, or rational” (Cisneros-Puebla & Faux, 2008, From deconstruction to anti-epistemology, para. 5). The reconstructive phase, Gergen argued, “acts as an invitation to create new ideas and practices in the service of bringing about new and more promising world conditions” (Cisneros-Puebla & Faux, 2008, Reconstruction and the qualitative movement, para. 2). Emphasising that “all methods of research come with values and ideology attached”, he noted, “as we

expand the range of research methods, we also expand the range of voices participating in the molding of the future” (Cisneros-Puebla & Faux, 2008, *Reconstruction and the qualitative movement*, para. 3). In particular, Gergen encouraged the development of “action research, narrative methods, ethnography, auto-ethnography, performance, and more”, as these are approaches which seek to expand the dialogue of voices (Cisneros-Puebla & Faux, 2008, *Reconstruction and the qualitative movement*, para. 3; see also Gergen, 2012, 2016; Gergen, Josselson, & Freeman, 2015; Sonn & Baker, 2016).

Gemignani and Peña (2007) discussed social constructionism and cultural studies as the post-structurally informed approaches to culture in psychology. The authors proposed the need to bridge the two broad approaches to culture within psychology “to support the ongoing and liberatory resistance against prescribed truths, taken for granted knowledge, and cultural hegemonies” (p. 296). They argued for the need for dialogue between the two approaches in order for psychology to create “a language of the cultural domain that resists homogenizing and positivist readings of culture” (p. 296). The authors referred to a critical constructionism, which “endorses the existence of a social reality to be changed”, yet also “acknowledges the epistemic processes and the political, historical, and cultural dynamics that create specific discourses, concerns, and games of truth” (p. 294). Thus the assumptions of social constructionism are accompanied by political commitment, with research approached as intervention for the purpose of social change (Gemignani & Peña, 2007; see also Gergen & Gergen, 2011, 2014).

Madill, Jordan, and Shirley (2000) distinguished between contextualist constructionism and radical constructionism. Kingry-Westergaard and Kelly (1990) argued that a “contextualist, Ecological epistemology” is most “congruent with the

philosophical and socio-political interests of Community Psychology” (pp. 30-31). As noted by Rosnow and Georgoudi (1986), “contextualism underscores the idea that human activity does not develop in a social vacuum, but rather it is rigorously situated within a sociohistorical and cultural context of meanings and relationships” (pp. 4-5). From this perspective, human action is understood as embedded in a particular context in terms of time, place, and culture, and ‘knowledge’ is always situated: what we know is dependent upon our point of view and social location/s (Orford, 2008). Kingry-Westergaard and Kelly argued that in order to understand behaviour in context, it is necessary to attend to the varied social constructions of participants in the context, and that this is only made possible through the development of collaborative relationships with participants. Researchers informed by contextualist, ecological epistemology must therefore be “prepared to develop and to revise his or her concepts as the collaborative relationship evolves” (Kingry-Westergaard & Kelly, 1990, p. 30); the research process is necessarily inductive, exploratory, and improvisational.

Along similar lines, Montenegro (2002) advocated a situated perspective (and situated knowledges) to guide community social psychology. As articulated by Montenegro, a situated perspective views

community processes as complex articulations of semiotic and material subject positions of knowledge and action. Each subject position holds a partial knowledge of the articulation with no privileged subject position from which to achieve total understanding: therefore there is not an underlying reality that can be discovered as knowledge is dependent on each subject’s position. (p. 512)

Montenegro argued that the liberatory potential of this perspective lies in the possibility for the “emergence of situated dialogues where certain social relations can be defined and challenged” (p. 525). Montenegro (2002) emphasised the need for community psychology to embody a critical character through a commitment to political action, whilst avoiding an essentialist standpoint and claims to privileged access to knowledge, truth, or reality.

Engaging with voices from positions of alterity. Within Critical Indigenous scholarship, Critical Race Theory (CRT), and critical and liberation oriented psychologies, dominant modes of knowledge production within psychology and related disciplines have been problematised. Further, such approaches have highlighted the need to expand the dialogue of voices, and the ecology of knowledge (Adams et al., 2015; Gergen & Gergen, 2011, 2014; Montero et al., 2017; Sonn, 2016; Sonn & Baker, 2016; Teo, 2015; Watts & Serrano-García, 2003). Authors advocating such approaches have emphasised the need to engage with voices from positions of alterity for the insights that they can provide into oppression, resistance, and liberation. Moreover, they have emphasised the importance of engaging with these voices in order to challenge hegemonic processes of knowledge production, and epistemic (Spivak, 1988) and epistemological forms of violence (Teo, 2010). Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) has identified the failure to recognise difference ways of knowing as a form of cognitive injustice, and discussed the importance of engaging with epistemologies of the South.

In her seminal writing on decolonising methodologies, Smith (2012) described research as “one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world’s vocabulary” (p. 1). She discussed how cultural imperialism has silenced Indigenous histories, and

objectified and dehumanised Indigenous people who have been constructed as inferior, primitive, and other. Smith (1999) wrote,

When undertaking research, either across cultures or within a minority culture, it is critical that researchers recognise the power dynamic which is embedded in the relationship with their subjects. Researchers are in receipt of privileged information. They may interpret it within an overt theoretical framework, but also in terms of a covert ideological framework. They have the power to distort, to make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate, and to draw conclusions, based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgments, and often downright misunderstandings. (p. 176)

Along similar lines, Dudgeon and Walker (2015) noted that “Psychology colonises both directly through the imposition of universalising, individualistic constructions of human behaviour and indirectly through the negation of Aboriginal knowledges and practices” (p. 276). Writing in critical psychology has similarly highlighted that rather than being disinterested, impartial, and universal, psychological knowledge operates to extend power relations (Hook, 2004, Teo, 2010, 2015).

In community psychology, Reyes Cruz and Sonn (2011) advocated a decolonising standpoint, which “brings into clearer view ways in which power/privilege/oppression are reproduced and contested through racialized and ethnicized practices and discourses; that is, how social inequality is maintained and challenged through culture” (p. 204). In the context of the Apartheid Archive Project, Sonn, Stevens, and Duncan (2013), conceptualised storytelling as a decolonising method that can disrupt the power relationship inherent in traditional modes of knowledge production. Also pointing to the need to decolonise research, Evans, Hole,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Berg, Hutchinson, and Sookraj (2009) argued for a fusion of Participatory Action Research (PAR), white studies, and Indigenous methodologies, given their common insights and commitments. Importantly, the authors asserted, “the gaze should emanate from the site of aboriginal people themselves but the direction of this gaze be concentrated externally through an explicit interrogation of Whiteness” (p. 900).

Wendt and Gone (2012) discussed the promise of qualitative approaches in Indigenous contexts, noting that qualitative research can

assist with the project of decolonization by incorporating colonization history as a contextualized frame, focusing on locally salient discourses about ‘culture’, revealing emic aspects of cultural processes and practices through thick description, and ‘giving voice’ by reporting results using participants’ own words. (p. 175)

Scholarship in the interdisciplinary field of Critical Race Theory (CRT) has also problematised dominant modes of knowledge production (Delgado, 1989; Ladson-billings, 1998, 2003; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). CRT values and centres the experiential knowledge of people of colour, with their stories viewed as legitimate, appropriate, and critical in understanding, analysing, and challenging racism (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Salter and Adams (2013) advanced a Critical Race Psychology (CRP), which centres the “epistemological value of marginalized perspectives” (p. 789), and mobilises, “counter-storytelling as a tool for revealing and resisting the racialized bases of society and everyday experience” (p. 788). Within CRT (and CRP), storytelling and counter-storytelling is conceptualised as a means through which to challenge master narratives and share the lived experiences of people of colour (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Informed by CRT, Bell's (2010) storytelling project model highlights the use of storytelling and the arts to challenge racism (see also Bell, 2009; Bell & Roberts, 2010). Bell identified stock stories, and three types of counter stories: concealed, resistance, and emergent/transforming stories. Bell (2010) defined stock stories as "...the tales told by the dominant group, passed on through historical and literary documents, and celebrated through public rituals, law, the arts, education and media" (p. 23). As articulated by Bell, stock stories function to affirm, even if unconsciously, "the superiority of the stock of whiteness. As the group defined as normal, 'white' stock is presumed to be proper, desired, the taken for granted way things are meant to be" (p. 30).

Concealed stories are those told from the perspective of racially dominated groups, which often remain invisible to those in the dominant group. As noted by Bell (2010), concealed stories

are circulated, told and retold by people in the margins whose experiences and aspirations they express and honor. Through concealed stories people who are marginalized, and often stigmatized, by the dominant society recount their experiences and critique or 'talk back' to mainstream narratives, portraying the strengths and capacities within marginalized communities... (p. 23)

Bell (2010) discussed resistance stories as

the reserve of stories accumulated over time about and by people and groups who have challenged an unjust racial status quo. They include stories of "sheroes" and "heroes" who have been excluded...in history books, but who have nevertheless struggled against racism. (p. 25)

Emerging/transforming stories are new stories that are co-constructed through the Storytelling project in the act of creating a counter-storytelling community (Bell, 2009, 2010).

Writing in liberation psychology has also highlighted the need to disrupt dominant ways of knowing through participatory (e.g., PAR) and biographical approaches (Montero, 2009). The liberation paradigm emerged in Latin America in response to the imposition of western knowledge—a form of cultural imperialism. Central to the development of liberation psychology (Martín-Baró, 1994; Montero et al., 2017) was the call for psychological research and practice to be more responsive to the needs of the people, and to recognise the virtues of the oppressed masses. This involved a reorientation of psychology to the lived experiences of oppressed groups (Martín-Baró, 1994; Montero, 2007; Montero et al., 2017; Segalo et al., 2015). Recognising psychology as ideological, research and action in psychology is approached as a moral, political, and ethical endeavour (Montero & Sonn, 2009; Montero et al., 2017). Because knowledge is viewed as produced in and through social relations, there is a particular concern with relational ethics, which recognises the interconnectedness of people (Montero, 2007, 2009). Critical and liberation oriented approaches are concerned with expanding the dialogue of voices, and in listening to, and amplifying the stories of those from positions of alterity (Dutta et al., 2016; Sonn & Baker, 2016; Quayle, Sonn, & van den Eynde, 2016; Teo, 2015).

Shulman and Watkins (2001) have discussed the task for psychologists in the process of healing in the wake of colonialism as being about learning and practicing “a capacity for deep, respectful, and empathic witnessing in the present to the ancestral narratives and life experience of all those in our communities” (p. 8). They noted that this is of particular importance “in relation to those whom we classify as

Other”, and for those privileged by a “long history of oppression and discrimination...even if we are not responsible for it” (p. 8). Informed by depth psychology, they suggested, deep listening, care, an intention to understand and support, and reparative actions is necessary to heal our histories and communities. Importantly this requires a willingness “to break with social codes of silence that have been enforced for generations” (p. 8). This has been discussed as psychosocial accompaniment (Watkins, 2015).

Narrative Inquiry

Social constructionist approaches in psychology such as discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987) and Foucauldian discourse analysis (Parker, 1992) have been central to challenging the realist assumptions of traditional psychological approaches. However, some have emphasised that such approaches risk “losing the subject” (Crossley, 2007, p. 140). Crossley (2007) emphasised the “need within contemporary psychology for a theoretical and methodological approach which appreciates the linguistic and discursive structuring of ‘self’ and ‘experience’ but also maintains a sense of the essentially personal, coherent and ‘real’ nature of individual subjectivity” (p. 141). Crossley argued that narrative psychology responds to this need.

Research in psychology has increasingly recognised the value of narrative inquiry for engaging with “the storied character of psychological and cultural life” (Goodley, 2012, p. 129). As noted by Goodley, narrative approaches provide a means to examine “the relationship between self and others; private and public and self and society” (p. 130), or as noted by Gergen and Gergen (2010), the “sociocultural context of human action” (p. 728). Within narrative approaches, the self and identity is understood as “inextricably dependent on the language and linguistic practices that

we use in our everyday lives to make sense of ourselves and other people” (Crossley, 2000, p. 9). Stories are therefore understood as presenting opportunities to analyse the close connection between self and subjectivity and encounters with the outside world (Goodley, 2012). Recognising that we are interpretive creatures, narrative approaches are concerned with exploring the meaning systems that play a constitutive role in the construction of “minds and worlds” (Crossley, 2000, p. 10). There is a particular interest in exploring “human existence as it is lived, experienced and interpreted by each human individual” (Crossley, 2000, p. 45), with meaning understood as “formulated through cultural meaning systems such as language and narratives which reverberate with knowledge of connections and relationships across generations” (Crossley, 2000, p. 11).

How we come to experience ourselves, others, and the social world, is conceptualised as intimately connected with our use and understanding of the symbolic resources that are available to us in the cultures within which we grow up (Bell, 2010; Clandinen & Rosiek, 2007; Hammack, 2008; Rappaport, 2000; Tappan, 2006). We are each embedded in familial and cultural stories, and so narrative is understood as an ontological condition of social life (Somers, 1994). Compared to traditional approaches within psychology, narrative approaches thus represent a more humanistic conception of the self as “a teller of stories” (Crossley, 2000, p. 47). As noted by Clandinen and Rosiek (2007) “narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honoring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding” (p. 42). Clandinen and Rosiek described the aims of narrative inquiry in the following way:

Beginning with a respect for ordinary lived experience, the focus of narrative inquiry is not only a valorizing of individuals’ experience but also an

exploration of the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals' experiences were constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted—but in a way that begins and ends that inquiry in the storied lives of the people involved. (p. 42)

For Emerson and Frosh (2004), narrative analysis is concerned with specific questions about particular lives: “how does this person, in this context, get to give the account he or she does, how is it constituted, what does it do, what psychological processes can be seen at work in it?” (p. 11).

Connelly and Clandinen (2006) discussed the shared commitments that characterise the variety of approaches to narrative inquiry, namely, a focus on the study of experience as it is lived, and the attention given to temporality, sociality, and place. The temporal aspect refers to the connection between past, present, and future. The second commonality, sociality, refers to “the simultaneous concern with both personal and social conditions” (Clandinen & Rosiek, 2007, p. 69). In relation to sociality, Clandinen and Rosiek (2007) suggested that narrative inquirers “cannot subtract themselves from relationship” (p. 69), “Nor can they pretend to be free of contextual influences themselves” (p. 70). Thus, they asserted that in narrative inquiry, “research questions and texts are ones where inquirers give an account of who they are in the inquiry and who they are in relation to participants” (p. 70). The final central thread across narrative inquiry is the centrality of place, and the specificity of location.

Gergen and Gergen (2010) have discussed the landscape of narrative inquiry within psychology. They noted that while there is no singular definition of narrative, the various approaches taken to the study of narrative share a concern with “stories as vehicles for rendering the self and world intelligible” (p. 728). Smith and Sparkes

(2008) also discussed the divergent approaches to narrative research but noted they share the assumptions that “identities and selves are shaped by the larger socio-cultural matrix of our being-in-the-world” (p. 6), and of a relational world (see also Gergen, 2009). Narrative approaches have a shared commitment to anti-essentialism in which identity is viewed “as multidimensional and connected to social, historical, political, and cultural contexts” (Smith & Sparkes, 2008, p. 7).

Gergen and Gergen (2010) identified three major lines of narrative inquiry that have characterised psychology’s engagement with narrative. The authors distinguished approaches that focus on the role of narrative in the cultural structuring of reality, narratives as conversational achievements (e.g., Bamberg, 2007), and finally, the study of lives through narratives (e.g., Josselson, Lieblich, & McAdams, 2007). The study of narratives as the cultural structuring of reality reflects a sociological orientation that connects sociological and psychological concerns. As noted by Gergen and Gergen, this approach is evident in the work of Gergen and Gergen (1984) on the narrative construction of the self, Sarbin (1986) on the storied nature of human conduct, and later Polkinghorne (1988) and Bruner (1990, 1991). Gergen and Gergen (2010) highlighted how narrative approaches have contributed to developments in critical social psychology and qualitative methods, and the ways it has been used in action, for example, in narrative therapy (White & Epston, 1990) and conflict resolution (e.g., Bar-On, 2002).

Critical Constructionist Narrative Inquiry

Sparkes and Smith (2013) discussed narrative as an aspect of constructionist scholarship. They distinguished between narrative constructionist inquiry and narrative constructivist inquiry. Highlighting the contrast in approaches, they noted that for narrative constructionist approaches,

narratives are not viewed as embedded in the individual or their interiority, as constructivist accounts would suggest. Rather, they are lodged in relationships and appropriated by individuals for use in various contexts. They are ongoing social practices that people perform and do in relation to others as opposed to something they have. (p. 299)

Similarly, Esin, Fati, and Squire (2014) distinguished socially oriented narrative research and individually oriented forms of narrative research. They noted that the constructionist approach to narrative “focuses on narratives as socially constructed by the interplay between interpersonal, social and cultural relations, rather than analysing them as a representation of reality, or as a representation with a single meaning” (p. 214). Sparkes and Smith (2013) noted that a narrative constructionist approach pays greater attention to relatedness, with narratives understood as “forms of social action through which human life and our sense of self are constructed, performed and enacted” (Sparkes & Smith, 2013, p. 299). From this view ‘selves’, ‘memories’, and ‘emotions’ are understood as “constituted through storytelling and shared resources” (p. 299).

In an earlier review, Smith and Sparkes (2008) developed a typology of various narrative approaches to understanding selves and identities in qualitative research. They identified five broad approaches to the study of narrative, namely, psychosocial, intersubjective, storied resource, dialogic, and performative. These different approaches to theorising identity and selves were positioned on a continuum from ‘thick individual’ and ‘thin social relational’ to ‘thin individual’ and ‘thick social relational’ depending on their analytic orientation. The psychosocial approach, exemplified by the work of McAdams (1993, 1996, 2003) and Crossley (2000), represents a ‘thick individual’ approach. This approach tends to view identities or

selves “as a long-term project, more situated in the person than the social situation, and orientated towards developing unity and a coherent story across an individual’s past, present and imagined future” (Smith & Sparkes, 2008, p. 13). This is in line with Gergen and Gergen’s (2010) classification of ‘narrative and the study of lives’, and the authors’ (Sparkes & Smith, 2013) more recent discussion of constructivist approaches.

Further along the continuum, representing a ‘thick social relational’ orientation was the ‘storied resource perspective’, which is in line with the approach taken in the current research. Within this approach, the analytical lens is turned to the “socially situated production of identity” (Smith & Sparkes, 2008, p. 17). Here narrative is conceived as “a form of social practice in which individuals draw from a cultural repertoire of available stories larger than themselves that they then assemble into personal stories” (p. 19). Identities are viewed “as conferred and actively claimed and contested” (p. 16), and stories are understood as a site for identity and self-construction. Smith and Sparkes (2008) noted that the storied resource perspective recognises the ways in which people can develop “personal stories that are idiosyncratic in their detail and unique to the circumstances of a particular life” (p. 20). However, they emphasised that these personal stories “cannot be extricated from the social” (p. 20); instead, they are understood as an “achievement by persons in relationships, employing resources held in common with other people” (p. 20).

The storied resource perspective (Smith & Sparkes, 2008) is situated within the narrative constructionist approach (Sparkes & Smith, 2013). Arguably, Rappaport’s (1995, 2000) conceptualisation of narrative in community psychology, aligns with such an approach with personal stories understood as negotiated in the context of community setting narratives and dominant cultural narratives. Rappaport

(2000) described a personal story as “an individual’s cognitive representation or social communication of events unique to that person”, that is, a person’s own life story, which he described as being organised “temporally and thematically” (p. 4). He contrasted personal stories with narratives, which are not idiosyncratic to an individual. Rappaport defined a community or setting narrative as a story “common among a group of people. It may be shared through social interaction, texts, pictures, performances, and rituals. These narratives tell the members important things about themselves” (p. 4)—it is “text and subtext of culture and context” (p. 6). Exploration of community narratives is therefore a way to understand culture and context and its effects on individuals’ lives including identities and subjectivities. Importantly, community narratives are themselves produced/negotiated in relation to dominant cultural narratives, which Rappaport (2000) defined as those

overlearned stories communicated through mass media or other large social and cultural institutions and social networks. The dominant cultural narratives are known by most people in a culture. They are often communicated in shorthand, as stereotypes... that conjure up well practiced images and stories. (pp. 4-5)

Souto-Manning (2012) has proposed Critical Narrative Analysis (CNA), which brings together Critical Discourse Analysis and Narrative Analysis. Arguably, this approach is in alignment with the narrative constructionist approach (Esin et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2013), the storied resource perspective as described by Smith and Sparkes (2008), and Rappaport’s (2000) conception of narratives. Souto-Manning noted,

Personal narratives are constructed and situated in social and institutional realms—yet by and large, they are analysed apart from issue of power and/or

institutional discourses. CNA proposes that when individuals make sense of their experiences through narratives, they bring together the micro (personal) and the macro (social or institutional) situations in place. (p. 5)

Therefore, this approach enables “critical analysis of narratives in the lifeworld—the everyday stories people tell” (p. 5), but these are necessarily understood within the context of broader institutional discourses. Along similar lines, Emerson and Frosh (2004) noted of narrative analysis, its “capacity for close attention to the social construction of subjectivities in relation to dominant discourses, and its potential for reflexive openness”, which they argued made it “a specific discourse methodology capable of critically contributing to the interplay between personal and social change” (p. 8).

Clandinen and Rosiek (2007) identified shared commitments of critical theoretical scholarship and narrative inquiry. These included a focus on analysing how structural oppression dehumanises, anesthetizes, and alienates people, and a commitment to resisting the effects of oppressive social systems “by producing a scholarship that intervenes in this process by helping people develop a more robust sense of the reality around them and their agency within that reality” (p. 47). The key differences noted by the authors, is that critical theoretical approaches, specifically Marxism, privileges the “macrosocial material conditions of life as the primary influence on human life and thinking” (p. 49), while the narrative inquirer “privileges individual lived experience as a source of insights” (p. 49). Clandinen and Rosiek mapped the borderlands between narrative inquiry and critical theoretical scholarship, noting that it is the

commitment to listening and collaboration, on the one hand, and an awareness that large-scale social systems set people up to perpetuate their own

oppression, on the other hand, that can lead a researcher to the borderlands between narrative inquiry and critical-theoretical scholarship. (p. 64)

The authors identified the work of Michelle Fine (1987), Fine and Weis (2003), and in CRT on counter-storytelling (e.g., Delgado, 1989) as examples of this work in the borderlands.

The current research is situated in these borderlands between critical scholarship and narrative inquiry. In engaging with the Elders' stories through critical narrative inquiry, the research seeks to capture the interconnectedness between structure and psyches, the relationality between oppressed/oppressor, the historicity of power relations, and the dialectic of oppression and resistance (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009). The specific approach taken to analysing the Elders' stories is informed by Rappaport (2000), and Bell (2010), and resonates with the storied resource perspective as outlined by Smith and Sparkes (2008), and the constructionist approach to narrative inquiry (Esin et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2013). These stories are told from the margins and can be understood as counter stories that can, but do not only, speak back to dominant cultural narratives and stock stories. In the next section, I discuss the research process, methods of data collection and approach to data analysis including the data analysis framework.

Data Collection

Laying the Groundwork

Ethics approval for this research was received on 28th May 2013 (see Appendix C; Appendix D for CAN letter of support). The first phase of the research involved several fieldwork visits beginning in November 2013. This was important in developing relationships, demonstrating respect, and in gaining support for the research from key Aboriginal community representatives (Australian Institute of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], 2012; National Health and Medical Research Council [NHMRC], 2003).

Writing in the context of mental health policy and practice, Walker, Schultz, and Sonn (2014) discussed the importance of working in genuine partnership with Aboriginal people, and emphasised the need to adopt Aboriginal protocols in community contexts. They noted that the development of effective partnerships “takes time, trust and personal relationship” (p. 203). Moreover, a “process of vouching” is often required, where “one or some of the community members will attest to the person wishing to enter the community” (p. 203). Walker et al. also stressed the need to work in “collaboration with cultural consultants, who will advise about cultural matters, provide guidance in appropriate behaviour, and mediate between the practitioner and the family/carer and community” (p. 203). They noted that the creation of genuine partnership at the Indigenous/non-Indigenous interface requires a commitment to working in culturally safe ways that “enhance rather than diminish individual and collective cultural identities, and empower and promote individual, family and community wellbeing” (Walker et al., 2014, p. 201). As noted by Clear (2008) unsafe cultural practice “diminishes, demeans, or disempowers the cultural identity and wellbeing of an individual” (as cited in Walker et al., 2014, p. 201).

CAN has actively sought to embody respect, reciprocity, and self-reflection (Kasat, 2013) in the community arts and cultural practice to foster cultural safety/security (Kickett-Tucker, Bessarib, Coffin & Wright, 2017) to be able to develop strong working relationships with Noongar people. Through their longer history of work in the Wheatbelt, the organisation has come to be recognised and respected in the region by the local Noongar people (Kasat, 2013). As such, staff from

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

CAN, including Noongar staff based at the Narrogin office, introduced me to key local people and vouched for me and the research I was conducting, acting as an informal reference group throughout the research process (Walker et al., 2014).

Noongar staff at the CAN office in Narrogin played a central role as cultural consultants (Walker et al., 2014).

During fieldwork visits, I attended various workshops, launches, a community festival, and participated in Bush Babies project activities including storylines workshops, the intergenerational storytelling workshop at the local high school, and informal storytelling (see Appendix E for details of fieldwork activities). In addition to Bush Babies, CAN was delivering and/or launching a number of other projects during fieldwork. For example, the Noongar Pop Culture projects, and the Charnock woman mosaic. During fieldwork visits, I met and had informal conversations with Elders, artists, and facilitators, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people, and other community members involved in CAN projects. Informal conversations were important in developing an understanding of the context, relationship building, as well as in the iterative and generative development of the research focus (Bishop et al., 2002). At this stage, the aim was to learn more about the issues affecting Noongar people in this community, the expressed needs of Noongar people, and to get a sense of the meaning of the Rekindling Stories on Country projects for the local community. Importantly, it was also about local people getting to know me and having the opportunity to ask questions about the research and my role with CAN in Narrogin.

Interviews with Elders

I began to recruit research participants for conversational interviews in July 2014 following the official launch of the Honouring our Elders Portrait Project

Exhibition that was held at the Western Australian State Library and West Australian Museum. The role of CAN staff and particularly Aboriginal staff, was extremely important and the trust that the agency had built up with Noongar people was central to the willingness of participants to speak with me—an outsider and a white/*wadjela*²³ researcher. The official launch represented the culmination of the project, and so this was considered an opportune time to speak about the meaning and significance of the project for participants.

Following the launch at the museum in Perth, I travelled back on the bus to Narrogin with exhibition attendees, and spent the next week based at the CAN office with Noongar staff members Marcelle and Gerri. Marcelle in particular played a central role in the recruitment of participants, encouraging Elders to come and have a yarn about their Bush Baby story and the Bush Baby project at the CAN office, which has become a meeting place or drop in centre for Noongar people in Narrogin. Marcelle also took me around to visit Elders in their homes and to share information about the research, and invite them to come down to the office for a yarn. Marcelle and I had many conversations as we sat in the office or drove around town waiting for people to come and speak with us. During these informal conversations, Marcelle shared her reflections on the project and the significance of Rekindling Stories on Country, her own healing journey, and about issues facing the Noongar community of Narrogin and Aboriginal people more broadly. We also reflected upon and discussed the key themes evident in the stories the Elders shared in the interviews and informal conversations.

23 Wadjela is the Noongar word for white person.

As a researcher, I needed to be flexible and patient at this time. Along with the CAN staff, I spent a long time sitting around waiting and hoping that Elders would turn up to the office for an interview. We had our biscuits and tea ready for their arrival. I recall feeling as though I was sitting around not being productive, concerned that I should be interviewing more people. However, I came to recognise that this sitting around and yarning was part of the important work of building relationships and waiting until people were ready to share. This process of sharing involved me being open and transparent about who I was and why I was conducting this research. These practices are important aspects of cultural safety (Kickett-Tucker et al., 2017). As social workers working alongside Aboriginal people, Bennett, Zubrzycki and Bacon (2011), emphasised the importance of

building the relationship in environments where the person feels comfortable; being aware of community protocols regarding with whom to consult; working alongside people; not going straight down to business or being outcome and process driven; providing choices about with who they might want to work...; giving information and working from a position of humility and dealing with people with dignity. (p. 29)

Interview participants. During this trip, four Noongar Elders who had participated in the Bush Babies project were interviewed: two males and two females all in their late 60s (Frank, Caroline, Mick, and Enid²⁴). Frank and Caroline were husband and wife, and were interviewed together. Each of the Elders interviewed had their portrait painted for the project. Three of the four Elders interviewed (Enid, Frank, Caroline) participated in the storytelling workshop at the High School and their

²⁴ Pseudonyms have been used to protect the anonymity of participants.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

stories were recorded, with many made into digital stories. Each of the Elders had been involved in a number of different CAN projects including the Cultural Mapping and Community Governance project, the Narrogin Stories soundscape, and Yarns of the Heart. Three of the four Elders interviewed indicated that they were members of the Stolen Generations. The other Elder grew up on a reserve on the outskirts of town and spent some time in the juvenile justice system after being declared “a neglected child” (“Boy declared neglected”, 1967) by the State.

Initial interviews. Initial interviews took place at the CAN office in Narrogin, with Marcelle present for all initial interviews. Information about the research including what was required of participants, and how the information would be used, was provided both verbally and through the information to participants form (see Appendix F). Participants consented to their participation in conversational interviews, and for these interviews to be digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the anonymity of research participants.

The interviews were conversational and structured around topics of history and connection to Narrogin, everyday life in the community including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (*Noongar/wadjela*) relationships, involvement in community arts projects, and why these projects might be important (see Appendix G). As noted by Blodgett, Schinke, Smith, Peltier and Pheasant (2011), “conversational interviews provide the researcher and the participants with flexibility to cocreate both *what* is said and *how* things are said during the interviews” (p. 524). Conversational interviews enable participants to a “high degree of control over the stories that are performed, and the researcher can also respond to the participants’ stories” (p. 524). This conversational style came to be extremely important, and ultimately enabled

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Elders (along with Marcelle) to lead the direction of the topics discussed, thereby reshaping the research focus.

Chase (1995) discussed the importance of inviting the telling of life stories as opposed to reports. She wrote, “If we want to hear stories rather than reports then our task as interviewers is to *invite* others to tell their stories, to encourage them to take responsibility for the meaning of their talk” (p. 3). In retrospect, I came to the interviews more likely to invite research reports with the questions I was asking. Fortunately, given the conversational nature of the interviews, the Elders (and Marcelle) re-directed my focus from research report to stories. In the interviews, the sociological and psychological questions I had as a researcher about the role of community based arts became secondary. While I asked questions about the role of the arts, it became apparent that Elders found these questions difficult to answer or just did not want to answer them, and instead shared stories about their lives. In sharing stories about their lives, they were in fact demonstrating the important role of these community arts projects and Aboriginal storytelling on country, in particular.

Marcelle played an important role in creating a relaxed and safe interview environment. Seemingly small assurances such as stating to Elders that we were, “just having a yarn”, helped to set the climate of safety. Bessarab and Ng’andu (2010) have described yarnning as “an Indigenous cultural form of conversation” (p. 37), and suggested that yarnning is “conducive to an Indigenous way of doing things; its strength is in the cultural security that it creates for Indigenous people participating in research” (p. 47). Bessarab and Ng’andu identified four types of yarnning, one being research topic yarnning (also social, therapeutic and collaborative forms of yarnning). In research topic yarnning,

both the researcher and participant journey together visiting places and topics of interest relevant to the research study. Yarning is a process that requires the researcher to develop and build a relationship that is accountable to Indigenous people participating in the research. (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010, p. 38)

Yarning encourages participants to speak freely and therefore makes possible the exploration of research topic in greater depth than more formal interview styles (Fredericks et al., 2011). Central to this informal approach to interviews, is the emphasis placed on “forming relationships that are based on equal and respectful partnerships, support, cooperation and respect” (Fredericks et al., 2011, p. 16).

During interviews, which ranged from one hour to two and a half hours long, I recall at times feeling as though we had gone off track, and being concerned that my questions were not being answered. However, what the Elders were telling me was far more important, and I needed to adjust my research questions to be responsive to what it was that they were telling me—what it was that they wanted the research to focus on. I came to recognise how interview questions were driven by my interests, and how the Elders (with Marcelle) had redirected me to a focus on their life stories. Ultimately, I came to conceptualise the research interviews as an extension of the platform for Noongar voices to be shared because these stories provide important insights into oppression, resistance, and liberation. As noted by Chase (2005) narrative research involves a transformation of the relationship between interviewer and interviewee into one of narrator and listener. Chase wrote,

The stories people tell *constitute* the empirical material that interviewers need if they are to understand how people create meanings out of events in their lives. To think of an interviewee as narrator is to make a conceptual shift away

from the idea that interviewees have answers to researchers' questions and toward the idea that interviewees are narrators with stories to tell and voices of their own. (p. 660)

Similar to my concerns that the interviewees were going off track, Czarniawska (1997) noted that, such experiences "used to bring [her] to the verge of panic- 'How to bring them to the point?' - whereas now [she has] at least learned that this *is* the point" (p. 28).

SooHoo (2013) discussed the stance of humility in culturally responsive methodologies, specifically as a non-Indigenous researcher working with Maori people in Aotearoa. Positioning humility as one way to decolonise research and create spaces for a liberatory praxis (Mutua & Swadener, 2004), SooHoo noted that humility "means blurring of the Self so that the Other may be more visible. It means respecting the possibility that Others have something more to say than you" (p. 209). She noted that this stance requires being cognisant of and "taking responsibility for the ... vestiges of power, expertise, and authority a researcher brings to the context" (p. 211). It means taking a step back, recognising one's ignorance, and embracing the discomfort of not knowing. As noted by SooHoo, a stance of humility entails a "willingness to be transformed" (p. 208), with the intention being to "honor and support the Other not to change anything or expect transformation. To expect change or to even expect a relationship would be a form of colonization" (p. 208).

The interviews became an opportunity to bear witness to the Elders' stories and memories of lives directly impacted upon by assimilationist policies, practices, and discourses and the legacy of this in the present. In bearing witness (Fine, 2006; Dion & Dion, 2004) to these stories, I, as a researcher who had expressed a willingness and interest in listening to and hearing these stories as a means of

interrogating our history and its continuities in the present, became accountable to the Elders. While I initially wanted to focus on the perceived role of the storytelling on country through the arts, they wanted to tell me about their lives, their history, and the urgent or pressing needs that they had.

Follow up interviews. In May 2015, approximately ten months after the initial interviews and the official launch of the Bush Babies project, I travelled back to Narrogin to share with Elders the themes that I was developing in the process of transcription and preliminary analysis. I was also able to have a more focused discussion in these key areas, namely around the lack of acknowledgement of the ongoing history of colonisation, the disruption caused to families, communities, culture, but also the continuity of culture. On this visit, I was able to speak with three of the four Elders, as one was not available at this time. Marcelle was not present for the follow up interviews, which were conducted at the CAN office. Informed consent was also obtained for these follow up interviews (see Appendix F).

Reflections on interviews. Some of the Elders came to the interviews prepared with documents, photographs, and/or newspaper articles. For example, in his first interview, Frank gave me an article to photocopy that was written about him and captured some of his life story. Specifically, of being taken to Wandering mission as a young boy, his memory of his mother walking all the way from Narrogin to visit him, and having blisters on her feet because she walked barefoot. In this newspaper article, Frank's desire to get the mission up and running again for the Noongar community to make use of was also expressed—something which he, and others, emphasised throughout my time in Narrogin. On a subsequent visit to Narrogin, in the context of another project, I noticed that he asked one of the facilitators “Have you seen that article about me?” and had it photocopied for her. Frank and his wife Caroline also

gave me a brochure about projects that are happening at Fairbridge farm because this is what he wants to see happen at Wandering Mission for the young Noongar people. Green and Sonn (2008) reported how CAN staff became identified as supporting the Aboriginal community, and are then called on to assist in responding to issues of concern for the community (e.g., unemployment, financial hardship). Arguably, this is exemplified in Frank wanting me to advocate for Noongar people, specifically to support them to get the Wandering mission up and running again. He encouraged me to go visit the mission to see it for myself, and to visit a local pub to see the history on the walls, of the (nearly) all-Noongar football team.

Mick, on his second interview, came to the office with a folder of newspaper articles that document part of his life story. For example, he had newspaper articles from 1967 about life for Aboriginal people in Pingelly where he lived on the reserve with his extended family. One of the articles had a photograph of where he lived, a ‘humpy’²⁵ with a broken-down car out the front. He and his brother slept in the car. The articles report on how as a 14-year-old boy he was sent to prison for stealing; he spent four nights in Fremantle prison before being somewhere else. Another related article (“Sentence quashed: Term for youth excessive”, 1967) reports how his older brother insisted on being arrested because he “wanted to be with his brother”. In one of the articles, it reported that the magistrate had stated that ‘the native boy’ “isn’t helping himself” (“Boy declared neglected”, 1967). Other articles that Mick shared report how the Pingelly Justice of the Peace (JP) wanted to bring back the cane for Aboriginals (“JP seeks right to cane Aborigines”, 1967). Another titled “The Aborigines dilemma” (D. Smith, 1967) asked, “Is drink the cause?” Reading the

25 Many Noongar people lived in tents or humpies made from iron and hessian bags.

articles, the similarities between the way that ‘the Aboriginal problem’ was spoken about then, and how it is spoken about now, was striking and disturbing.

In searching for the articles that I had been shown during the interview, I came across other articles of relevance. For example, I found a letter to the Editor written by a *wadjela* doctor (Dr. Jacobs) who several of the Elders spoke about as someone who looked after Aboriginal people. In the letter, he is advocating for the hospital not to be segregated so that Noongar people would be provided with the same quality of care as all other community members (Jacobs, 1951). Engaging with these documents was useful in understanding the context within which the Elders grew up. Reading the newspaper articles from the 50s and 60s was useful in providing some insight into the way in which Noongar people at the time were treated and written about. The people being referred to as ‘natives’ in the letters and articles were the same people that I had spoken to during interviews. These archival records are clearly of importance to Noongar Elders who wanted to share them with me to show their journey. Mick emphasised that to understand issues facing the community now, we need to understand this longer history. He told me, “This is where it all stems from”. I wondered if he needed me to see the evidence considering many people talked about how often people do not believe them when they talk about how difficult life was back then, and how they were treated, and are persistently told to ‘move on’.

Archival Materials

It was important to recognise the resources that were already available to explore the research questions. In addition to the interviews with Noongar Elders (N=4), I also made use of various archival sources as Bush Baby stories. This included Bush Baby stories recorded as part of project activities both informally (N=2) and as part of the intergenerational workshop at the high school (N=4), and at

the Katanning Harmony Festival (N=3), with Elders often sharing multiple stories. Snippets of the stories of all 16 Elders were also included as part of the Bush Babies catalogue (CAN WA, 2014b). I also made use of some archival resources produced as part of related CAN projects, which provide an archive of Elders' stories (N=4). This was considered particularly important given that Aboriginal people, and Elders and community leaders in particular, are often burdened with the expectation of telling their stories and sharing their knowledge multiple times; stories that can be re-traumatising. Figure 4 below shows the data sources used in the collection of Bush Baby stories.

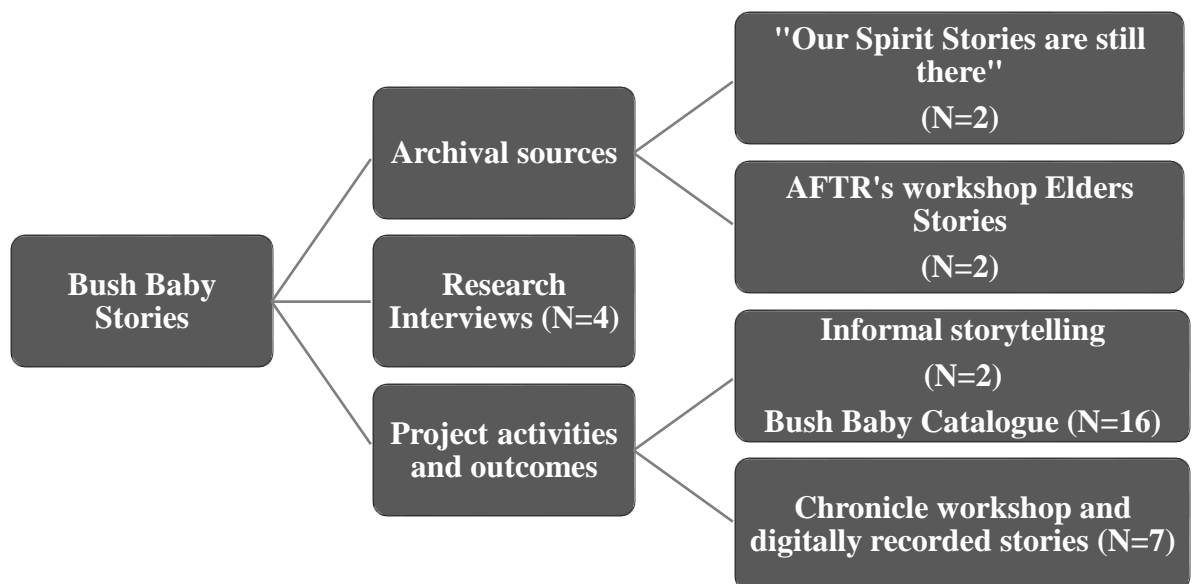


Figure 4. Bush Baby data sources

I include the Bush Baby story of one of the Elders (Janet) who participated in the Honouring our Elders Portrait Exhibition. Her Bush Baby story was captured as part of the Cultural Mapping and Community Governance project and produced as *‘Gnaala boorong wangkiny wongi nidja nyini: Our Spirit Stories are still there’* (CAN WA, 2012). I had asked a CAN staff member, if it would be possible to speak with this Noongar Elder for the research. She laughed and told me “she is the most

interviewed Noongar woman”. It was not necessary to interview her given that she has already shared her Bush Baby story. It was therefore more appropriate to make use of the archival materials available, rather than taking up more of her time. This particular Elder did share stories with me and another CAN staff member (Project Coordinator) informally as she was having her photograph taken at an old birthing site and another old meeting place. She talked about the old traditional birthing practices, how they used to find water, and her family connections. She also spoke about the loss of kinship and how she wished she could sit in Narrogin for a week to speak with all the young people to tell them about their families and how they are all connected. Unfortunately, we did not record this *in situ* storytelling on this particular day, mainly because it was spontaneous and it did not feel right to bring out a recording device. As part of the cultural mapping project, she had previously shared her story of being born in the Bush and about the Noongar midwives who delivered her (CAN WA, 2012). She also talked about growing up under the restrictions of the 1905 Act and discussed the strength and continuity of Noongar culture. In this recording the story of another Elder (‘Pop Abraham’) is intertwined with Janet’s storytelling and is also included; he also shared memories of growing up in the 1940s and of culturally significant sites in the area (CAN WA, 2012).

I also include the stories shared and documented as part of a digital storytelling workshop with students and CAN staff delivered by Australian Film Television and Radio (AFTR) in December 2012 (3rd-7th), as part of the larger corpus of Bush Baby stories. Two short documentaries were produced by Narrogin Senior High School students with CAN staff, about two of the Bush Babies who participated in the Elders Portrait Project. One of the documentaries told the story of Nanna Purple (i.e., Hazel Winmar) from Kellerberrin whose photograph inspired the Elders Portrait

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Project and who passed away in 2014 following her 100th birthday. In the documentary, her daughters are telling her story and she is present. It was considered important to include her story in writing about the Bush Babies project because it was her photograph that inspired the Honouring our Elders portrait project. The other short documentary is of a local Elder who also had his portrait painted as part of the Elders portrait project, participated in the intergenerational storytelling workshop at the high school, and told his story to CAN staff (and myself) at the site of the old reserve but was not interviewed for this research (Revel). These stories were incorporated as sources of data, given that I was only able to interview four Elders, three of whom were members of the Stolen Generations. These additional Bush Babies (Revel, Janet, Matthew) were not members of the Stolen Generations; however, Hazel's children were forcibly removed (as discussed in her digital story).

CAN has in place agreements regarding ownership and any rights of access to resulting intellectual and/or cultural property in relation to the community arts projects, which often involve oral history and storytelling. These agreements have been negotiated with relevant Aboriginal community representatives and reflect CANs commitment to respectful practice with Aboriginal people (AIATSIS, 2012). While, CAN facilitate the community arts projects, the intellectual property and ownership rights remain with the individual and/or community. The Bush Baby Stories used as archival data for the research remain the intellectual property of the Aboriginal Elders who shared their stories.

Table 1 below shows the participants who shared their Bush Baby stories through interviews, project activities and outcomes, and archival sources. Pseudonyms have been used for Elders who participated in interviews. Pseudonyms have not been used for publicly available material.

Table 1.

Bush Baby Sources and Participants

Source of Bush Babies Stories	Participants
Informal Storytelling: Recorded stories	Revel (Born 1941); Joan (Born 1928)
Published Bush Babies Catalogue	16 Elders (two of whom had their portraits painted posthumously)
Documentaries produced as part of Australian Film Television and Radio (AFTR) Training	Nanna Purple (https://vimeo.com/59388097). Passed away following her 100 th birthday in 2015
	Pop Revel (https://vimeo.com/59388094) (Born 1941)
Gnaala boorong wangkiny wongi nidja nyini: Our Spirit Stories are Still there	Janet and Matthew shared stories of growing up in the 1940s
Chronicles workshop and digital stories	Enid ²⁶ , Frank, Caroline, Revel
Chronicles, Katanning, digital stories	Geraldine (Born 1954); Wendy (Born 1960); Arthur (born 1941)
Conversational Interviews with Elders	Enid (July 2014) Frank and Caroline (July 2014; May, 2015) Mick (July 2014; May 2015) All in their late 60s

26 Pseudonyms have been used to protect the anonymity of the interviewees. For publicly available information (e.g., the name of artists, and Elders captured in the portraits) pseudonyms have not been used.

In total, the Bush Baby stories of eight Elders were included in the corpus of stories, along with the brief snippets provided in the Bush Baby catalogue of each of the 16 Elders involved in the portrait project. Some Elders shared their stories as part of interviews as well as project activities, and many shared multiple stories.

Reciprocity and Giving Back

In addition to feeding back preliminary themes to Elders and CAN staff, as the analysis was written up, summaries of data analysis including illustrative excerpts, were sent to CAN staff who had the opportunity to provide input, and to approve or query the analysis—the story being told, and also to make use of the material for their own purposes. A report is currently being developed for CAN to be distributed to those involved. Elders have been provided copies of their transcripts and their digitally recorded interviews via CAN. This was considered particularly important, given that many had expressed the importance of writing down their story.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Framework

The approach to the analysis of narrative analysis aligned with the storied resource perspective as discussed by Smith and Sparkes (2008), which is situated within narrative constructionist inquiry (Esin et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2013). From this perspective, narratives are conceived as personal, yet “thoroughly shaped by socio-cultural conventions” (Smith & Sparkes, 2008, p. 17). Viewing narrative as “a form of social practice in which individuals draw from a cultural repertoire of available stories larger than themselves that they then assemble into personal stories” (p. 19), stories are understood as “a ‘site’ for identity and self-construction” (Smith & Sparkes, 2008, p. 19; see also Case & Hunter, 2012; Hammack, 2008).

Within this broader orientation, Rappaport's (2000) framework of personal stories, community narratives, and dominant cultural narratives informed data analysis. In analysing the Elders' personal stories, the aim was to identify the narrative resources evident across the Bush Baby stories—the shared community narratives. The personal stories were thus conceptualised as providing insights into the resources Noongar people are drawing on to make sense of past, present, and future, and in constructing what it means to be Noongar. As well as highlighting the symbolic resources available at a community level, these personal stories were also understood in relation to broader cultural narratives (Rappaport, 2000), or stock stories (Bell, 2010). In this regard, the Elders' stories were conceptualised as counter-stories (Case & Hunter, 2012; Harris et al., 2001; Rodricks & McCoy, 2015; Salter & Adams, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). In particular, the story types identified by Bell (2010) in her Storytelling Project model, specifically stock stories, concealed stories, and resistance stories, informed the analysis of the stories, with examples of concealed and resistance stories readily identifiable in the Elders' storytelling.

Data Analysis Process

The recorded Bush Babies stories, which included the interviews, as well as the stories digitally recorded as part of project activities, and those Bush Baby stories recorded as part of related CAN projects, were transcribed. As noted by Esin et al. (2014) transcription is one part of the analysis process, with the researcher necessarily making decisions about what is included, and the structure and presentation of the transcribed text. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, with aspects of how things were said (e.g., with laughter, a more serious tone, a whisper, a pause) also noted. In listening back to the interviews, I also noted any reflections on the interviews/interviewing, often frustrated with myself for not allowing silences, or

asking a question, rather than staying with the narrator and the story they wanted to tell. The transcription was carried out over multiple rounds (Esin et al., 2014), with an initial ‘rough transcription’ (Reissman, 1993), refined over subsequent listening/transcription efforts. I did not record the length of pauses, just noted them when they did occur. The recordings were transcribed in their entirety.

After listening to the recordings, and once the transcription process was complete, I produced initial summaries for each of the Elders who shared their Bush Baby story/stories (whether through interviews or archival materials). These summaries outlined significant life events (e.g., taken to mission as a young child), key themes or emphasises in their storytelling, and similarities and/or differences across settings (i.e., interviews vs. storytelling workshop) (see Appendix H for an example).

As discussed by Crossley (2007), “meaning is not just ‘transparently’ available within an interview, a transcript or an autobiographical script. It has to be achieved through a process of interpretation and engagement with the text” (p. 147). The first stage of this process generally involves reading and familiarising oneself with the transcripts (Crossley, 2007). Transcripts were listened to multiple times throughout the process of transcription, with the transcripts then read and re-read multiple times, in order to familiarise myself with the material and to develop a general sense of key emerging themes. I made initial notes in the margins of the transcripts, which I had printed out.

The preliminary coding process involved reading the transcripts line-by-line taking note of sections of the text relevant to the research questions. A process of open coding for each of the individual transcripts then took place; the focus at this stage was on the individual Bush Babies personal story/stories. As noted by Miles and

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Huberman (1994) “Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes are usually attached to ‘chunks’ of varying size – words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs” (p. 56). Open coding involves carefully reading the data, identifying all statements relating to the research question/s, assigning them with a code, or category (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes are then noted, with each relevant statement, or illustrative examples, organised under the appropriate code (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Based on this initial coding, a coding scheme was developed (The coding scheme is included as Appendix I). Examples of codes included ‘hard but happy lives’, ‘family feuding’, ‘concern for young people’, ‘strong extended family on reserves’, ‘loss of culture’, ‘cultural continuity/survival’. The coding scheme that was developed in the first stage was then used in rereading the transcripts, searching for statements that fit into the emerging categories, but also being open to any additional codes. This stage therefore involved looking across the transcripts to identify the shared aspects of the stories being told, that is, the community narratives evident across the stories, which point to the narrative resources that Noongar people have available for making sense of the connections between past, present, and future and for constructing what it means to be Noongar. The coding scheme was developed and refined as the analysis progressed. These themes reflected shared aspects of the Elders’ stories, the shared narrative resources that they were drawing on in constructing personal stories.

Following these first two stages, the aim was to become more analytical, and look for patterns and explanation in the codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This involved organising the codes into themes and making connections within and between the emerging themes. Following this, the aim was to create a coherent and persuasive narrative based on the themes (Lyons, 2007), or more specifically, the

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

community narratives that were emerging from the data analysis process. It was important that this story include the many stories that were told—stories of hardship, loss, despair, but also, stories of family, cultural continuity, and survival. The stories were ultimately organised into community narratives relating to key themes across their storytelling: the history and continuity of oppression in their lives, the consequences of this history in the present for individuals, families, and communities, as well as the resilient and resistant responses and survival of Noongar people and culture.

Chase (2005) developed a typology of three voices that “narrative researchers deploy as they wrestle with the question of how to use their voice(s) to interpret and represent the narrator’s voice(s)” (p. 664). The three voices identified were: the researcher’s authoritative voice, the researcher’s supportive voice, and the researchers interactive voice. The supportive voice “pushes the narrator’s voice into the limelight” (p. 665). Chase emphasised that “this narrative strategy aims not for establishing authenticity but rather for creating a self-reflective and respectful distance between a researchers’ and narrators’ voices” (p. 665). In writing up the analysis, I sought to stay close to the stories and make the Elders’ stories central. I sought to keep my voice to a minimum, guiding the reader, and making connections between stories and with relevant literature, but presenting the Elders as the experts. The notion of the researcher’s supportive voice therefore resonated with the way that I approached writing up, and the task of elevating the Elders’ stories.

As Lyons (2007) has argued, the narrative “researcher adopts an active and creative role for interpreting the data to create a narrative that is coherent and persuasive” (p. 168). Stein and Mankowski (2004) argued that the qualitative research process involves the act of witnessing, where the researcher “listens to and affirms the

experience of the narrator giving a testimonial” (p. 24). Thus the researcher is positioned as an emotionally involved “impassioned listener” (p. 24), as opposed to as detached observer. The act of interpreting involves “making sense of the collective experience of participants by transforming ‘participant stories’ into ‘research stories’ based on the experience and knowledge of the researcher” (p. 22). Stein and Mankowski emphasised the need for researchers to recognise their “interpretive authority in working with qualitative material”, and thus the need to be explicit about their own values and personal agendas (p. 22). Therefore, the analysis produced reflects not only what the participants shared, but also my own theoretical commitments and interests, particularly my interests in highlighting the historicity and relationality of power relations, the interconnectedness between structure and psyche, and the dialectic of oppression and resistance (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009). The analysis produced also speaks to the key lessons for me as a researcher bearing witness to the Elders’ stories. The analysis is presented with illustrative quotations, for the reader to judge the persuasiveness of the interpretations. Importantly, as noted by Emerson and Frosh (2004) critical narrative analysis generates “a situated, partial and warrantable psychosocial ‘knowledge’ ” (p. 10). The situated knowledge (Montenegro, 2002) of Noongar Elders was made central in taking on the role of psychosocial accompaniment (Watkins, 2015).

Data triangulation. I made use of CANs archive of Elders’ stories throughout the analysis process as a source of data triangulation (Denzin, 1970/2009). Many of the Elders who had participated in Bush Babies had also participated in other projects. For example, as part of the Yarns of the heart project (CAN WA, 2011), which Enid had been involved, participants were asked to give their dolls a name and to share the story behind their doll. In the interview, Enid spoke a little bit about why she made

her doll, but I could make use of this archived material to see what her doll looked like and what she had written about the doll at the time.

Captured as part of the Cultural Mapping and Community Governance project were stories from Sima Khan-White at Wandering Mission, and a compilation of Noongar Elders representing Gnaala Karla Booja, recorded at different sites including Lake Navarino in April 2011; some of the Elders interviewed had also participated in this cultural mapping. Sima's story extended upon what some of the Elders, who had also been taken to missions including Wandering mission, had spoken about during interviews and the storytelling workshop, but had not necessarily elaborated upon. For example, Enid had spoken about being made to feel sinful, but had not gone into detail about this. In her story, Sima spoke about this in more detail. Sima's story was recorded at Wandering Mission inside one of the buildings and is extremely powerful and emotional. Sima had expressed a pressing need to share her story as part of her own healing (CAN WA, 2012). Sima's story added depth to my understanding of what it might have been like to grow up in Wandering Mission. Listening to Sima's story and then returning to listen to the stories of Elders shared at the Chronicles workshops and in interviews, I was able to pick up on things that were left unsaid, things that were alluded to but were too difficult to communicate. Sima spoke about the occurrence of physical and sexual abuse that has been documented at Wandering mission (Laurie, 2017). Sima's story was a story of dispossession and suffering but ultimately of resilience, resistance, and survival in the face of adversity.

The oral histories and compilation of Elder's knowledge, produced through the cultural mapping project also acted as an important guide in the process of data analysis. These resources enabled me to learn about Noongar culture, identity and belonging: what it means to be Noongar. These resources, as archives of Noongar

cultural knowledge, were therefore useful in engaging with in making sense of the Elders' stories. In particular, they pointed to the continuing significance of *moort* (Family and kinship), *boodjar* (Country), *katitjin* (Cultural knowledge) for Noongar people (L. Collard, Harben, & van den Berg, 2004). These stories also pointed to the history of oppression in the Elders' lives, the importance of returning to cultural knowledge, and of listening to Elders. As I engaged with the Elders' stories, the words of Noongar Elder Janet Hayden (CAN WA, 2012) remained in the forefront of my mind: "The Noongar people's best voice is their own voice" (p. 1).

While the interviews with other participant groups were not ultimately included as sources of data for this thesis, these interviews were useful in the process of data analysis. They were affirming of the stories told by Elders, and of the need to make the Elders' stories central to the thesis. In listening again to the interviews with Noongar adults (an artist, and three facilitators), and reading and re-reading those transcripts, there was a strong emphasis on the need to give respect back to the Elders—to put Elders back in their rightful place. They spoke about their own healing journeys as involving going back to their Elders, listening to their stories, and reclaiming their identity, their culture. Knowing who they are and where they come from included knowing about this history of dispossession, not only to understand present realities but also to recognise and honour the suffering, struggle, resilience and survival of those before them. It was also about knowing their culture—what it means to be a Noongar person. It therefore seemed fitting that the central focus of the thesis became the Elders' stories. In retrospect, given that the project was part of Rekindling Stories on Country, this should have perhaps been the explicit focus all along.

Three Shared Community Narratives

The personal stories of Elders were analysed with a focus on the shared resources, or community narratives, the Elders were drawing on in explaining past, present, and future, and constructing what it means to be Noongar. Following analysis, I identified three broad community narratives, which contained a number of sub themes. The three shared community narratives are displayed in Figure 5 below.

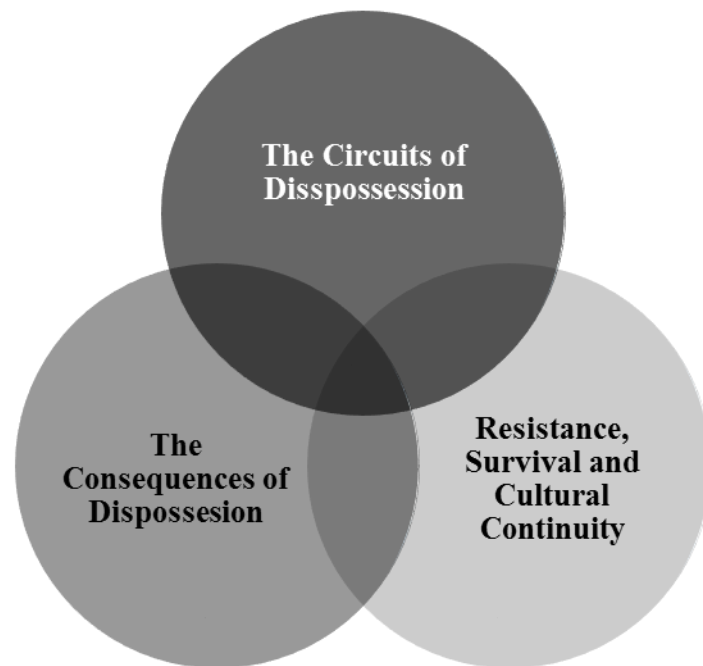


Figure 5. Three broad community narratives

The first community narrative includes stories of Elders that show the history and continuity of oppression in the lives and collective memory of Elders—the circuits of dispossession. The second shows the psychosocial consequences of dispossession, for individuals, families, and communities, which are intergenerational. The third broad community narrative involved stories of resistance and survival (of people and culture).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach taken to explore the narratives that Noongar Elders drew on to explain the past, present, and possibilities for the future, in the context of the Bush Babies project. The epistemology informing the research is a critical contextual version of constructionism, informed by the liberation paradigm and calls for decolonising research and psychological inquiry. Utilising the methodology of narrative inquiry, the research made use of archival materials, digital stories produced as part of project activities, and conversational style interviews with four Noongar Elders, as sources of Bush Baby stories (see Appendix J for concept map of research process). The three community narratives are presented over the following chapters, using illustrative excerpts from the transcribed materials.

Chapter 6: Narrating the Circuits of Dispossession

This chapter presents the two community narratives constructed following analysis of the Bush Baby stories, which collectively narrate the circuits of Aboriginal dispossession (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009). The first community narrative labelled, 'Life was put on us', showed the various forms of violence and dispossession that have been used historically to maintain relations of domination which were established through colonisation. The second community narrative, labelled 'It's still going on', emphasised the continuity of structural, cultural, and interpersonal forms of violence that continue to shape and constrain the lifeworlds of Aboriginal people in contemporary Australian society. The two community narratives are displayed in Figure 6 below.

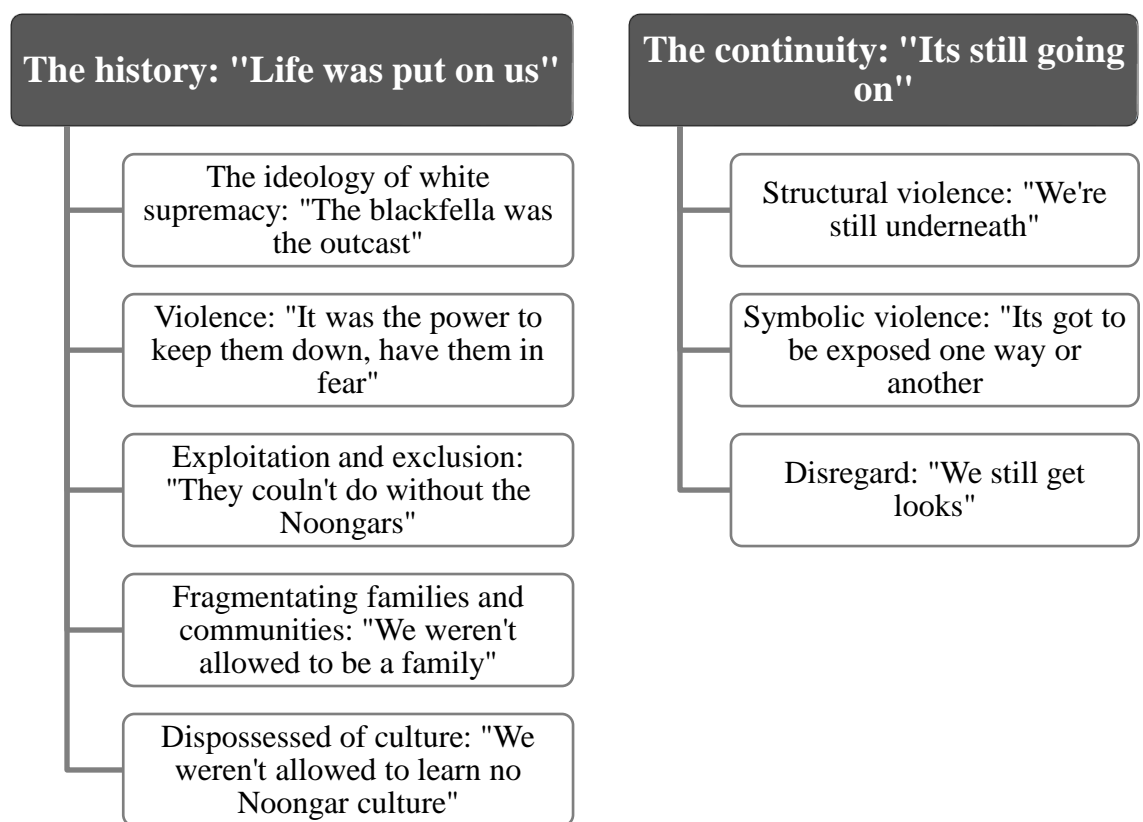


Figure 6. The circuits of dispossession past and present

The Collective Remembering of Oppression: “Life was put on us”

In sharing their stories, the Elders narrated how paternalistic and assimilationist policies, practices, and discourses impacted their own lives. They also drew on collective memory (Apfelbaum, 2000) about the treatment of Aboriginal people historically, to communicate this history. Five central mechanisms of control were evident in this community narrative, namely: the ideology of white supremacy, direct violence, exploitation and exclusion, the deliberate fragmentation of families and communities, and the systematic removal of culture and language.

The ideology of white supremacy: “The blackfella was the outcast”. The Elders described how ‘race’ has been used historically to construct some groups as inferior in order to justify or legitimate inhumane treatment, including the usurpation of land and political authority (Apfelbaum, 1999; Fanon, 1952/2008, 1963/2004; Memmi, 1974/2003; Quijano, 2000; Smith, 2012; Teo, 2005). In the excerpt below, Caroline explained to the students who were bearing witness to her story, how the social construction of an inferior and superior race was used to justify dehumanising policies such as segregation and child removal.

Firstly every, every country in this world is made up of the Indigenous race, ...and they was um made to be as a as a different type of, as a different person to everyone else in society because of um the colour of our skin and um ‘cause how, who we are, Aboriginal people. And because of that, this is the way we were firstly treated. We was taken away from our parents and put in the missions and that, put in the reserves outside of towns, near dumps, near the bush where they segregate Aboriginal people away, out of sight because of their status in life, being a lower class people. But it’s not right really....

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Caroline wanted the students to understand how the ideology of white supremacy is implicated in the contemporary realities of Aboriginal people. Mick similarly reflected upon the construction of ‘the black race’ as ‘a cursed race’.

Mick: They took them away from their culture, they took ‘em away from all their, religion...taught them Christianity **their way** but not the Bibles way... this is where the big confusion came into it, you know, some of them said, “oh you could do this and do that”, but the Bible says: “no you’re not allowed to do that”. But because they was white, they said they was right, and the blackfella was the outcast ... people put in the Bible that “all the black race is a cursed race, God didn’t like, don’t like the black race”.

Interviewer: Was that in the Bible?

Mick: This is what someone wrote... how they interpreted it over in America when the slaves... to justify what they was up to... It came down through the years that black race was a cursed race; they gonna be treated like animals and that’s what they gonna be treated as.

Mick problematised the construction of “the cursed race” in Biblical texts, and explained that interpretations such as this functioned to justify slavery in the United States of America, and colonisation in places like Australia. As Mick explained, and in line with critical race scholarship (e.g., Fanon, 1952/2008; Memmi, 1974/2003), it was by constructing black people as an inferior race, “the outcast”, that the dominant group (i.e., white people) could treat them “like animals”. This example highlights the inextricable relationship between ‘knowledge’ and power: “because they was right...they was right”. As these examples illustrate, these Aboriginal Elders recognised and wanted to communicate how processes of classification, stigmatisation, and ‘othering’ functioned to establish relations of domination and

subordination (Apfelbaum, 1999), legitimising the dispossession of Aboriginal people from their own land and political authority. The Elders were well aware of how the social construction of race was used to justify relations of domination and subordination.

Direct violence: “It was the power to keep them down, have them in fear”.

It was through the ideology of white supremacy, race and racism, that inhumane treatment including physical forms of violence was justified (Fanon, 1952/2008; Memmi, 1974/2003). Moreover, it was through physical forms of violence and the fear this creates that enabled other forms of violence such as the usurpation of land, economic exploitation, and exclusion to be enacted (Memmi, 1974/2003; Moane, 2011; Quijano, 2000). This was captured in the Elders’ stories. For example, stories of the violence suffered by Aboriginal people on the frontier (e.g., Moses, 2004; Reynolds, 1987, 2013 on frontier violence), were often shared during conversational interviews. Many Noongar people in the area are descendants of those murdered in, or were surviving witnesses of the Pinjarra massacre of 1834²⁷, which was led by Governor James Stirling (Contos, 2002). On his second interview, Mick brought some information about one of his ancestors who was present at the Pinjarra massacre and survived by hiding in a tree. Enid also spoke of this ancestor, and shared some of the story of the Pinjarra massacre:

They all travelled down there just for a big meeting, a big dance, it wasn’t for, to lay plans to kill white people or anything... They just went down dancing, lore and things like that and they were followed... Some escaped, some were

27 .The Pinjarra massacre, also known as the Battle of Pinjarra took place on October 28 1834; it is estimated that between 14 and 30 Aboriginal people, were killed (Monument Australia, 2017).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

caught and tortured and some were killed because they come up out of the water and they were shot right there in the water.

This attack was led by Governor James Stirling who Enid said has “such a famous name now but he was a murderer to me. He crept up on our people”. As expressed by Enid, Stirling is someone who is memorialised in Western Australia, yet he is a murderer in the eyes of Noongar people.

Enid’s storytelling about the Pinjarra massacre represented it as an unprovoked attack, which occurred because white people only saw Aboriginal people as ‘the baddies’.

They wasn’t prepared for any war or anything or killing you know ... They did kill some of the white men I suppose, but they were the baddies, that’s all the white people saw them as. But it stopped them from trusting a lot of white men unna? ... It was hard to, but as they got older they got jobs on the farms and that... they had to still live.

Fanon (1952/2008), wrote about a Manichean psychology, a psychological worldview where the world is divided into ‘us’ - ‘them’, ‘good’ - ‘bad’, ‘white’ - ‘black’, which he argued is the basis for racist ideology. Enid emphasised that this massacre “stopped them trusting a lot of white men”, yet they still had to work for white people— they depended on this work to live given the dependency relation established through colonisation (Apfelbaum, 1999). Further exemplifying the use of violence and the establishment of the dependency relation, Enid commented “the farmers put the fence up and had our people confused see and when they walked along it they got shot you know”.

Enid also shared stories about the brutal history of an Aboriginal prison on Rottnest Island where Aboriginal men from across Western Australia were sent from

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

1841-1907 (Haebich, 2000). Historian, Anna Haebich (2000) noted that Rottnest Island Prison, Australia's only Aboriginal prison, was "by all accounts a hellhole of death by disease, execution, abuse and overcrowding- an Australian gulag with hundreds of unmarked graves as testimony to the brutality there" (pp. 210-211). In remembering the dark history of Rottnest Island, Enid discussed how violence was used as a method of putting fear into Aboriginal people.

We are reading in that history there ... you know how one bloke was put in the stock, where you put your hands in 'em. He put them in there from morning until night and while he was in there they punched him in the face and did damage, and belted with the cat of nine tails you know and he was that exhausted he still beated him around and you know; why was it reasonable that? ...It's just to put fear, you know and for others to do that.

In this excerpt she described the violence inflicted on Aboriginal men and asked, "why is it reasonable that?"

Mick similarly spoke about the use of violence to instil fear in black people, and made connections between the treatment of black people in the United States of America and in Australia.

You look at the fella name Mr Lynch over in America. He said to the fellas in Australia... he said to them, 'if you want your niggers, ... to obey you and do what they're told, you got to do this and this and this, you got to hang them high', and hang 'em high he did. If one nigger steps out of line he got hung in front of everybody else and that was the dominant power to keep the blackfella down and he told the fellas here in Australia to do the same..., it was the power... to keep them down, have them in fear, we was fearful, I'm still a bit fearful myself.

Mick pointed to the role of fear in disciplining Aboriginal people ('keeping them down'), and expressed that he is still a bit fearful himself. Showing me newspaper articles, Mick recalled how the Justice of the Peace in the town he grew up "...wanted to whip us with the cat of nine tails, us Noongar kids". He went on to comment, "my dad and grandparents... worked for him and made him a multimillionaire... and he wanted to do us a corporal punishment" ("JP seeks right to cane Aborigines", 1967).

Further examples of violence captured in the Elders' storytelling included stories about the experience of racial profiling, control and surveillance, and brutality by the police, including stories of Aboriginal deaths in custody. For example, Frank shared a story about being accused of stealing a car by police officers despite having a good name in the town. Arthur also shared a story of being arrested for stealing a motorbike that he owned. He commented, "I've got to tell you this story", as he shared the story with bemusement. He recalled how the police officer cut off all his hair with blunt scissors explaining, "that's how bad it was that place there" (Referring to Gnowangerup²⁸). He reflected that "it was one of the towns where you wasn't allowed in after six o'clock... Oh it was terrible. Narrogin was very similar". Enid recalled that on the reserve, her family had "a lot of terrible times with police".

We'd be all asleep and they'd come with the big spotlight, you know... like a prison camp and wake us all up... We'd see this bright thing, we'd get up and

28 Gnowangerup Mission was established in 1926 on behalf of the Australian Aborigines' Mission, on a Government Reserve. In 1935, the mission moved to land owned by the Wrights and became the United Aborigines Mission. In 1954, the mission closed and re-opened as an Agricultural High School for Aboriginal boys (Find and Connect, 2011c).

say there's something wrong, but it was the police coming with a big spotlight, you know?

She shared the same story at the storytelling workshop, emphasising that they would “make sure they went through every house you know”.

In the example below, Enid further described the experience of police brutality suffered by Aboriginal men, who were powerless against such brutality.

They used to show us a blank paper and say, ‘oh here this is the warrant’ but nothing written on that, but they had that power you know... It sort of give us that feeling scared-ness you know... They used to have padded cells and all unna? Take our men and belt them up, break their jaws, they'd send them out, ‘we'll let you out if you don't say nothing’, you know.

In a story told by Frank and Caroline about a relative who died in custody following an asthma attack, Frank said, “She wanted her gun (i.e., Asthma pump) and they just wouldn't listen to her”. Caroline commented, “She was only in there for fines”. Frank said, “60 dollars. Her life was gone for 60 dollars”.

Exploitation and exclusion: “They couldn’t do without the Noongars”.

The Elders also often shared stories of economic exploitation and exclusion, legitimised through the ideology of white supremacy, race and racism, and facilitated by the production of fear through violence and/or the threat of violence. In the excerpt below, Enid highlighted how the creation of fear was central to the exploitation of Aboriginal labour, which the white farmers depended upon.

The farmers wanted, they couldn’t do without the Noongars, it’s like the African slaves you know, did the work for the white people. That’s how they were collecting them here to do their work. They come over as poor farmers, yet these Noongars were just had a fear of a white person over them, they did

whatever they could. 'Cause you could see in the history, those men were healthy people who were chained around the neck and you know it must have been horrible if they wanted to go to toilet unna?

Enid thus communicated how the accumulation of privilege for white settlers has depended upon the dispossession and exploitation of Aboriginal people. This exploitation was driven by white supremacist ideology and often involved the use of physical violence. As highlighted by Enid, such brutal treatment contributed to the demise of Aboriginal people who she said were once healthy people.

Showing up the exploitation of Aboriginal people historically, Elders often spoke of the work Noongar people have done clearing the land (Haebich, 2000). For example, Enid commented,

We got chunked off the r... farms then. But I mean they did a lot of dirty work, they did a lot of poison pulling, they did a lot of clearing, unna. They did a lot of um burning up you know.

The Elders told how the farmers depended upon the menial work of Noongar labourers who were often paid only in rations and lived in camps on the fringes of towns or on farmer's properties until the farmers did not need them anymore²⁹ (Haebich, 2000).

In the excerpt below Frank shared his memories of his parents receiving rations for the work they did, emphasising that Aboriginal people were not permitted to handle their own money.

I never been to school properly but I, I knew what, what we was going through, you know 'cause, how our mothers was living and fathers, living on

29 From 1968, Aboriginal pastoral workers were entitled to equal pay, which resulted in the eviction of whole communities from pastoral stations (HREOC, 1997). Aboriginal people settled on the fringes of towns, living in conditions of dire poverty.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

sugar, sugar, tea and flour...and yeah and you know that's all they used to give them, they never paid him out or nothing. And if we wanted to get clothes, we had to get a letter off the boss ... it's like a voucher you know... you just go down and get clothes and that, and he paid for it. Like our family wasn't, couldn't handle their own money you know.

As discussed by Haebich (2000), under the 1905 Act Noongar people were excluded from towns and their movement was strictly controlled yet they provided a pool of seasonal labour for farmers. Exploitation and exclusion were thus enacted simultaneously— at the same time as they were being exploited for their labour they were marginalised or excluded from towns. In describing exploitation, one of the five faces of oppression, Young (1990) noted that the “energies of the have-nots are continuously expended to maintain and augment the power, status, and health of the haves” (p. 39). This was very much evident in the Elders collective remembering.

Elders explained that when the farmers were “done with the Noongars” (Mick), all the Noongars then moved onto reserves on the fringes of towns.

...kicked them off the land and that's when we all headed back into town into Pingelly and um at that time, there was no reserve houses up on the reserve but when all the Noongars started coming back in there, then they seen the sense that they had to put houses up, corrugated houses, tins and cement floor. Two bedroom one kitchen, all for the families who was lucky enough to get one (Mick).

The opening of these houses on the reserve was documented in one of the newspaper articles that Mick brought with him. This article discussed the “excitement among the Pingelly native population” as “Houses officially opened” (“Houses Officially Opened”, 1966, p. 7). As reported in the article, “we trust native families

selected for these homes will prove themselves worthy citizens, thus paving the way for others to follow their assimilation” (p. 7). Another article from 1967 showed the humpy³⁰ where Mick and his family lived, and highlighted the shortage of housing and the poor conditions on the reserve (e.g., “Native housing”, 1953). He and his brother stayed in a broken down old car in the front of his families tin humpy which had “one little bedroom down the back and then we had floor, not floor, ground we had a little bit of boards on here, on this part, a little fire place, (*laugh*), when you make a fire smoke go right through the place, we got smoked every day”.

Another headline read, “Native boy declared neglected child”. This ‘Native boy’ was Mick (“Boy declared neglected”, 1967). In showing me the article, he commented,

I wanted to get away from Pingelly and all that crap there what was going on... . You know we seen it in the schools, when we was going to school, we seen it when we were out in the communityWe wasn’t allowed to do what we wanted to do, they had all these signs up and this is what they put about me.

This article documented how a 14-year-old ‘native’ was “committed to the care of the Child Welfare Department for 12 months” (“Boy declared neglected”, 1967). As reported in the article, the magistrate had stated that ‘the native boy’ “isn’t helping himself”. Mick commented “so who neglected who there? You know, the government was neglecting us ...and then we get blamed, they get blamed for neglecting and, and then they just put that on you”. Mick commented that the poor conditions on the reserves in those days were kept “hush hush”. Mick explained that he brought these documents in because “this is where it all stems from”. In bringing

30 Many Noongar people lived in makeshift tents or humpies made from iron and hessian bags.

with him a large collection of documents of his history, Mick thus communicated that in order to understand the present we need to understand this history, which remains in the living memories of these Elders today and the collective memory of Aboriginal people.

Stories were also told of how Aboriginal men fought in the war³¹, only to come back and not be allowed in the pubs, or to be counted as citizens in their own country—another example of exploitation and exclusion. Indeed, as part of the storytelling workshop, Revel told how his father came back from the war to find that his children had been taken to a mission. The Elders also often spoke about the curfews that controlled the movement of Noongar people across the state. From 1927-1954, Noongar people were prohibited from entering Perth³² and were restricted from towns after six o'clock (Haebich, 2000). Enid explained how “everyone did their shopping or something early in the day because of those rules, you know they'd rush down, rush back but if you were sick you know after that you couldn't go to E.D” (i.e., Emergency department). Frank described how Aboriginal people could be “picked up just for walking the street, six (i.e., after six o'clock) – three months you in Fremantle (i.e., jail), just for walking the streets!”

Many Elders told how they were born in the bush because if you were Aboriginal “you weren't allowed to go to the hospital, you know, to have babies in the hospital” (Joan). Janet recalled,

Because our old people weren't allowed into hospitals almost the whole area of the great southern, they weren't allowed to have their babies in hospitals

31 The speaker did not specify the war that they were referring to. As noted by SWALSC (2017g), “Aboriginal Australians fought in the second Boer War (1899-1902) through two World Wars and in the Vietnam war” (para. 1).

32 See prohibited areas map: <http://www.noongarculture.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/ProhibitedMAP-final-new.pdf> (SWALSC, 2017h).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

and that and most of them had their babies home... There was some good doctors, but the, because the councils and the Shires controlled the hospitals and that, a lot of our babies weren't allowed to be born in the hospitals.

Arthur who was born in 1941, said,

Places like Gnowangerup, where I was born, ... if a doctor did take you, you'd be on the veranda. You wouldn't be inside of a ward. You'd be out on the veranda having a baby you know, if any lady was having a baby.

Mick who was born in 1952 said,

I was born at Pingelly hospital but, but back in those days, we was born at the back of the hospital, it wasn't in the main place.... Segregated, where the Morgue was... so Noongars was born at the back there, at the morgue and then after that... they take us into the mainstream (*laugh*).

Enid, who was born in the bush, commented that, "Noongars used to lay on the veranda and people didn't believe that". She went on to explain, "they weren't allowed inside. If they came to the hospital I think they had to come through the back unna?" This was the same hospital where Enid currently works. These memories and stories further show the exclusion of Aboriginal people who were considered to be too 'uncivilised' to be sharing a hospital with white people (Haebich, 2000), and how these stories remain in the collective memory of Aboriginal people.

Several of the Elders shared memories of some good white doctors, one who was named Doctor Jacobs who was a 'protector' of Aboriginal people³³: "he was a good doctor; he was a protector or Aboriginals he was" (Enid). Joan also spoke about Doctor Jacobs: "You weren't allowed to go to the hospital you know to have babies in

33 I was able to locate a letter to the Editor from Dr. Jacobs who was advocating for Noongar people to be allowed in the hospital so that they are provided with the same level of care (Jacobs, 1951).

the hospital, Doctor Jacob came there, that was about when the war was on and that changed everything then”.

Similarly, participants spoke about how “Aboriginal children, people weren’t allowed to get education in those days” (Joan), or were unable to “go to school properly” (Frank) because their parents moved around for seasonal work (see Haebich, 2000). Matthew, who was born in 1928, said “We didn’t go to school much ‘cause we, you know... white people were against Noongars going to school”. Joan, who was born in 1929 shared that her and her brothers were the only Noongar kids at the small bush school she went to from ten to sixteen. She was able to go to school because her father had asked permission from the teacher who allowed it, thus highlighting the power white people had to control the lives of Aboriginal people³⁴. Joan recalled how “a lot of people, like the farmers, like a lot of the racist ones would say no they don’t want the Aboriginal kids in the school”. As discussed by Haebich (2000), in the Wheatbelt, the poverty of Aboriginal people and their increasing proximity “aroused fear of physical and moral contagion amongst whites” (p. 252) and “provoked demands for their complete removal” (p. 252). In several towns in the Wheatbelt, white families protested and had Aboriginal children removed from schools (e.g., Katanning in 1912, Quairading in 1914). Haebich (2000) discussed the dilemma faced by Aboriginal families, whose children were excluded from most state schools, yet they “were required by law to send them to school or face the threat of them being removed” (p. 185; see also Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission [HREOC], 1997). Frank shared how, because his parents were moving all the time for work, “we couldn’t even go to school properly, so that’s when they...

34 As discussed by Haebich (2000), the *Education Act 1893* (WA) “allowed the Minister for Education to exclude children whose presence was deemed to be ‘injurious’ to the health, welfare and morality of other children” (p. 252).

come and picked us up, the police, and took us to Wandering mission and put us there”.

Arthur said, “I only went to two years school... I started when I was 12 and knocked off when I was 14... That’s how much school I had (*laugh*). ‘Cause ... we used to move around from work, from farm to farm, and some of them farms years ago, they was too far from the school bus stops”. Others spoke about how they were able to go to school but described the racism they experienced at school because of “the black and white situation...there was a lot of fights at the school, black and whites used to fight” (Mick). Speaking to students at the storytelling workshop, Enid said,

went to school, went to school raggedy, ... I went to school anyhow but I got some sort of education. We were made fun of you know, we was called niggers, we was called black people, dirty people whatever you like, we all came through it.

Fragmenting families and communities: “We weren’t allowed to be a family”. The deliberate fragmentation of families and communities was also captured in the Elders’ storytelling and was particularly prominent as Elders shared stories of being taken from their families and placed in missions. For example, Enid spoke about life on the reserve before being taken to Wandering mission. One of the stories she shared highlighted how the ideology of racial superiority and the project of eugenics reflected in classificatory practices (i.e., ‘Full blood’, ‘half caste’, ‘quadroon’, ‘octoroon’) meant that her own grandfather was not allowed on the reserve “with his family... ‘cause we were darker than him, but he was still our grandfather”.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

That was a reserve and, my granddad stayed on top of the hill there and 'cause he was classified as a white man and he was a white man so my grandmother stayed with him, she was allowed on the reserve but he wasn't, so if we needed to take him wood or water or collect wood for him, we'd go up to him instead of him walking down to us to get picked up by police or... 'cause we were darker than him, but he was still our grandfather.

She went on to explain that "if he had been found in the, not a house, a shack, tin shack, if he had been found in there, he'd most probably have been jailed or fined... We loved him very much". As noted by Harris, Carlson, and Poata-Smith (2013), "Racialisation and the practice of creating and imbuing racial categories with seemingly impermeable boundaries and indestructible meanings has...underpinned a range of colonial practices" (p. 1). This example highlights the institutionalisation of racism in the 1905 Act (WA), and the impacts for families, which had the effect of fragmenting families and communities (Haebich, 2000; HREOC, 1997).

Another story Enid shared was about an incident where a relative, who "was fair with blue eyes and blonde hair and couldn't be any whiter", was confronted by someone about being on the reserve. As told by Enid, this person shouted, "'what are you doing here, you're a white woman?' She said 'I'm not a white woman, my mother's black woman, that's my mum there', grandmother like". Enid described how angry the man was that a white woman could be with Aboriginal people and how hurtful this was to her.

Oh he was that angry, and it hurt us you know that someone come and shows our family up like that you know... you know, she was our family, we didn't care. We didn't look at the colour of her eyes or to what she was. We just knew that she was blood relation.

It was not the colour of skin, eyes, or hair that mattered to Enid: she emphasised they were still “blood relation”. Ideas about who is and who is not authentically ‘Aboriginal’ based on phenotypic traits, as well as “expectations of Indigenous cultural purity or environmental naturalness”, continue to pervade Australian cultural politics (Harris et al., 2013, p. 1). Such expectations ignore the complexities of identity for Aboriginal people, and marginalise and dismiss a significant number of Indigenous people “as contaminated, impure and inauthentic” (Harris et al., 2013, p. 2). Indigenous identity is relational, contextual, and fluid, “a process of becoming rather than being” (Harris et al., 2013, p. 5; see also Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989; Dudgeon, Mallard, Oxenham, & Fielder, 2002; Paradies, 2006).

Some of the stories shared mentioned the native citizenship certificates³⁵, which different authors have discussed as further fragmenting Aboriginal families and communities (Haebich, 2000). For example, Wendy said,

Mum was still under the welfare because the father was an octoroon, classed as an octoroon so he was 1/8 of an Aboriginal and the mother was Aboriginal so she could not go into the pub without her citizen rights (i.e., certificate), so that’s, I remember that as a child.

Recipients of these certificates were required to renounce their Aboriginal identity and thus relinquish ties with others not exempt from the restrictions imposed by the *Aborigines Act 1905* (WA) (Haebich, 2000).

Memories of being taken: “We were bewildered because where was our family?”. The fragmentation of families and communities was most profoundly

35 The *Native (Citizenship Rights) Act 1944* (WA) “required Aboriginal people to sever all ties with their extended family and to demonstrate they had ‘adopted the manner and habits of civilised life’ for at least two years to gain ‘full rights of citizenship’”. Citizenship, once granted, could be revoked if ‘civilised life’ was not maintained. The Act was repealed by the *Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act Repeal Act 1971*” (Find and Connect, 2011a, para. 1).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

captured in some of the Elders' stories of being forcibly removed from their families. Many of the Elders and/or their children and/or parents, were members of the Stolen Generations. Elders' stories were seemingly more nuanced when they spoke about the fragmentation of families and community through policies of child removal. This was in part because they were narrating their own personal biographies. Highlighting the extent of child removal, Caroline stated, "...every family was affected. Every one of our extended family and immediate family right through was affected by being in a mission". Some managed to escape this fate, but lived with the ever-present threat of being taken (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017; Haebich, 2000; HREOC, 1997).

The suffering caused by child removal was evident throughout the storytelling. As part of the intergenerational storytelling workshop, Frank shared the following:

When we finally got there, and we met these nuns, they was all in black, and we didn't know what was going on 'cause it was the first time we ever been out there and seen these people dressed up like that. We thought we was in space (*laugh*). And ah, we finally got settled in there but we wasn't so happy. We did a lot of, we did a lot of thinking and crying and that and 'cause it was a bit hard for us to ah cope with what's been going on, being taken away from our parents. They wasn't there to see us be taken. The police and the welfare, they threw us in the back of the ute, truck and away we went.

In an interview, he said, "we did have, you know, heartache for our parents 'cause we knew we were missing them all... you know we was lost".

Frank recalled the pain of seeing the suffering of his mother who just wanted her children to be with her.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

But Mum come out there and she really, she really went off and she was just crying and bashing herself on the ground and so they rang the police to get her off the property. So that's really hurt us 'cause you know, see our mother taken away by the police and she really wanted us to be with her... We was taken away by force ... that's why we called the Stolen Generation, 'cause we shouldn't have went out there 'cause we never learnt nothing. We wasn't getting the right education 'cause we was out there stuck.

Caroline also shared her story of being taken to the mission and the suffering this caused to her and her parents.

I didn't feel like um, that we should be taken away from our parents. I was feeling pretty bad to be taken from my mum and dad. I just cried non-stop... I knew that I wasn't with my and dad, and I just cried, cried, cried so much, *(pause)* for them.

Caroline said,

It's more important; we should be with our parents because they're the only ones that gave us life. No one else, but now the white people took the life away from us, they took us from our parents and that's really wrong.

Caroline stressed that taking an Aboriginal child away from their parent's means that their parents are not there to protect them spiritually (see L. Collard, 2008), as captured in the extract below.

I was haunted by a big, big um spirit dog. He come to my bed. He jumped on my chest, like he was alive, breathing on my chest and I can't squeal, I was paralysed and this is it—when we, Aboriginal kids are away from our parents we can easily be attacked by different things, spiritually and that. So it was a

terrible thing to leave our parents 'cause they was protecting us and helping us through the night and that.

Enid shared her story of being taken from the reserve and emphasised that they had never been in a nice bus before, and so they just climbed in. This is a familiar story for members of the Stolen Generations (e.g., CAN, 2014c, p. 10).

We were playing hopscotch on the reserve one day, and I didn't know why this green bus pulled up... He was the boss of us Noongars in Narrogin, he told us where to go, in the mission, and we were just looking at dad, you know we thought he was joking. We didn't have a good ride in a good bus or something so we just climb in, you know, with another family and they took us to this mission at Wandering, Wandering mission, one of the coldest places in WA, and ah you know we were bewildered because where was our family?... When they shoved us in, you look back, I just watch dad go from a man to a little ant, you know, just watching him, become distant, 'what's happening to us dad?' Anyhow we just looked around you know got further in the bush, we didn't know any surroundings or anything... We were just taken to this mission, and separated from the reserve there, and when we got to the mission we were separated from our brothers.

Enid described the sadness she felt for her father who despite being their father, had no authority over what happened to his children.

That he had no say what happened to us, you know like he was our father and like he had no authority over us. These white people had the authority, you know, 'we taking your kids Jack, don't care how you feel', you know whether it kills you or whatever, you know or the loneliness.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Enid's comment also highlights the heartbreak and grief caused by these policies (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017; Babidge, 2016; Shaw, 2012).

Speaking with a small group of students as part of the intergenerational storytelling workshop, Caroline further emphasised that they were taken against their will: Aboriginal people had no authority over their own lives:

If I turned back time, what I want to change is the way that our Aboriginal people were treated. If there weren't any government policy set upon Aboriginal people to be taken away from their parents and put in homes, that was the government policy, that they segregate Aboriginal people and take the children's, put the children's where they can get educated and an upbringing away from the parents. But they thought they were doing a good job but some could be good for some, but for some, bad for some you know? But I find that our people that were put into the situation against our will you know, we was put away in a mission against our will. It wasn't our idea. It wasn't our parent's idea, it wasn't our grandparent's idea; it was the government's idea.

Further highlighting the authority afforded to white people and institutions, Enid spoke of how her brothers ran away from the mission but how the welfare took them back: "My sister nearly fainted when she seen 'em, and she cried she begged the welfare to let us have 'em you know, she cried 'cause they still had that control, they still bosses you know. They were the big shots".

Dispossessed of family and childhood: "Not allowed to be a family". The dispossession of Aboriginal people of their family and childhood was emphasised throughout the Elders' storytelling. Caroline described what life was like in the mission as part of the intergenerational storytelling workshop.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Um, typical, yeah, it's pretty typical anywhere else when you're with your families, but ours was totally different. We was with mobs of other kids and in dormitories and that and um, same thing, we have to get up in the morning to attend school, we have to get ready and everything like that. But not one or two of us would go on to school there was a big mob of us coming from the dormitory to go to school...

Like others, Enid emphasised the loneliness of the mission: "you know, the separation was horrible, the loneliness from your family, dreaming about them in the night, wishing they were there, tears falling on your pillows". Caroline also expressed the sense of loss associated with being dispossessed of family.

While we was in the missions we weren't to know and bond with our sisters and brothers, ...we just had to make do, with all each other as family, but my own sisters and brothers, I missed out because we didn't really know them and bonded with them as we should because the situation in life we were put into because of superior people, were in government who segregated Aboriginal people...

Caroline described the subtle way they "breakdown the family barrier".

They practiced it like without – you sort of noticing, the way they treat you that you're not allowed to be near your sister or brother, not have a bond, not allowed to be a family, which he (i.e., Frank) recognises himself there. He's been in a mission. So it's been all over the place.

For Caroline, while "It wasn't an isolated lonely life, ... it wasn't loving as it should be, bonding. To be back with your parents is a better life 'cause that's where you came from and that's where you should be". Captured in one of the digitally recorded Bush Baby stories, Frank shared the following:

We couldn't see our sisters 'cause that was, that was a rule they had, we wasn't allowed to see our sisters and cousins or wasn't allowed to talk to 'em but we used to sit in the same dormitory, and have breakfast, dinner and tea, but we wasn't allowed to talk to them or nothing. We used to all stand in the same line. They was in one line, and the girls in one line, and we just look at 'em and smile at 'em, that's all, that's how it was. We couldn't talk to them or nothing, or we couldn't sit and have breakfast with 'em, you know, and we was in the same mission! That's what really hurt me 'cause and I was asking them, I asked the father why we couldn't like meet with our sisters and cousins. 'No' he said, 'you can't, that's the rules'. So we just had to go by the rules.

Caroline and Enid similarly emphasised that even though they were in the same mission they were not allowed to play with their brothers and sisters: "Even though we was in the same building, just a part of the crowd, you know part of the mission kids. We sort of like wasn't allowed to bond" (Caroline). Enid commented how they "weren't allowed to play with our brothers. We used to wave to 'em". As an older sister, it was also evident in her storytelling, the sense of duty she felt in protecting her brothers from harm, but the impossibility of doing this given their situation.

I was crying too because I didn't want my brother to leave, 'cause at home I'd carry him around on my hip, or playing with 'em you know, playing together, we belonged to one another, and um there we was separated.

Their storytelling showed how they were dispossessed of their childhood and a loving family in the mission. Enid said "you never had a family night, we never had family sit together with my brothers at the table, it sort of, you know, no loving".

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Many of the Elders remembered the punishments at the mission, and how strict the priests and nuns were, emphasising that it was not the loving environment that they were used to at home with their parents and extended families. For example, Enid spoke about the exploitation of children, who did “all the dirty work” in missions. Frank described how “They put us straight into working, picking stones and mallee roots and milking cows five o'clock in the morning—we had to do every day”.

They started to give us jobs, working around the farm and that and we was only young, we was only kids. It was very hard, to do all the work we was doing ... you knew we used to go out and work, getting up at five in the morning. Milking cows you know, we was only little blokes (Frank).

Enid described how she had to leave the mission at 16 for work, emphasising that “they never even give me chance to have a little time with my brothers... yeah ‘cause that’s the time the endowment³⁶ stopped I suppose”. Caroline similarly commented on the lack of care shown when they were let out of the mission.

They let us kids all out without any help with our parents, to think that we are right, that we got things that we need and to continue on but they just dumped us there at our door, didn’t care less. We had to make, make things work amongst our family, even though mum and dad was finding it hard to make ends meet.

Frank told how he and his brother had to sleep in the bush once they were 15 to work on farmer’s property, and how scared he was. He often commented on the

36 Child Endowment was a universal allowance introduced by the Commonwealth government in 1941 (*The Child Endowment Act 1941*). A sum of 5 shillings per week was paid for each child under the age of 16 years, directly to the mother. Under the original legislation, child endowment could not be paid to children living in institutions run by the State or Commonwealth government. The act was amended in 1942, and child endowment payments were made available to government-run institutions, and to Aboriginal children living on missions (Find and Connect, 2011b).

lack of concern that was shown for their welfare, expressing that they should have made sure they had somewhere to live.

That's how they treated us you know, we was banned from the towns and when we went to the mission the sisters and brothers (i.e., nuns and priests) treated us bad there, 'cause when they got us the job, they should have had, made sure we had a place to live. If the farmer didn't have anything there they could've, we could've still stopped at the mission— it was only about three kilometres away from the mission.

He contrasted this lack of concern for them once they left the mission to work for farmers, with the floggings he received when he ran away from the mission as a child.

Never come to seen us or nothing. We thought the welfare would come, but they didn't. We runned away three times but they took us back, took us back to the mission and flogged us and old father he was the worst. He was very strict.

The Elders' stories of being in the mission thus troubled the notion that it was 'for their own good' (Haebich, 1988), as they emphasised the fact that they did not learn anything on the mission. Instead, they were put to work, and once they turned 15 or 16 they were kicked out and sent to work with no apparent concern for their welfare. These stories of the Stolen Generations thus show not only the fragmentation of family, but also captured the other mechanisms of control including exploitation, violence, and racism.

Dispossessed of culture: “We weren't allowed to learn no Noongar culture”. Elders also discussed how because of assimilationist policies, they and the

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

generations before them “weren’t allowed to learn no Noongar culture” (Caroline). As articulated by Caroline,

Like when we were growing up with our parents, we wasn’t allowed to be told anything about their life, their culture... ‘Cause we were supposed to adapt to white people’s lives you know. We weren’t allowed to learn no Noongar culture, no Aboriginal culture so if they tell us about it, they may be better off just telling other people around, you know but not us...

Revel commented that “when our parents used to talk Noongar way the ... people around government they’d put ‘em in jail and chuck the woman’s and all, they chuck ‘em all in jail, to stop them talking Noongar way”. Because of this, it is “very hard to talk Noongar way”.

Mick also pointed to the dispossession of culture and language across generations. In the excerpt below Mick explained how he “never seen ‘em do anything cultural”.

Mick: Only going hunting and that you know, but nothing spectacular or whatever...they might have done it when they were younger but

Interviewer: Did they tell you stories and stuff or, or?

Mick: No grandfather never, never said anything about

Interviewer: So is that from the disruption?

Mick: It’s from the disruption because they took him away when he was a young boy, he never (*laugh*), he must have never learnt nothing.

Further highlighting the way Aboriginal people and culture were constructed as inferior, Mick reflected upon how famous Aboriginal footballers such as Polly Farmer and other successful sportspeople were told to deny their Aboriginality: “the white people said to him, don’t tell anyone you’re Aboriginal”. This reflected the

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

ideology of white supremacy, which constructed Aboriginal culture as inferior and something to be systematically and forcefully eradicated through assimilation. As commented by Mick, “everything’s set in the, in the British way, all the rules that’s been put there, that’s how it is”.

Elders spoke of how they were also dispossessed of their culture and language by being in a mission, or because their parents were taken to a mission. For example, Enid described how they were not allowed to speak Noongar language and relayed a story about Noongar cultural beliefs being ridiculed by the priests.

Enid: Language was a taboo thing, weren’t allowed to talk that. ...one of the priests killed a carpet snake, you know ‘cause we all told how the carpet snake was a good thing or something... He said, “here's your god here” ... We was scared ‘cause... with the Noongars there is a story behind the carpet snake... I mean it mightn’t have meant much to the little kids, but us big kids who knew a bit, knew that it was um

Interviewer: It was disrespectful?

Enid: Yeah disrespectful.

Enid told how “we was baptised... communion and things like that. We were all these little white angels, little black fellas in white” (*laughing*).

In the excerpt below Enid points to the loss of cultural knowledge brought about by the separation of children from their families.

If we was home Grandparents could be telling us stories about the bush or something but um we all had duties, we all had little girls, instead of playing with dolls, they was washing up spoons and forks and the other lot would be cleaning dormitories and other lot would be washing big pans.

Summary. The mechanisms identified in the narrative ‘Life was put on us’ worked together, and have their roots in the construction of an inferior and superior race, which was central to colonisation and Aboriginal dispossession (Quijano, 2000; Teo, 2005). The Elders were drawing on collective memory of Aboriginal suffering as well as their own living memories, including of being removed from their families as part of the Stolen Generations. In the next section, I present the community narrative, “It’s still going on”, which highlights the continuity of structural, cultural, and interpersonal violence in the everyday lives of Aboriginal people.

Narrating the Continuity of Oppression: “It’s Still Going on”

In their storytelling, the Elders’ named the continued experience of structural, cultural, and interpersonal forms of violence in the everyday lives of Aboriginal people. The community narrative, ‘It’s still going on’ articulated the continuity of power and control over their lives—the fact that they are “still underneath” (Mick).

Structural violence: “We’ve still got nothing”. Throughout their storytelling, Elders emphasised the continued experience of entrenched disadvantage and inequity, which they understood as reflective of ongoing forms of structural violence. As expressed by Mick, “a lot of it’s still going on, because we still below”. For Mick, “when you go back to the past, way back, and you come up to the future, we’re still underneath”. Similarly, Caroline emphasised that Aboriginal people have still “got nothing” and are “still controlled”.

We’re still – our life is still struggling. We’re still trying to establish ourselves... Never got near the establishin’ side of our life yet. We’re still – There’s no freedom there. We’re still controlled, you know, well there’s

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Homeswest³⁷, Government, Prime Ministers, Government, all different people of authority has control of us, you know, 'cause we got nothing. We'll never have nothing.

Mick highlighted the continuing disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal lives:

You look around and you see all these other big flash things all going up every day yet we still got nothing. Still got nothing (*laugh*), richest country in the world yet we're still living back in the 60s, you might say, still got nothing.

He continued, questioning where all the money that is supposedly directed at Aboriginal communities goes.

Every government come in and go out and still nothing done... they might say they put a lot of money, but where? I don't know where all the money goes. Don't go to the Noongars, ground, grassroots ones, to the community... doesn't go to the community.

Mick emphasised the importance of Aboriginal self-determination, specifically of people being in control of their own money. In the excerpt below, he likens the situation to "getting rations all over again".

Mick: But myself, I wanted to set up our own trust fund um you know?

Interviewer: Have control over it?

Mick: Have our own things, so don't have to go to other people all the time, it's just like getting rations all over again, like you're begging, begging for your own money.

37 Caroline is referring to the Housing Authority, which is the major provider of affordable land and housing in Western Australia.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Pointing to the continued experience of being condemned, of having no chance “because you're a different colour”, Mick highlighted the disparities of outcomes in the criminal justice system in the present as a specific example of structural violence, as is reported in the literature (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2012, 2014b; Amnesty International, 2015; Weatherburn, 2014).

The Bush Babies grow up to be big babies, you know and go through all that hardship, all that condemning ya because you're a different colour, you, you finished before you even do anything, when they see your colour, you're finished you've got no chance. Same when you go to court, they see you there, black fellas in front of ya, they'll give you six or 12 months another bloke come along same charge a white fella, he'll get out.

Throughout interviews, a high level of concern was expressed for Aboriginal young people because there's “nothing for them” (Mick), and so there was an identified need to create opportunities for Aboriginal young people. Frank was a strong advocate of turning the old missions into something for the young people (e.g., for training, businesses, and as a meeting place). In particular, there was concern expressed about the high levels of incarceration. Incarceration rates of Aboriginal people in Western Australia are significantly worse than the national picture (Amnesty International, 2015). Between July 2013 and June 2014, Indigenous young people in Western Australia were 53 more likely to be in detention than their non-Indigenous peers (AIHW, 2014b). Indigenous young people represent only 6.4 percent of the population of 10-17 year olds in Western Australia, yet 78 per cent of young people in detention are Indigenous (AIHW, 2014b).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In the excerpt below, Frank explained that Aboriginal young people are now being taken to jails rather than missions. This was a concern expressed by many Noongar people.

That's why all our young kids are getting in jail now, it's sort of gone back ... they all in jail there, some of them are in there for nothing, so that comes from what we have come, been through, we been through it, you know, I did nine and a half in that prison, in convent prison there³⁸, they watched us all the time, you couldn't go outside, couldn't even talk to our sisters, or our cousins, you couldn't talk to other people over the fence.

Frank is referring to being in the mission as like being in prison. He argued that jail represents the new mission, and emphasised that many are in jail “for nothing”. Mick similarly stressed the lack of opportunities for young people and the dispossession of hope for an alternative future (Walter, 2010a) as captured in the following excerpt.

Mick: You look at your kids, and your grandkids and what hope they got? I look at my little boy and I think to myself, there's a cell waiting for ya, you know?

Interviewer: That's really sad, yeah

Mick: Yeah. That's where they'll probably end up, in the, in the jail.

Interviewer: that's the new, that's the cycle?

Mick: Yeah, they are building all the jails for the Noongars, instead of doing something else with the money.

38 Here Frank is referring to Wandering mission as convent prison.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Mick discussed the problem of Aboriginal incarceration, explaining that life is too hard for Aboriginal men on the outside, so many prefer it in prison, again emphasising that “outside they’ve got nothing”.

Mick: See all the boys today in prison, they can’t hack it outside, they'd rather go

Interviewer: It’s easier in there?

Mick: It’s easier in there; they just... outside they got nothing

Interviewer: And it goes back to the disadvantage and the poverty?

Mick: Yeah they go back to that when they come out, when they come out they go, some of them last out for one week or two weeks and then they back in again

Interviewer: Is it because there’s no jobs and stuff for them and?

Mick: Yeah nothing to do for them, that’s what it is...

Interviewer: They feel like they’re not included as part of the society sort of thing?

Mick: Yeah, fringe dwellers...on the fringes because they can’t get into any jobs around where they live in you know, it’s their comfort zone but a lot of them don’t want to leave their families because they stuck close to their families you know.

Here Mick highlighted that there are no jobs available close to where they live (i.e., their 'comfort zones'), and explained that they have families (i.e., young children) and so do not want to move far away to the mining towns for work because they would have to leave their family and this can be disruptive to families.

In discussing the housing situation for Noongar people in Narrogin, Mick highlighted the continuity of segregation, which happens informally.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

That's when they started shifting people into the towns but doing that they also caused, a reserve they moved it from out of town, into town, so they put everyone in the same area, you know, it's just like living on the reserve again. It's the same thing happening now, today. You got black fellas over there all in the one spot, and the black fellas up here all in one spot...*(laughing)* yeah it makes you laugh.

His reflections are reminiscent of discussions of 'white flight' in the context of the United States of America (Kruse, 2005; McCarthy et al., 2004). Mick emphasised how issues of feuding are exacerbated by the fact that the State Housing representatives (i.e., typically non-Indigenous people), do not listen to them and continue to put Noongar families next to other Noongar families, often ones who have volatile relationships.

Mick: ...we have a lot of meetings with HomesWest, you know the State housing people... we say to them, 'don't put Noongars next to Noongars because it's gonna be trouble'

Interview: Why do you think they keep doing it? Is that just where the houses are?

Mick: Well, well actually there are a lot of house goes empty but whether the people up in the power up here, they probably don't want to go against the white the white non-indigenous people to put a house, Noongars in a house next to them, "Ahhhh!"

Interviewer: So you think its non-Indigenous people saying we don't want Noongars next to us?

Mick: Mmm *(in agreement)*, yeah, they'll ring 'em up and tell 'em, they'll say 'no we don't want', you know and then they'll say 'oh we'll put them next to

one another'...all the posh people, up that way, that way all the poshies, and across that side all the poshies.

Mick's frustration at the continued control of Aboriginal people's lives by Government officials is further reflected in the example below where he emphasised that those making the decisions impacting the lives of Aboriginal peoples have no understanding of Aboriginal lived realities.

A lot of these ah government officials they sit in their high rising houses and all that, nothing happening to 'em. They can't see what the um people are going through. If they come down and lived with 'em...if they come and lived with 'em for a week or a month or whatever and then they will see, they will realise, how could you fellas live like this? (*laugh*).

In fact, Mick challenged me during an interview, asking "What about you? ...You come and live with some Noongars, family for a week...I'll put you to the test. Plenty of families here in Narrogin, you could live with us for a week and have a look".

On a similar point, Mick emphasised the importance of land for Aboriginal self-determination, and the continued dispossession of land, stating that Noongar people have "nowhere to go". In this example, he eloquently articulated how Aboriginal dispossession (vs. white privilege) (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009) is accumulated across generations.

Like I say, that's what's missing, land... Land, all we want land, land rights, land, land land. To get Noongars and the people away and do their own thing, do their own business or whatever they want to do, 'cause you look at other families you know, white families, what do they do? ...They got their own farms... they all stay on their own farms hey and their kids all work. And

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

when they die their kids stay there and take over maybe, most of 'em, and it gets handed down, inheritance down, down to the generation and this is what's not happening with us Noongars. We've got nothing to.

Interviewer: you can never get ahead?

Mick: we can never get ahead.

Exemplifying the continuity of structural inequities of employment and opportunity, Caroline asserted that people in this town do not employ Noongar people from this town.

He's (i.e., Frank) been playing footy for Railways that long in this town and there's white blokes here won't employ... none of them employed an Aboriginal, not even any of his, not even him then when he was younger, not even his kids. None of them employed an Aboriginal and they're all his mates.

Caroline connected the lack of employment opportunities with institutionalised racism in the education system (Glover, Dudgeon, & Huygens, 2010). From her view, Aboriginal people are still not being educated properly.

They're not – they wouldn't be properly educated anyways. They won't educate them up there... And that's what I said to my – a couple of Noongar kids who was up there at the school. I said to them, 'Does the teacher look at you when they giving the class, when they teaching in the class?' They said, 'No. They don't look at us', a couple of them said. I said, 'Well, that's why you're not catching on because they're not including in the class. They're not including you as member of the classroom.' You know what I mean? ... That's what's happening now. There are a lot of Aboriginal kids getting nothing. They learn nothing all over Australia. It's the way that they're still being treated.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Captured in the excerpt above is Caroline's concern about Aboriginal children being excluded within the school setting (i.e., in the classroom). This is further captured below.

Caroline: It's just that something, something need to come up where it makes things easily where our children are gonna be recognised throughout the school same as the white child because when my kids was – my younger son was going to school, ... they didn't include him in the learning, him and his cousin was sitting at the back desk in the back of the room ... drawing and that while the wadjelas were doing their work from the blackboard from the teacher.

Interviewer: So do you think there would have been a change now?

Frank: Never change

Caroline: They never learnt. That school never learnt 'em to read or write. Never learnt 'em nothing and yet I was working there and I never questioned them. Oh, I don't know what's wrong with me.

For Caroline, prejudice equates to exclusion and is still a pervasive experience in the lives of Aboriginal people.

Caroline: Well, prejudice is happening. It's a sort of um (*pause*)– you don't – when you're not included in the mainstream of education, employment, ah that's prejudice within itself. That is prejudice. And you know it's not the Aboriginals doing it, it's the white people doing it. That's what you call prejudice there unna? So it's through every town and if they changes that, tell you, now Aboriginal people will be able to be something, be something good, good people.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Caroline often spoke of how Aboriginal people are, and can be good people, who can do good things and make something of their lives if they were given the opportunities.

Once their jobs and education – once the jobs are done and education done, and then the housing, that's all the ground – that's the groundwork. Once that's done, that's when Aboriginal people will start rising up, start proving who they are, really are as human beings... This is all we need... We need the basics to start from first, and if our kids are not getting that in the schools, they're not getting employment.

Caroline thus points to the lack of opportunities and the continuing structural inequities that prevent Aboriginal people from “proving who they are”, and “being something good”. Caroline’s comments suggest that Aboriginal people are excluded from or deprived of “everything...that relate to being a human being”, and thus that they are situated outside the realm of human being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Smith, 2012). Caroline’s comments echo O’Donoghue’s (2003) assertion that being regarded as a problem, is part of a dehumanising process.

Finally, throughout his storytelling Mick emphasised that he and Noongar people more broadly, have been having the same conversations for twenty years but that nothing changes. He spoke about it as being the “same circle, going round and round”.

Mick: It’s a long way off because (*pause*) because different generations coming and going you know and one what people said years ago, they all died and then we done it all over again, so we, you know, we still in that same circle going round and round.

At the end of the interview, he laughed about the amount of research done within Aboriginal communities, but with nothing to show for it.

Symbolic violence “It’s got to be exposed one way or another”. The Elders’ stories also pointed to the continuity of cultural violence, and in particular the silencing and erasures of Aboriginal history and contributions. Mick emphasised the importance of telling about this history stating that its “got to be exposed one way or another... ‘cause a lot of people think that everything’s alright you know, but it’s not”. He problematised the desire for ‘white Australia’ to “leave it buried in the past”. Similarly, Enid, who was speaking about what happened to the First Peoples of Canada (i.e., Indian Residential School system), highlighted the similarities with the policies inflicted on Aboriginal people in Australia, as she transitioned from speaking about what happened to them to speaking about what happened to ‘us’: “they was taken from when they were four years old, and abused, and the priests, people who were supposed to look after us and love us... People say get on with your life but how can you, you know?” Enid, like others, emphasised how non-Aboriginal people “don’t want to listen to us what we been through you know”.

Speaking of how Aboriginal people are constructed as having nostalgia for injustice, or as revelling in their misery, Stan Grant³⁹ (2016) commented in a recent speech,

No, we have no nostalgia for injustice because we have not first had the chance to forget... for us these memories sit deep within our soul. Rather than long for these memories – rather than seek them out to give meaning to my

39 Stan Grant is a journalist of Wiradjuri Aboriginal descent. Grant delivered this speech, ‘From reconciliation to rights: Shaping a bigger Australia’ as part of the Wallace Wurth Lecture 2016. See: <https://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/stan-grant-wallace-wurth-lecture-reconciliation-rights>. This speech followed the Four Corners report (‘Australia’s shame’) into the mistreatment of Aboriginal children at Don Dale.

identity in a perfect world I would wish them away. But what has been done cannot be undone.

What has been seen cannot be unseen.

Indeed the importance of acknowledging this history was emphasised by each of the Elders. Pointing to the perceived wilful ignorance (Alcoff, 2007; Bailey, 2007; Mills, 2007; Sullivan & Tuana, 2007) of a shared and ongoing history of Aboriginal dispossession, Mick discussed how white people do not want to know:

They don't want to come to the party and talk about things and, you know, and get it over and done with once and for all probably, but they don't want to, they don't want it known to anybody about what happened.

Throughout Mick's storytelling he emphasised the problem of 'pussyfootin around history', and the respect he has for those who are "really upfront with everything", reflecting the view that to move forward, we have to know what we are moving from. For example, speaking of a History Professor (i.e., Colin Tatz) who had appeared on National Indigenous Television [NITV] program 'Awaken' (Grant, 2015), Mick commented, "he wasn't pulling any punches either. He was telling it how it was you know". For Mick, this wilful ignorance is a barrier to positive change in terms of improving Aboriginal lives and the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. He went on to explain that while there may be some 'good people', he has never seen them "speaking out against... all the wrongs and all the um unequal stuff".

I mean you get a lot of non-Indigenous people that that ah, good people, and they know a lot of Aboriginal people see, but you never see them get up and tell 'em in the newspaper or on TV about ... speaking out against what the, all the wrongs and all the um unequal stuff.

Here Mick was pointing to the lack of acknowledgement of an ongoing history of dispossession, but also the lack of recognition of Aboriginal contributions in building the state, indeed the nation.

A lot of us Noongar people we work for a lot of wadjela people, and they never stand up and say, 'hang on, no they, they done a lot of hard work for us' ...but I haven't seen anyone yet, stand up and say those things, about the um Aboriginal people, right across the board, right across Australia, I never see 'em stand up and say that.

From Mick's view, they (i.e., white people) are too scared to speak up because if they did they would be thought of and treated like a race traitor or a "nigger lover", in his words.

Probably because they'd be frightened of what that lot gonna say.

Interviewer: Other wadjelas?

Mick: Yeah, ... oh you're a nigger lover... that's what they're frightened for...they'll see you in the street and they'll turn the other way, you know next time, say if it was you, they'll turn the other way and they won't talk to you... They'll say there she is, the nigger lover... So that's a big thing I reckon and it's across the board (*laugh*) ... but it's good to see 'em all walk across that bridge (i.e., the reconciliation walk⁴⁰).

Kessarís (2006) has similarly discussed the treatment of white people who refuse to maintain the status quo in her discussion of covert white racism from an Aboriginal perspective.

40 Mick is referring to the Walk for Reconciliation march in 2000, where 250,000 people walked across Sydney's Harbour Bridge to support reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Another aspect of cultural violence captured in the Elders' storytelling was the silencing of Noongar histories including a history of resistance. For example Mick recalled learning about Captain Cook: "when we used to go to school, they were tellin' us about Caption Cook, all these fellas, explorers that come over here, 'oh they killed the savages', you know, 'made the savages jump'". Mick also discussed the way history is not properly acknowledged, and how Aboriginal suffering is not recognised. He used the example of the memorialising of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) to highlight the way Aboriginal histories and Aboriginal suffering is silenced.

Well, take for instance the um, the white race, Europeans say, now they got, next year, they got um 100 years celebration of the ANZACS, that's in your face... how they, you know how they went over and fought for this country and all that, and the pain and the suffering they went through and they still going through it, their families still going through it, you know they still cry today when they talk about their grandfathers and great grandfathers that went to war and ah. Yet us Noongars been at war here for the last 200 years, you know, with the, with the Governments.... We still crying, we still crying and dying and you know and all the rest of it. We didn't have to go to another country to fight, we was fighting here, we still fighting.

In speaking about the honouring our Elders portrait exhibition, Enid commented, "they (i.e., CAN) starting to put us on the map hey (*laugh*), lining the walls and the halls (*laugh*)", thus highlighting the absences of Aboriginal people from 'the map', and pointing to the silencing and erasures which function to reproduce the colonial power relationship (Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In the example below, Frank and Caroline take issue with the failure of former Prime Minister Tony Abbott to follow Aboriginal cultural protocol.

Frank: But like we'd like to see, that we get help for our people, you know 'cause look look look, at him on white man TV last night, one of them, that bloke, what's his name...?

Caroline: He never properly introduced him to the landowners

Frank: Yeah to the Aboriginal people

Interviewer: Oh, taking Tony Abbott around, yeah

Caroline: They never included the Aboriginal people to welcome the foreigners to their country...they never did do any of that stuff, so the Aboriginal people will be upset about it 'cause, 'cause everything that.

Aboriginal people had, even before the white people came, it was all sacred country, they did all their ceremonial, and they did all their storytelling, you know, they bonded with the land, and what's 'sturbing (i.e., disturbing) it, is bringing foreign people over and not introducing them to the (*pause*) to the real people of the land.

Frank's description of mainstream news as "white man TV" is also telling. Mick also problematised the lack of Aboriginal content in mainstream television: "there's not too much things out there. Oh I don't know even, I don't know if I miss anything, or don't see or whatever... you don't see nothing much on TV really".

Disregard: "We still get looks". Also captured in the community narrative "It's still going on", Elders shared experiences of everyday racism or disregard (Walter, 2010a) in the present, and the way the racial gaze (Fanon, 1952/2008; Hall, 1996) means that Aboriginal, Noongar people often do not feel comfortable or welcome in public spaces, or "wadjela spaces". For example Mick said,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

‘Cause when they go to the white, wadjela things, well they don’t feel, they don’t feel right; they feel like they’re trespassing.... You take this place, up here, the rec (i.e., Recreation) centre, you go there you get all these looks at ya, and you, think you’ve done something wrong or something for just walking in there... like I say you feel like you’re intruding, they give you funny looks.

Given this, Mick emphasised that “not much has changed” in terms of racism.

Not much has changed, it might look good up on the surface but underneath, still the same, ... now like you get older you see, you go to a shop you still get looked at suspiciously. Like you’re going to steal somethin’ or rob somebody, no matter where you go you get that same sort of thing, but then you get a lot of good people too; black white and brindle (*laughs*).

For Mick, “racism’s still going on”, it’s part of “everyday life for us, it’s constant in our face”. Mick explained, “Still a lot of people don’t like us Noongars, they don’t want us to get on and succeed”.

It all goes back to there, to keep the Aboriginal people down, don’t let them get up because probably frightened if too many Noongars get up there and start dictating things I suppose, and you know if they be in the government positions.

When asked about Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations, Enid responded that “some are good and some are bad”. She recalled a recent incident where,

One Noongar girl thought she’d go to (Name of shop) and ask if she could have layby, you know. She seen the wadjela woman in front of her booking it up sort of you know. So she asked if they could do the same to her, they said, ‘no we don’t do’ and that stopped a lot of Noongars going in there, or maybe

could've. I know when she told me I wouldn't go in and ah I wouldn't buy anything from there even now.

There had also been another incident at the local supermarket where a Noongar employee caught other employees speaking about Noongar people in a racist way. Enid explained that they had called Noongar people "Coons". Enid commented that while the supermarket had readvertised a position for Noongar person, "One yarn like that gets around no one wants to be involved". As Enid reflected, "I mean everyone likes a job, but if you feel that, I'm sure, if I feel that sort of feeling...I wouldn't stay there".

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the community narratives that illuminated the history and continuity of the circuits of Aboriginal dispossession. Elders drew on collective memory, as well as their own personal memories and biographies to describe the mechanisms of control that have been central to colonisation and assimilation, particularly under the 1905 Act (WA) which controlled every aspect of Aboriginal lives (Haebich, 1988, 2000; HREOC, 1997). Many of the Elders involved in the project were members of the Stolen Generations, and so stories of loss of family and the forceful erosion of culture were central to this shared community narrative. Significantly however, the Elders interviewed asserted the continuity of unequal power relationships in the present, which makes it difficult if not impossible for Noongar people to move forward. These circuits include structural, cultural, and interpersonal forms of violence.

Chapter 7: Narrating the Psychosocial Consequences of Dispossession

The community narratives outlined in the previous chapter showed Noongar Elders' memories of how 'life was put on [them]' and the ways in which structural, cultural, and interpersonal violence continues to shape and constrain their lifeworlds. The two community narratives together communicated the circuits of dispossession in the lives of Noongar people (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009). As many have highlighted, colonial mechanisms of control were explicitly aimed at destroying the cultural unit, and had the effect of dehumanising Indigenous peoples, fragmenting community, and eroding and erasing Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being in the world (e.g., Atkinson, 2002; Y. Clark, 2000; Dudgeon, Wright, Paradies, Garvey & Walker, 2014; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Haebich, 2000; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission [HREOC], 1997; Krieg, 2009). The impacts for Aboriginal individuals, families, and communities continue to be felt (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017; Atkinson, 2002; Shaw, 2012; Zubrick et al., 2014), and was evident in the Elders' storytelling about their lives as part of the Bush Babies project. The focus of the current chapter is to explicate how Elders narrated the psychosocial consequences of dispossession (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009) for Aboriginal subjectivities, communities, and within families, inter-generationally.

The stories resonated with Shaw's (2012) writing on vulnerability, which he understood as "an affliction of the powerless" (p. 1). Drawing on his own family history as a Noongar man and member of the Stolen Generations, Shaw discussed how Aboriginal people were rendered vulnerable through disempowerment and dispossession. The notion of vulnerability firmly locates the issues facing Aboriginal individuals, families, and communities as arising in conditions of social suffering

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

(Frost & Hoggett, 2008; Kleinman, Das, & Lock, 1997; O'Loughlin & Charles, 2015). This framing of the problem “draws attention to the lived experience of inhabiting social structures of oppression: and the pain that arises from this” (Frost & Hoggett, 2008, p. 441).

In my second interview with Mick, he brought along a folder full of documents that captured part of his life story. In showing me his history, he explained, “this is where it all stems from”. By “it”, Mick was referring to the psychosocial burden of oppression that continues to be carried by Aboriginal people, families, and communities, which makes them vulnerable (Shaw, 2012). This burden was evident in issues of drug and alcohol abuse, suicide, feuding, and incarceration. The harm caused to individual subjectivities, communities, and transferred and accumulated across generations within families, was evident in the Elders’ stories and is collectively discussed within the community narrative labelled, “this is where it all stems from” (Mick). Three aspects of the psychosocial burden of oppression were identified as part of this overall community narrative, as displayed in Figure 7 below.

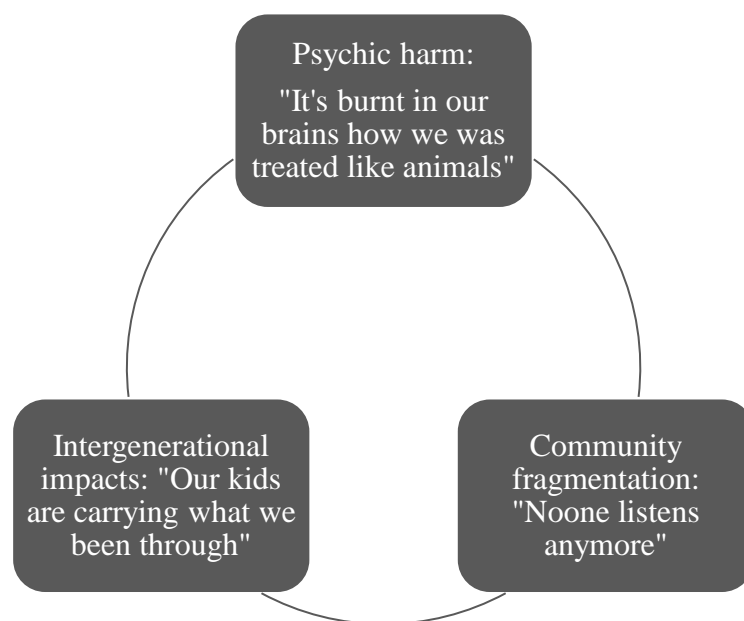


Figure 7. The consequences of dispossession: “This is where it all stems from”

“It’s burnt into our brains, how we was treated, like animals” (Mick), highlights the psychic harm caused to individual subjectivities as a result of whiteness/coloniality which has historically denied the humanity of Aboriginal people, and sought to reduce them as human beings. “No one listens anymore” (Mick), points to the disruptive impact that the dispossession of Aboriginal people of their culture, language, and history reflected at a community level, and the sense of loss associated with this. “Our kids are carrying what we been through” (Caroline) shows the intergenerational nature of this psychic harm across and within Aboriginal families.

Psychic Harm: “It’s burnt in our Brain, how we was Treated, Like Animals”

The Elders’ stories exemplified the need to understand Aboriginal subjectivities as constituted within limit situations where Aboriginal people have been constructed as an inferior other and as outside the realm of humanity (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Moreton-Robinson, 2004). The circuits of dispossession are understood as producing limit situations (Freire, 1970; Martín Baró, 1994), which are historically created “situations of oppression ... where violence and poverty place limits on opportunities and on consciousness itself” (Moane, 2014, p. 118). As noted by Moane (2014), “limit situations shape psychological patterns and reactions including consciousness” (p. 118). This section focuses on exploring how the limit situation produced by historical and ongoing forms violence has shaped Aboriginal subjectivities as captured in the Elders’ storytelling about their lives.

The Elders’ storytelling showed how whiteness/coloniality sought to brand Aboriginal people with inferiority. For example, Caroline reflected on being taken to a mission and the implications for her as a young child.

I was put in a mission and when the authority picked us up, you know, we was too young to understand, but now that we are older the understanding has come more clearly because we were targeted like criminals. That's what's in our minds, we was criminals...

Caroline's comment shows how the systematic, forcible removal of Aboriginal children from their families, legitimised through the labelling and stigmatising of Aboriginal people (Apfelbaum, 1999), impacted upon Aboriginal subjectivities. Caroline expressed how Aboriginal children put in this situation internalised the idea that they were somehow bad: "...that's what's in our minds, we was criminals" (see O'Shane, 1995). She commented however that as she got older she was able to see more clearly how they were "targeted like criminals". Caroline therefore came to problematise (Freire, 1970; Martín-Baró, 1994; Jones, 2014) the internalised messages of Aboriginal inferiority. She located the cause of her and other Aboriginal peoples' suffering in the social context of structural and cultural racism (see Glover, Dudgeon, & Huygens, 2010).

This example points to the process whereby oppression can be internalised but also the possibilities for conscientisation (David, 2014; Fanon, 1952/2008; Freire, 1970; Gonzalez, Simard, Baker-Demaray, & Iron Eyes, 2014; Martín-Baró, 1994). As noted by Jones (2014), "If we refuse to let others define our reality and humanity, capability, and potential, then we need not internalize the negative messages that are delivered routinely in our society and ongoing encounters" (p. 286). Similarly, employing the term appropriated oppression, Tappan (2006) emphasised the need to pay attention to "the pervasive and insidious role that systemic forces, in the form of cultural tools and resources (ideologies, images, stereotypes, scripts, etc.), play in promoting and promulgating both oppression and privilege" (p. 2139). As noted by

Tappan, this conception “gives rise to a measure of hope and a sense that these dynamics, both at the individual level and at the systemic level, can be changed, made different” (p. 2139). This is evident in Caroline’s experience where as she got older she began to problematise racist ideology, and the demeaning images, stereotypes, scripts that go with it. Thus while oppression can have “real and powerful personal and experiential consequences” (Tappan, 2006, p. 2138-2139), the appropriation of oppression is not inevitable or automatic (this will be further explored in Chapter Eight).

Significantly, Caroline was concerned with ensuring that the Aboriginal students understood that they were not less than: that they do not appropriate the damaging social scripts and images. For example, as part of the storytelling workshop, she said,

... but we not to think that we are a lower in that system, we got to do something to show that we are not evil, we got something to offer our people,... . Don't care about the colour of your skin—don't let that be in your way, because you're a human being.

She was telling the Aboriginal students that they are human beings, they have something to offer, and they are not less than white people. In so doing, she is pointing to the psychic harm of the ideology of white supremacy with its demeaning images, stereotypes, and scripts (Gonzalez et al., 2014) that sought to burn inferiority into their brains and to rob them of their dignity and pride in belonging as a people and a culture. Indicative of the negation of dignity and justice for Aboriginal people, Caroline emphasised the need to “get people in there and show that they're part of the people, part of the town, part of everything in – that – relate to being a human being”. Caroline therefore recognised the importance of contesting damaging stories of

Aboriginal inferiority that continue to pervade the Australian cultural landscape, and which these young people are exposed to.

Mick described the psychic harm of oppression using the words “branded”, “burnt”, and “locked in our brains”, and referred to how Aboriginal people have been treated “like animals”.

Mick: Yeah I thought to myself you⁴¹ wouldn’t have a clue to live in a black man’s shoe, you know shoes, walking their footsteps, or whatever, you wouldn’t have a clue to know what it’s like lookin’ at it from our side of the fence. It wouldn’t even enter their brains like its locked in our brains you know, it got burnt in our brain, you might say, we got branded on our brains, how we was

Interviewer: And it’s still?

Mick: It’s still there, you know how we was treated, like animals, you might say.

Mick’s comment further highlights the need to understand the constitution of Aboriginal subjectivities within a context of coloniality where Aboriginal people have been relegated a sub-human status—where the cultural tools (Tappan, 2006) available for appropriation are psychologically damaging to Aboriginal subjectivities (Atkinson 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2014). The psychic harm, the branding, is thus caused by the cultural tools of white supremacy that have sought to rob him of his dignity, his humanity. As discussed in some of the writing on internalised oppression, “One of the most destructive and insidious consequences of colonialism happens when the colonized begin to think, feel, and act like the colonizer” (Gonzalez et al., 2014, p.

41 Mick was referring to a white man in a suit who was giving a speech at the official launch of the Honouring our Elders’ Portrait exhibition in Perth, emphasising the significance of such work for reconciliation.

32), that is, when the oppressed buy “into the negative stories we have been told about ourselves since childhood” (p. 33). Importantly, both Mick and Caroline were not buying into this story but actively resisting it in their storytelling. While both Mick and Caroline problematise these stock stories of Aboriginal inferiority, the branding, the dehumanising treatment remains “locked in” their brains, and the collective memory of Aboriginal people.

In the excerpt below, Mick further discussed the psychic harm of living every day under relations of domination, emphasising the continuity of Aboriginal suffering in the present.

Mick: We might look all civilized and ah everything seems to be going alright but when you get down to... when you live it every day, then you'll know what I'm talking about...yeah 'cause your brain, never been to that place before so you can't, you know, bring yourself to get that, to see, or get that feeling of how, what I feel, unless you been there and done it, really.

Interviewer: So does it feel like you're carrying a big heavy burden?

Mick: Oh, we well I been carrying a heavy burden for years. ... I used to think to myself why are we in this old tent here and the wadjelas up there in their lovely houses, with the fire going and you know, in luxury?

Made evident in this narrative, is the everyday stress of being Aboriginal in Australia—the crushing weight of colonial violence (Bulhan, 1985; Fanon, 1952/2008), which continues to be felt despite assumptions that “everything seems to be going alright”—that is, the myth of decolonisation (Grosfuguel, 2007). Drawing attention to “what those without power endure: to abjection, and to the nature of the ‘self as object’ (Hoggett, 2001)” (Frost & Hoggett, 2008, p. 441), Mick emphasised the impossibility of non-Aboriginal people genuinely understanding what Aboriginal

people have been through, and what life is like as an Aboriginal person. Mick explained this heavy burden he has been carrying, specifically in relation to seeing the disparity of Aboriginal/Noongar and non-Indigenous lives, with the accumulation of dispossession on one side and the accumulation of privilege on the other (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009).

In some of the digital stories, participants spoke about when they first came to recognise that Aboriginal people were treated differently. Through these stories, they were sharing memories of differential treatment, and of being labelled and stigmatised as young children (Apfelbaum, 1999). These are memories that stay with them, or as described by Mick, are “burnt in [their] brain”. The following is taken from a digital story shared by Wendy.

For some reason you know I go I remember when I was in grade one and I don't know if you guys do but I do, and um so you're talking early 70s, um knowing that Aboriginal people were treated differently, some were taken out because they needed to get their hair checked and treated for lice, that was something that stayed with me, um and maybe scabies too.

Geraldine shared how when she found out that Aboriginal women were not permitted to give birth in hospitals, this made her feel “funny”. She began to reflect on other experiences growing up that she had not necessarily understood at the time. She told a story about not understanding why her brothers always made her sit at the back of the bus. These are stories and memories of inferiorisation, which remain in the collective memory of Aboriginal people, and inform the constitution of Aboriginal subjectivities in the present.

Further illustrative of the damaging impacts of oppression for subjectivities, Elders' spoke about how the circuits of Aboriginal dispossession, and specifically the

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

policies of child removal, broke people's spirits and often lead to issues of alcoholism and suicide. Enid commented, for example, "a lot of them were sent to drink, you know what happened to them, and some committed suicide". Enid described how her brother, who she said was poorly treated at Wandering Mission, was "sent to drink" and died at the age of 27. Frank commented, "all the kids I been in the mission with, they all gone, there is only a few left, they all died because alcohol and stuff". Caroline explained, "See, well, all the mission kids, when they come out, they never got on with their life. They sort of gave in". As part of the storytelling workshop, she said, "they seeked help through the bottle, to help them to get through life".

The issue of alcohol and substance abuse in Indigenous communities has been understood as a response to the experience of historical trauma (Brave Heart, 2003; Gonzalez et al., 2014) or the cultural soul wound (Duran, Duran, Brave Heart, & Yellow Horse-Davis, 1998; Duran, Firehammer, & Gonzalez, 2008). As noted by Duran et al., (1998), "Loss of life due to alcohol-related problems has affected the community over several generations. Although the problem of alcoholism is very complex, there can be very little argument that the genocidal legacy is a key factor in understanding it" (p. 346). In the Australian context, Shaw (2012) has similarly discussed issues of drug and alcohol abuse as stemming from vulnerability as an affliction of the powerless. Issues of drug and alcohol abuse can therefore be understood as reflecting double suffering (Frost & Hoggett, 2008), where the psychic harms of social structural oppression lead to further suffering, producing vulnerability for drugs and alcohol as a means of self-medication.

This vulnerability was understood as being produced within a social context where Aboriginal young people are made criminal. For example, Frank, like

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Caroline, spoke of how Aboriginal people including children were and continue to be made to feel like they are criminals:

Frank: You know, we was (*pause*), we was criminals as kids, you know... and that's why our family, our Aboriginal people now. They're pretty strict on Aboriginals, even in Narrogin now, you know.

Interviewer: So you still feel they treat you like criminals?

Frank: Yeah we still feel they treatin' us like criminals 'cause that's why I try, I have a talk to the young blokes here and say 'look you blokes get a job you know, show these blokes what you can do'.

Interviewer: yeah, prove them wrong?

Frank: Yeah they'd rather go drinking and do things like that.

Here Frank is describing how Aboriginal people are made criminal. In response to the 'strict' treatment of Aboriginal people, which he continues to see in Narrogin, Frank emphasised that he encourages the young ones to "show these blokes what you can do", which is indicative of the stigma Frank sees as attached to Aboriginality. However, he expressed dismay that "they would rather go out drinking", a response that needs to be interpreted within a context of structural violence that continues to produce vulnerability (Shaw, 2012). The situation described by Frank, echoes Walter's (2010a) concern that Aboriginal people are "too often dispossessed of a conception of a different future" (p. 131).

Frank expressed similar concerns at the storytelling workshop where he discussed the over policing of Aboriginal people.

...they kept putting pressure on us and they still putting it on us now you know, they pull you up to check your car, one bloke he got pulled up nine times, he never drink in his life. Another one of my cousins got pulled up eight

times, she don't even drink, you know, this is, look at these kids here, these kids see that going on.

Frank expressed concern that “these kids see that going on” thus alluding to the psychological impacts of racialised policing and the messages this sends for young Aboriginal people. He is concerned about the psychic harm of the continuing negation of dignity and justice reflected in the practice of over policing, and the pressure they keep putting on them.

Similarly, Mick described a ‘live for the day’ mentality.

Mick: Yeah a lot of them are unemployed, they turn to the alcohol and the drugs, and they just live for the day... . They don't care about tomorrow, they don't care about tomorrow. Tomorrow never comes for 'em... . You know, just get drunk and go home ... they might have an argument with someone then, they start bleeding one another and bleedin' one another and end up going to court and some get jail over it, its, its.

Interviewer: A cycle keeps going?

Mick: A cycle keeps going round and round and round.

Mick explained that, “they just live for the day...tomorrow never comes for ‘em”. He described a cycle associated with this, beginning with unemployment, then drinking, fighting, jail—a cycle that “keeps going round and round and round”. This cycle is indicative of vulnerability produced within conditions of oppression (Shaw, 2012). Caroline and Frank also discussed the issue of drug and alcohol abuse leading to criminal behaviour, with Caroline stating, “Drugs have changed everyone.... They're all getting in jail 'cause of drugs”.

In the excerpt below, Mick further elucidates the limit situation characterising the lifeworlds of Aboriginal people.

Mick: Yeah leave it buried in the past, you know, but the past is always here with us, you know, you can't get away from it until you die. You look at your kids, and your grandkids and what hope they got? I look at my little boy⁴² and, and I think to myself, there's a cell waiting for ya, you know.

Interviewer: That's really sad

Mick: Yeah. That's where they'll probably end up, in the, in the jail.

Evident in Mick's comment that "they'll probably end up...in the jail", is the dispossession of hope for an alternative future (Walter, 2010a) given ongoing forms of structural violence which sees incarceration as a common experience for Aboriginal young people (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2012, 2014b). This speaks volumes about the context within which Aboriginal subjectivities are constituted, and the psychological burden of oppression.

In the extract below, Mick discussed how fear was put into Noongars and how he is "still a bit fearful".

We was fearful. I'm still a bit fearful myself. When we was young, we see the police or welfare people come (*Smacks hands together*), we used to take off running in the bush, hiding, and they used to come and say 'what you running for, what you done, you done something wrong? Hmm', you know, trying to get us to retaliate and then they take us for anything so that's the way it's, it came down through history and it's still going that way.

As this example illustrates, fear of the police (and welfare/child protection system) is something that Aboriginal people grow up having to learn, given practices of child removal and experiences of police brutality. This is further shown in the extract below, where Enid recalled the pain of hearing about the death of John Pat

42 Mick is referring to his grandchild.

from closed head injuries in police custody in Roeburne, WA in 1983 (Grabosky, 1989).

The thing that killed me was when we had that first death in custody with that boy up ..., John Pat⁴³ unna. I think how could they do that to a young boy? Well we don't know how most of our Noongars dying anyhow. We just see that they committed suicide. Never, you go and check the place out, how could they do it? How could they do it, 'cause there is hardly anything for them? Oh they did it by a towel. Did it by a towel! You know it's ridiculous, you know, you just know that something really bad happened but you can't prove it 'cause it's all behind locked doors.

She went on to describe how "even the kids can sense it, they get that fear ... 'cause they say, the police are not your friend. Anyhow we knew that".

Marcelle: Yeah you get taught that, *madarch madarch!* (i.e., Noongar word for Police)

Enid: You taught when to shut-up when they coming, you know you walk away frightened...

Interviewer: Do the kids these days have to watch out as well?

Marcelle: Yeah

Enid: They know... they know (*whisper*)

Marcelle: 'Cause welfare can still walk into your homes.

Enid: They still take our kids.

Frank often expressed that Aboriginal people are 'shy' and 'frightened' people, which can be understood in relation to this history of subjugation.

43 In 1983, John Pat was 16 years old. Pat was assaulted by police, and later died in police custody. The autopsy revealed that he had sustained a number of massive blows to the head. For more on the case of John Pat, see Grabosky (1989): <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/previous%20series/lcj/1-20/wayward/ch5t.html>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

They are shy people you know, they are shy, Aboriginal people are shy..., don't want to talk. Don't be frightened to talk, talk, tell people what you want, where you want to go, 'cause otherwise you not going to get anywhere.

In this example, he is telling the young Aboriginal students, “don't be frightened”, thus seeking to intervene into processes of internalised oppression.

In the final extract, Caroline was discussing the significance of CANs community arts and cultural development activity. In the excerpt, she alludes to the psychic harm caused by processes of dehumanisation, as well as the reclamation of dignity and pride that was facilitated through these projects.

Caroline: You know what, CAN WAs done a lot for us, it's made us feel, back to where we should be as Aboriginal people but not only as Aboriginal people as, as people, um, ah with respect for all people, ... sort of letting everyone else know around that we're here, and it's done wonders for us ...it did a lot!

Frank: Yeah

Caroline: It did a lot

Frank: A lot

Caroline: And what youse are doing youse are making 100% changes in our life

Interviewer: So what is it about what's being done?

Caroline: It's like we've come out of prison now, we've moved out of it and we gonna get out and move and do something.... It's freeing us from the shackles of what we've been in before you know.

Caroline described how the work CAN has done has helped to let “everyone else know around that we're here”, and “made us feel, back to where we should be

as...people”. It was helping to reassert pride in identity, culture, and belonging and thus in addressing the psychic harm caused by colonisation/coloniality.

Summary. The Elders’ stories showed the damaging impacts of oppression for Aboriginal subjectivities. The stories pointed to how dominant cultural narratives have and continue to construct Aboriginal people as less than, and as criminal, creating vulnerability reflected in a cycle of hopelessness, where they “live for the day”. It was also evident in the Elders storytelling, how these experiences and memories of suffering stay with them: “[they] can’t get away from it until [they] die”.

Community Fragmentation: "No one Listens Anymore"

The Elders spoke of the forced erosion and loss of cultural knowledge and language stemming from dispossession (Fine & Ruglis, 2009), and the psychosocial implications for communities. For example, in the excerpt below, Caroline described how assimilation meant that their parents were not allowed to pass on cultural knowledge because they had “to adapt to white people’s lives”.

When we were growing up with our parents, we wasn’t allowed to be told anything about their life, their culture, we wasn’t learn nothing about their culture ‘cause we were supposed to adapt to white people’s lives you know. We weren’t allowed to learn no Noongar culture, no Aboriginal culture so if they tell us about it, they may be better off just telling other people around, you know but not us. So we never, we had to learn as we went, you know, as we was growin’, we learnt, but it wasn’t from our immediate families...

Denied the cultural and historical inheritance of her own family who had to adapt to white people’s lives, she explained that she did manage to pick up little bits as she went, but not from her parents.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Caroline discussed the threatened forced closure of remote Aboriginal communities⁴⁴ in Western Australia. She predicted that the consequence of forced closure of communities—dispossession of culture and country—would be drinking and homelessness, which echoes the experience of her own family.

Caroline: That's very cruel. You can't take –

Interviewer: People who've been living there for –

Caroline: All their life. You can't take that from them. Once they take that from them, they're gonna die. They're not adapted to life in the towns. You know, [Barnett⁴⁵] don't understand Aboriginal culture. You can't take 'em from that 'cause that's their life. And they're gonna be into the drinking and homelessness.

Caroline emphasised that the state premier, Barnett, had no understanding of Aboriginal culture and in particular their deep connection with country (Bishop, Vicary, Mitchell, & Pearson, 2014; Dudgeon, Mallard, Oxenham, & Fielder, 2002). As noted by Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses (2014), “Loss is an event that can become an individual and collective problem when it involves basic resources, relationships, values, or meaning systems necessary for psychological strength and well-being (Lear, 2006)” (p. 310). The Elders' discussion of the disruption of culture and implications for individuals and communities captured this sense of loss—the loss of those meaning systems that are vital for their psychological wellbeing (Bishop et al., 2014; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015).

All the Elders who were interviewed were members of the Stolen Generations, or their parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents were, and so they each expressed

44 In 2014, the WA Premier proposed forced closures of 150 Aboriginal communities in Western Australia, after the Federal Government announced it would no longer fund essential municipal services.

45 Colin Barnett was the former Premier of Western Australia (2008-2017).

that they did not know much in culture or language, and this was experienced as a loss. Enid said, “I don’t know my Noongar language”, and “I didn’t learn much in culture, but I knew about the respect, storytelling and (*pause*) yeah, maybe it’s left to us to do the writing”. Many of the Elders spoke about extended family members who knew the language, or other Noongar people who had cultural knowledge. For example, Enid said “We did hear a bit from the last two that passed away, mother and son, they tried to learn us, you know, we did go to a few of their meetings”. As illustrated by this excerpt, Noongar people are actively engaged in processes of reclamation. She also commented on a local Elder who knew how to speak Noongar language, stating “he had good parents, you know, he knew a lot”. This Elder had grown up with his old people on the reserve: he did not grow up on a mission and so he got to learn from his ‘old people’. Those who were taken to missions largely missed out on this opportunity and instead were denied their cultural and historical inheritance (A. Clark, 2014).

Further capturing the sense of loss of culture, Mick commented that he never saw his grandfather do “anything cultural”.

Interviewer: And so now, do you think the cultures lost or do these projects help to...

Mick: Especially down this way, it’s um lost, ‘cause my grandfather, he never as far as I know, he never done anything cultural, he just worked, worked... and just been an ordinary man with his family... . ‘Cause um, different family groups I suppose had their own different ways of doing things and saying things.

Interviewer: Stories and stuff?

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Mick: Stories and that yeah, but with my grandfather there, and my brother here, he's brother I have never seen 'em do or anything cultural, only...

Interviewer: How about just being out in the bush?

Mick: Only going hunting and that you know, but nothing spectacular or whatever...they might have done it when they were younger but

Interviewer: did they tell you stories and stuff or?

Mick: No grandfather never, never said anything about...

Interviewer: So is that from the disruption?

Mick: It's from the disruption because they took him away when he was a young boy, he never (*laugh*), he must have never learnt nothing!

Mick described how he takes his grandkids out bush, while at the same time emphasised that he does not know anything about the culture.

Mick: What I do with my kids, grandkids and all that, we go bush, we go bush every week, we go hunting... . We go wood-cutting, we spend the day out there, have a barbecue and all that you know... and ah show 'em different animals and I can't show 'em much about the culture, I don't know nothing about the culture

Interviewer: But that is the culture isn't it?

Mick: That's just the our way, well that's not really a culture to me it's just my way of life sort of thing, you know, just, it's just the way I was brought up to do that, so yeah

Mick emphasised that while he can educate Noongar kids in the bush, the children also need their school education—they have to navigate two worlds (Atkinson, 2002; Jones, 2014), and so “it's a big hard long road for the Noongar people”.

The dispossession of culture and language was understood as a major factor in the issues currently facing Noongar individuals, families, and communities—that is, in the production of vulnerability (Shaw, 2012). In the second interview with Mick, he expressed a sense of despair about the issues facing the Noongar community, asserting: “dysfunction, everything dysfunction”, and “Everything, everybody's, everybody's dysfunctional”. Mick understood this “dysfunction” to be a consequence of past policies and practices which were explicitly aimed at the removal of culture, and so the diminishment of traditional roles, structures, and knowledge (Australian Human Rights Commission [AHRC], 2011). In explaining this “dysfunction”, Mick said, there is, “No, no um, no guidelines, no discipline”. He was speaking about the loss of respect for Elders but also pointed to the negative influence of technology on young people.

Mick: Well everything's, everything's lost now, too many things been happening too much technology coming out now and taking the young fellas away from everything and um, and ah. When my old grandfather he ah, I'll just read ya what he said. He died ... 1968 he died, 1968... yeah so not long before he died he remarked, ‘I'm worried about my people and what will become of them, as they won't listen to advice anymore’.

Interviewer: Is that what you feel as well?

Mick: Worse, just like he said, they won't listen no more. It's all yeah it's what um, old Mr Neville⁴⁶ said, he wanted a white Australia....

Interviewer: so you think it's become a white Australia?

46 Auber Octavius Neville was the Chief Protector of Aborigines in WA from 1915-1940 (Haebich, 2000). In his evidence to the Mossley Commission of 1934, Neville stated: "they have to be protected against themselves whether they like it or not. They cannot remain as they are. The sore spot requires the application of the surgeon's knife for the good of the patient, and probably against the patient's will" (Haebich, 1988, p. 320).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Mick: Well it's trying to be a white Australia and try to rub out all stuff

Aboriginal you know and make everybody ah...

Interviewer: Assimilate?

Mick: Assimilate, different decisions to what they ah want to make.

Mick clearly connects this breakdown of Aboriginal communities and social structure to the pressures placed on Aboriginal communities to assimilate—to make it a white Australia and “rub out all stuff Aboriginal”.

The connection between issues of community dysfunction, and the deliberate destruction of culture has been documented in the literature (Atkinson, 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2014; People, Culture, Environment, 2014; Wexler & Gone, 2015). For example, as noted by Villaneuva (1989, p. 30) writing about the impacts of colonisation for Native Americans,

...if the culture would have remained intact, we would not be experiencing the devastating problems that we are facing. The responsibility should be placed in the right place and some honesty shed on the issue and then perhaps we could begin to ameliorate the problem. (as cited in Duran et al., 1998, p. 347)

Mick firmly placed the responsibility of current issues facing Aboriginal communities with A.O.Neville, the Chief Protector of Aboriginal people in Western Australia, as a symbol of white Australia and assimilation.

Given the dispossession of culture and language and the damaging impacts for communities, Mick identified the need to teach Aboriginal children “Aboriginal stuff, Noongar stuff, right through”.

Mick: ‘Cause ah you got to, I think you’ve got to go back to schools up here, learn ‘em in the schools, ...we want to tap into,..., start from grade three with

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

‘em Aboriginal stuff, Noongar stuff, right through, you know, ‘cause when you trying to start way over here, it’s too late.

Mick expressed concerns that the young Aboriginal people often do not finish high school, with females often getting pregnant before they can (“They *Boodjari*”). Many of the Elders had expressed concerns about young people going down the wrong path, and not finishing high school.

In the extract below, Mick was responding to a question about the role of community arts and cultural development projects like Bush Babies.

Mick: Problems too big, problems too big, the spirits gone out of the people

Interviewer: So that word healing um people talk about healing

Mick: It’s just a word

Interviewer: Just a word (*nervous laugh*)? What needs to happen to bring back the spirit in people?

Mick: Um, (*pause*) well in the first, there’s more hate than love, not only here in Narrogin but all around the world, because you know these people watch TV and see what’s going on there and then you got another, another bad influence on young people is these movies they’re bringing out, what they are watching on their new technologies things nowadays, you know, all this violence and hatred and you know all the gooey stuff and that’s sort of getting into their brains, and you see a lot of these little kids saying and doing what they see and hear on that little box.

A sense of despair and hopelessness, produced in conditions of social suffering, was evident in the above comment from Mick. He expressed that “the spirit has gone out of the people”, and that there is more hate than love in the world, putting some of the blame on the “new technologies...getting into their brains”. The notion

that “the spirit has gone out of the people” resonates with writing on the soul wound (Duran & Duran, 1995; Duran et al., 1998, 2008).

The experience of grief and loss within communities was also captured in the Elders’ storytelling. For example, as part of the intergenerational storytelling workshop, Frank spoke about the many family members he has lost, with one of his families being ‘wiped out’.

We are a big family, and now, I look back now, and all my cousins and nephews all died before me, and one of my families were wiped out, on my sister’s side. She, all her kids are dead. She only got grandkids alive, all her family, they all died out, just the grandkids living that’s all and they don’t hardly know their family...and that’s very hard.

He further discussed this loss, in the context of an interview.

When some of us get together now, I lost two cousins,... and it really hurt me ‘cause I sort of looked after them when I was in the mission, they were smaller than me, I looked after ‘em, and it was really hard, I never even went to their funerals, just didn’t have the money. I still worry, think about ‘em. We all brothers and sisters when we was out there (i.e., in the mission).

The two excerpts from Frank capture the frequency of loss experienced by Aboriginal people, the disruption caused to families (“they don’t hardly know their family”), as well as the emotional toll associated with all this (“That’s very hard”, “it really hurt me”, “it was really hard”, “I still worry”). Shaw (2012) noted in regards to death and funerals that, “This aspect of Aboriginal life indicates the frequency of loss that families’ experience and it speaks of a communal trauma” (p. 51). For Shaw, funerals “are symbolic of a community continuously in grief, a wounded community”, with suicide understood as at the extreme end of the death spectrum” (p. 51). Babidge

(2016) has also commented how, “The ‘psychic scars’ (Povinelli, 2002: 190) the emotional impact, of frequent death touches everyone in the community because the weaves of interrelatedness are fine” (p. 205). The premature death⁴⁷ of Aboriginal people is attributed by the Elders’ to the experience of suffering, of having their spirits broken, and specifically to being part of the Stolen Generations. Further compounding his experience of grief and loss, Frank stated that he was not even able to attend the funerals of the people he had lost because he did not have the money. He was therefore not able to meet the obligations of kinship.

The forceful removal of culture and language was understood as contributing to the breakdown of communities, evident in the common assertion that there has been a loss of respect for Elders—that the Elders have no authority anymore. The diminishment of traditional roles, knowledge, and structures, was most evident in discussion of the issue of feuding. All Elders interviewed discussed the issue of feuding, often emphasising that they have had to stick to themselves to avoid getting involved in ‘community issues’, as demonstrated in the excerpts below.

Caroline: Living in our way and how we want and they’re good people, they keep their distance. They know we family, they know we pleased to see one another, but we don’t get involved, that’s the main thing we don’t get involved ‘cause our life how we want we want it for ourself.

Caroline: There is community issues but, but we keep a distance, but we don’t show the difference you know?

47 In the context of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Professor Ted Wilkes commented, “Most of the suicides in Aboriginal communities have a connection back to child abuse”. Wilkes described Wandering mission as “just one of many institutions [he] could label as a nest of pedophilia” (Laurie, 2017, para. 37).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Interviewer: Yeah you say hello to everyone and

Caroline: Everyone's the same to us but we just stick to ourselves. Because we don't want people to think, 'oh they're on their side or they're or they listen to yarns about us' and that sort of thing, we don't need to get into that, we keep from it, yeah.

Enid: But ah like I still have my children come around and their children and we don't like for trouble with anyone else but we like we still yarn with anyone else you know we still got a connection but it's not the same with your own family you know.

It was often emphasised, that once Elders pass away, the families fall apart. For example, Frank said, "you know. Our old people, ... that was good when they was alive...when they died everything sort of, everything sort of went you know, haywires... we used to all work together happy, shearing in the shed".

Many Elders' emphasised the need for Noongar people to start working together rather than against one another, and expressed that "Noongars are our own worst enemy" (*laugh*) (Mick).

The problem with Noongars now, they doesn't sort of mix and like work together 'cause, see in Narrogin here you've got about three sort of different groups, on that side and this side and... they doesn't mix with one another. If we have a meeting, we have about three meetings, and all live in the same town, and so what they should be doing is getting together and saying we want to make it, make everything work for everyone (Frank).

Mick expressed some scepticism about the possibilities for change because of the intragroup conflict.

‘Cause even when um Noongars all get together, do things, always, trouble starts you know, trouble starts, ‘so and so's doing this’, ‘oh you're not allowed to be there’, ‘what are you doing there?’ or ‘what she doing what she talking about?’ and then they go down again... They like putting one another down instead of letting one another up and say that’s good brother or sister, you don’t see it Yes ‘cause there’s families here they threaten other families ‘cause they bigger families, and smaller families got to... toe the line or get a hiding. You know and that sort of thing goin’ on like bully tactics (Mick).

This issue of feuding, “of putting one another down instead of letting one another up”, the ‘bully tactics’ that Mick described, can be understood through the concept of lateral violence: “a product of a complex mix of historical, cultural and social dynamics that results in a spectrum of behaviours that include gossiping, jealousy, bullying, shaming, social exclusion, family feuding, organisational conflict and physical violence” (AHRC, 2011, p. 8).

In the extract below, Frank shares how he was accused of thinking he was a white person, thus capturing the conflict that has been created about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, which contributes to the issue of feuding (AHRC, 2011; Dudgeon et al., 2002; Harris, Carlson, & Poata-Smith, 2013).

I get on good with them. I aren’t scared to talk to them (i.e., white people) in the street there because they all know me, but then they say ‘oh look over there he talking to the’ ... ‘oh you think you're a white person’ ... ‘No I don’t think I’m a white person, I’m black like youse fellas but you blokes are not understanding that you, you got to mix when you are in a town, you like

you're all living together like, we one big happy family' ...and they don't do that they just say to me you, you hang around your own, you know. I said 'course I can hang on my own. This is my land I got to rear my family... I got to rear my family up', but they don't see it that way. We been fighting here for years, we been fighting here for years... with our own family.

Summary. The Elders' stories pointed to the impact that the diminishment of traditional roles, knowledge, and structures has had on Aboriginal communities. Not only were Aboriginal people told they were less than, with negative impacts for subjectivities, they were also denied their cultural heritage, and often mourned for this loss. The issue of feuding stood out as a significant issue impacting community wellbeing.

Intergenerational Impacts: “Our Kids are Carrying What We’ve Been Through”

The intergenerational impacts of this history, was evident in the Elders storytelling, particularly in Caroline's storytelling about her own family's history. Caroline explained to a small group of Aboriginal students, the “government thought they were doing a good job.... a lot of the families...they're still carrying it— they'll always be carrying it”. Caroline described the devastating impact that policies of child removal have had on the family unit and Aboriginal communities more broadly. Her reflections pointed to the intergenerational effects of historical trauma (Atkinson, 2002; Gone, 2013; Kirmayer et al., 2014; Milroy, 2005). As noted by Shaw (2012) “Many young Aboriginal people are rendered vulnerable by virtue of their heritage, which links them through their parents and grandparents, thus rendering vulnerability an intergenerational issue” (p. 53).

In the excerpt below, Caroline reflected on the “space in between” her and her children

It’s just there’s something that I couldn’t, I couldn’t um tap into at the time that there was a, there was a space in between our lives that never... . Between me and my children’s, there was a space...because when you’re put in a mission.

Caroline understood this ‘space’ as a result of her and her husband both being ‘mission kids’. As noted by Anna Clark (2014), the Stolen Generations “represented a colossal intergenerational rupturing of not only families, but family *histories and narratives*” (p. 97), and thus, “distinct disconnections from the past where whole family stories and important kinship information had simply been lost” (p. 97).

Caroline explained that, “whatever we went through, maybe they could’ve went through in life, but no speaking about it because it’s a quiet silent thing”. In response to a question about the importance of speaking about this as part of breaking the intergenerational cycle, Caroline commented, “It’s keeping us going that we don’t have to think about it. If I have to tell ‘em about it, they say ‘go away we don’t want to hear that’ you know what I mean, unna”. This highlights the emotional difficulty of speaking about experiences of suffering as well as the difficulty of hearing these stories (Ahmed, 2005; Apfelbaum, 1999; Lykes, 1997; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). Apfelbaum (2000) stated, “remaining silent about the past, refusing to pass it on, is also an attempt to protect the next generation and to try to spare them the pain and anguish the parents themselves have suffered” (p. 1010).

Caroline emphasised that while she is able to speak with the Aboriginal students about being in the mission, she is not able to do so with her own children.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Me and him (i.e., Frank) couldn't sit down and talk about our mission life. It's different for what we doing for youse now. I can tell you kids but I couldn't sit with my own kids to tell them 'cause I was thinkin', they most probably, as being with two parents being there, it's already set into them you know what I mean, I don't know, like I can't bring myself to tell them how I was taken away and reared up amongst other kids and you know.

In the above excerpt Caroline discussed the emotional difficulty of telling these stories to her children ("I can't bring myself to tell them"), but also her belief that being her kids, they already know, explaining that "it's already set into them"—they know without having to be told: that it is embodied (Candib, 2002; Segalo, 2013). Indeed while Caroline and Frank have not told them, children of the Stolen Generations often try to find those connections—to fill in the silence, the 'memory gap' (A. Clark, 2016). In the example below, Caroline further described the difficulty of sharing painful stories with those closest to her (i.e., her children), and the disconnection that this creates.

We'd be all crying you know 'cause they're closer to me, I gave 'em birth, we bonded with them. And I can't, you know you can't connect to the main ones near you, it's always someone else you can speak with and it seemed funny isn't it, but that's the way it is. Yeah I couldn't tell my kids.

Segalo (2013) has noted how "untold stories lead to silences being passed on from one generation to the next" (p. 40).

Enid also spoke of the difficulty in telling her children about her past, because despite the time that has passed, it is still too emotional.

Enid: Well my kids are anxious to hear my past

Interviewer: Do you share it with your kids?

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Enid: And I like to tell them, and I'd like to write it but I can only go so far and it gets too you know, too emotional,

Interviewer: It's hard?

Enid: Too hard. I've got about that much written now. But you know, that's where it comes, it stops there.

Interviewer: But it's valuable for them?

Enid: It's valuable. It's like I've got to be strong, even though we've been out of the mission for what, about 40, 50 years unna; it's still, it's still there, it's still the hurt, the pain, the friendship, the love.

At the end of the interview, Enid emphasised, "I'll write this story, I'll end up writing it one day, when all this bad feeling get out of me", because "when I die the stories die with me". Therefore, even though, it has been 40 or 50 years since she was in the mission, the pain, the bad feeling, is still there, which makes it difficult for her to share the stories with her children and grandchildren. Yet she recognised the importance of them knowing this history. Further highlighting the difficulty of speaking painful memories, I was told that Frank had only recently begun to share his stories, as part of these projects. He had also commented that he had initially been reluctant, because he thought he was giving away their stories.

Caroline often used the language of trauma to understand what her own children are going through, with substance abuse understood as a symptom of the trauma they are carrying. As discussed by Shaw (2012), "The removal of the right of Aboriginal people to care for their own children is crucial in understanding the relationship between past policies and current issues, because it irreparably damaged the social fabric of Aboriginal family life" (p. 14; see also Atkinson, 2002). Historical trauma theory offers a way of understanding the intergenerational effects identified by

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Caroline. The theory proposes “that the traumatic events endured by communities negatively impact on individual lives in ways that result in future problems for their descendants” (Kirmayer et al., 2014, p. 307; see also Atkinson, 2002). Kirmayer et al. (2014) suggested that the transmission of historical trauma can occur at many levels:

interpersonally, through altered parenting; within families, which may be disrupted by loss of members or exposure to stressors like domestic violence; at the level of the community, when many individuals and families are impacted by disturbances of social networks and experiences of safety and solidarity that affect health; and at the level of nation, where the suppression of culture and the disruption of family and community threaten the continuity of whole peoples. (pp. 308-309; see also Milroy, 2005)

The intergenerational disruption of family and community caused by these past policies and the vulnerability this disruption has produced, is captured in the example below, where Caroline described the pain of seeing her grandchildren not having their parents, and of her children not being with their children.

I pray for my kids because they all led astray, ‘cause they going through their trauma too, most probably because we been, both parents been in the mission and now the childrens [sic] are feeling our trauma and I praying for them too because I know they're weak, ... they get sidetracked.

As captured here, she often spoke about the risk of them being led astray or going down the wrong path (“they get sidetracked”), reflecting their vulnerability. Testament to the intergenerational impacts, Caroline feared that the children of those who were taken to missions could be “our lost generation”.

Not only me but there are a lot of parents and grandparents still suffering ... you know they could take our grandkids, ‘cause our children’s have gone

astray. I rearing nearly all my grandkids up... it's the people that we connected to, who we thought they could be strong, carry on, get a life, look after their childrens [sic], but a lot of them, in government care these kids 'cause of drugs and alcohol. These the people, they could be our lost generation, I reckon they're our lost generation.... I cry because they left with me, and just like I been left with someone else in my days, now they left with me, and I cry for them that they haven't got their mum.

Each of the Elders who participated in the storytelling workshop, expressed that they were either “rearing up” their grandchildren (or great grandchildren), or their grandchildren had come into contact with child protection, which as noted by Shaw (2012) reflects the vulnerability that is produced because of the history of invasion into Aboriginal people, families, and culture. Many of the students who participated shared that they too were in a foster care situation. Caroline emphasised the connection that the students have with the stories that the Elders were sharing: “when we telling our stories, they're connected there too somewhere because they are experiencing part of it”. The notion of a second Stolen Generation was something that Noongar people spoke about in informal conversations during fieldwork, with children being taken from their families now because the parents are struggling with drugs and alcohol addiction (“they gone astray”), which must be understood in the context of historical, intergenerational trauma and the vulnerability that ensues (see Atkinson, 2002; Shaw, 2012).

Caroline discussed her father's drinking in relation to the pressures of assimilation and the suffering they carried from having their children taken away but also more generally of being “told to act like a wadjela”.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

My dad, he was told to act like a wadjela, 'cause them days you had to fit into that lifestyle, the white ways you know. But dad used to go and drink, was he thinkin' drinking was going to make him a white man? He used to drink and drink 'til he got to be an alcoholic and this is what I'm carrying trauma from him too ... you know. This has been put up on him too, him and mum you know... Our parents got to be thought of too 'cause they're the ones we was taken' from and just imagine how much hurt they went through, they was carrying it all the way through, but they wouldn't tell no one, because they carried it on their own and I'm proud of them, even my grandparents, I'm proud of them.

Caroline described the 'trauma' that was passed from generation to generation. Caroline wanted the students to understand that their parents' issues of substance abuse stem from this longer history, that is, the trauma that has been passed across generations. She emphasised how "the parents need to be thought of too", and thus the problem of placing blame on Aboriginal parents struggling with issues of substance abuse because they are also suffering; they are just trying to get through life. Caroline is therefore highlighting the vulnerability that Shaw (2012) discussed. This needing to think of the parents was also captured in a Bush Baby story shared by Wendy, who had described the difficult upbringing she had.

So you get to your 40s, and now I'm 51, 52 this year. You get to your 40s and start reflecting back on your life, and you need to deal with those parts of your life that hurt you and um, so you can move on, and yeah that's I kind of done that, I went back in your own mind, and say, yeah that hurt me, or why wasn't mum there, and 'cause mainly they look at your mum, you as a mum why weren't you there? And I looked at mum and she had a very sad life

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

herself. Because there was a lot of domestic violence, and she ended up in, one stage there, she ended up in Charles Gardener (i.e., psychiatric ward), with a breakdown...

While Caroline often invoked the language of trauma, she also emphasised the continuity of Aboriginal suffering in the present, highlighting the connection between past and present.

Caroline: It's a lot to do with the past

Frank: Yeah lot to do with the past

Caroline: 'Cause when Aboriginal people weren't allowed to go to school, they had to be put in the mission and from the mission they were put in prisons and from all that past, from their parents their grandparents and all that, it's all, it's all what our kids are carrying now, we have suffered and all our kids are sufferin' now

Interviewer: Like a cycle?

Caroline: You know, they still carrying it within them.

In the example below Caroline states that this history “fell back on our kid's”, and goes on to explain the intergenerational nature of dispossession, which means that Aboriginal people have “never progressed”.

Caroline: All of that fell back on our kid's unna, our families now. That is why they have never progressed ... from when the white people came over, that Aboriginal people never picked up in their life because it come back to um being independent, respect and everything to do with life itself. None of our people were allowed to have 'cause everything was taken off them. The land was taken off them, their respect was taken off them... and the living, living

itself with them, with their families was taken off ‘em ... Living in that era has an impact on our people now.

Interviewer: The legacy of it?

Caroline: Yes the legacy of life, is still with our people, our kids, grand-kids, everyone, can’t progress ... because there is still a stop there.

Caroline is naming both the psychic legacy of this history as well as the continued forms of structural violence, emphasising that Aboriginal people have not been allowed to be in control of their own lives, and so they are “still coming up from behind”.

...all that was kept away from them, it was taken from – They’re not allowed to have, they not allowed to-be people of authority. They’re not allowed to be people of their own, own ah um, own destiny. They have to be backwards all the time, keep out of sight you know. That’s, and our people – we’re still coming up from behind.

In writing on the need to reframe historical trauma, Kirmayer et al (2014) noted that “kinds of adversity faced by each generation differ, and the construct of trauma does not capture many of the important elements that are rooted in structural problems, including poverty and discrimination” (p. 313). In explaining that the younger generation continue to carry the suffering that previous generations have been through, Caroline is accentuating the continuity of the oppressive power relationship. Similarly, Mick commented, “How come we as Aboriginal people not up where the white people are?” He went on to offer a reason.

...this historian fella (i.e., Colin Tatz⁴⁸) said well it's, when you trace it all back, back to the um colonial days...when um you had to do what your told or else, you know, you get ah you get ah jail, you get flogged and you get whatever you had taken off ya.

Therefore for Mick, the legacy of this history continues to be experienced by subsequent generations, and so it is intergenerational. It is the power relationship, and the implications of that power relationship for individual subjectivities, culture and community, that remain and which continues to 'traumatise' individuals and communities. This is in line with writing on the use of the concept of historical trauma, which has emphasised the need to recognise the ongoing experience of structural oppression (Hartmann & Gone, 2014; Kirmayer, Simpson, & Cargo, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2014).

Summary. The Elders' storytelling also highlighted the intergenerational impacts of the circuits of dispossession for Aboriginal families. In describing these intergenerational issues, Elders emphasised the concerns they have for subsequent generations who continue to carry their trauma. Importantly, their stories pointed to the cumulative effects of historical policies, practices, and discourses, but also the ongoing effects of dispossession for the current generation.

Chapter Summary

This Chapter presented the community narrative labelled "This is where it all stems from", which showed the psychosocial burden of oppression for Aboriginal subjectivities, communities, and across generations. Following Shaw (2012), this

48 Mick had watched this episode of *Awaken* featuring Colin Tatz (Historian), Michael Long, and Gilbert McAdams, the previous evening on National Indigenous Television Network (NITV) (Grant, 2015). See: <http://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/445841475989/Awaken-The-Tipping-Point-Racism-Diversity-and-the?cid=inbody:four-indigenous-afl-stars-who-changed-the-game-forever>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

burden was conceptualised as producing vulnerability— an affliction of the powerless (Shaw, 2012). The stories pointed to the branding of Aboriginal people with inferiority, which remains “burnt in their brain” even if they have not necessarily internalised these messages of a devalued identity. The stories also captured the breakdown of communities including the diminishment of traditional roles, knowledge, and structure through the deliberate destruction of culture and language leading to issues such as family feuding. Finally, the stories illustrated the rupture that is caused across generations because of the vulnerability that is produced at an individual and community level, but also by the continuity of the circuits of dispossession the lives of Aboriginal people.

Chapter 8: Narrating Resistance, Survival and Cultural Continuity

The previous two chapters have reported on the structures of oppression and the psychosocial harm it has produced as conveyed in the stories of Aboriginal Elders. In this chapter, I report on the strategies of resistance and survival evident in the Elders' stories and storytelling. This final shared community narrative conveyed the overall sentiment, "we survived we're still here" (Enid). Informed by the circuits' of dispossession (Fine, 2014; Fine & Ruglis, 2009), and literature on the various responses to oppression and adversity (e.g., Case & Hunter, 2012; Ramirez & Hammack, 2014; Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips & Williamson, 2011; O'Neill, 1994; Sonn & Fisher, 1998), this community narrative is conceptualised as both reflecting and constituting the resilience, resistance and survival of Noongar, Aboriginal people and culture. The stories are testament to this survival, but the process of storytelling is itself conceived as a central part of processes of cultural maintenance, reclamation and renewal, that has been central to Noongar resilience, resistance, and survival, or what Vizenor (1999, 2008) has called survivance.

Within this shared community narrative ("we survived, we're still here"), Elders' stories pointed to various psychological and behavioural strategies at an individual and interpersonal level used to circumvent experiences of oppression or mitigate its adverse effects (Case & Hunter, 2012). Counter-storytelling and the use of humour, has been understood as important social and cultural strategies used by subordinated groups to navigate oppressive social contexts (Case & Hunter, 2012; O'Neill, 1994; Sonn, 2012). Evident in the Elders' storytelling were symbolic strategies including concealed stories of oppression often involving humour (Duncan, 2014; Sonn, 2012), and resistance stories (Bell, 2010; Case & Hunter, 2012). Importantly, the Elders' stories also highlighted the continuity and survival of people

and culture in the face of adversity. Exemplified by stories of country (*boodjar*), kinship (*moort*) and culture (*katitjin*) based in Noongar ontology (L. Collard, Harben, & van den Berg, 2004), the storytelling showed how Noongar people are actively engaged in processes of cultural maintenance, reclamation, and renewal. Therefore, the stories shared were not just counter-stories speaking back to whiteness, but can be understood as central to constructing identities in the present.

I first outline some examples of individual and interpersonal strategies of resistance captured in the Elders' stories, which echo those documented elsewhere (Bell, 2010; Case & Hunter, 2012; Sonn & Fisher, 1998). I then illustrate symbolic strategies of resistance. Specifically, concealed stories Noongar people told about oppression (and oppressors) which often involved humour, and resistance stories that highlight the ways people challenge racism. These various responses to oppression are displayed in Figure 8 below.



Figure 8. Narrating resistance and survival

I then present examples of stories that exemplify the continuity of culture and of finding strength in cultural knowledge (*katitjin*), country (*boodja*), and family (*moort*). The different examples illustrate the shared community narrative “we survived, we’re still here”—a narrative of Aboriginal/Noongar resistance and survival, or as Vizenor (1999) has named it: survivance.

Individual and Interpersonal Strategies

Evident in the Elders’ storytelling were a number of ways individuals responded to the experiences of oppressive social realities and specific experiences of racism. These strategies echo those reported in the social psychological literature (e.g., Case & Hunter, 2012; Mellor, 2004; Prilleltensky, 2012). They included behavioural responses such as withdrawing from or avoidance of particular places or settings that are perceived as culturally unsafe; turning off or not listening; different forms of confrontation; preparing children to survive in a racist world; and through resisting “meta communications of otherness and inferiority” (Case & Hunter, 2012, p. 264). Other personal stories shared by Elders recounted the resistant actions of their parents who sought to protect or stay with their children, who were removed as part of the Stolen Generations.

Captured in the Elders’ stories was the way Aboriginal people respond to oppression at an individual level through withdrawing from or avoiding places or settings where they do not feel culturally safe (Fredericks, 2009; Walker, Schultz, & Sonn, 2014). For example, Enid shared a story about a young Noongar person who was working at a local supermarket but resigned after she overheard other staff members using the racial slur ‘coons’. Given the blatant racism, her place of employment was not experienced as safe and so protecting her social and emotional wellbeing meant resigning from her job. Withdrawing from this place of employment

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

and thereby avoiding future experiences of racism is a strategy of self-preservation. In sharing this story, Enid said, “I’m sure, if I feel that sort of feeling... I wouldn’t stay there, and explained that even though the employer advertises specifically for Aboriginal employees and “everyone likes a job”, “one yarn like that gets around no one wants to be involved”. Sharing this story with other Noongar people becomes another strategy aimed at alerting others to such experiences of racism. Enid also shared a story about how a Noongar girl had been told she could not put something on lay-by, yet the “wadjela woman” before her had been able to, and so she and many other Noongar people (she presumes) will no longer shop at this local store. Actively avoiding the shop can be understood as a strategy of self-protection with the aim of circumventing anticipated experiences of racial discrimination as well as an act of resistance (Case & Hunter, 2012).

Throughout his storytelling, Mick emphasised frustration in the lack of understanding or acknowledgement of Aboriginal realities and experiences of suffering, past and present, and explained how he stopped listening during a speech at the official opening of the Elders’ Portrait exhibition in Perth by a non-Indigenous man in a suit who was speaking about the project as facilitating reconciliation. Mick expressed it “should have been ... older Noongars, to say from the heart, not pussyfootin’ around you know what really happened... ‘cause I lost, I lost it when they were talking too much about other things”. Mick’s dissatisfaction was connected with the “pussyfootin’ around...what really happened”, that is averting the gaze from a history of Aboriginal suffering (Barta, 2008) and the associated denial of relationality between the accumulation of privilege and wealth on one side, and of dispossession on the other (Hoagland, 2007; Levine-Rasky, 2016). This for Mick was experienced as an insult. As discussed by Barta (2008), reconciliation “has become

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

the official ideology within which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians can now “move on”. Symbolically, as many Aboriginal people know, it does not recognize the depth of their historical trauma or give them a national memorial” (p. 210). In ‘turning off’, Mick was responding to what he perceives as the silencing and erasure of the ongoing history of dispossession and suffering. This can be read as an act of everyday resistance or infrapolitics reflecting the hidden transcript of indignation (Scott, 1990), in relation to reconciliation rhetoric.

Another response to experiences of racial discrimination evident in the storytelling was confrontation—that is, standing up for oneself and calling out racism. For example, Frank shared the following story in his interview as well as the storytelling workshop:

Frank: ... two traffic cops come behind me in two cars, one in front and one at the back, pull me up and I said, ‘What's wrong?’ They said, ‘Is this your car?’ And first thing come out of my mouth is, ‘Well, what I'm driving it for?’ so, they started questioning me ... and I said, well here, ‘Here are the keys.’ I left the keys on the bonnet and I walked back to the police station down here and they said– ‘Where are you going?’ And I said, ‘You can come down if you want to 'cause I'm going back to see Sergeant’ ...and I walked in and he heard my voice and he sung out to me what’s wrong ... and I said, ‘Can I come see you Sergeant ‘ ‘Yeah. Come in’. I said, ‘These two blokes pull me up you know that car I bought the other day when you were in the yard with me’, I said, ‘they reckon I stole it’. He said, ‘What?’ So he called them up and he just come into the office and he said to me, ‘You can go now, Frank’. Well, in two weeks time, he sacked those two blokes.

Caroline: He sent them to another town.

Frank: He sent them away.

In this example, Frank responded to this experience of racial profiling by confronting the police officers directly. This is a story of harassment and of resistance, of standing up for his rights, which he feels important to share. Significantly however, Frank's response was in some ways contingent on the acceptance by white people in the town and depended upon the Sergeant vouching for him based on knowing him through playing football.

Also related to experiences of racialised policing and confronting the perpetrators of such injustice, Frank shared a story about one of his cousins who was a police officer, and witnessed police brutality toward a Noongar man. Frank commented,

He couldn't take it because..., he seen him knock this Noongar bloke down and it must have been his family and he just turned around and he hit the police, he knocked the policeman out... so he got the sack.

Thus individual responses can include physical retaliation to protect self and other group members.

Elders' stories also pointed to how they have to prepare their children for encounters with racism. The strategies include actively countering racism and harmful cultural narratives. For example, as discussed in the previous chapter, Enid and Marcelle shared how "even the kids can sense it, they get that fear..., the police are not your friend". Marcelle explained "yeah you get taught that, *madarch madarch*⁴⁹!" thus showing how young Aboriginal people are taught to be careful of the police. At the storytelling workshop, Elders were telling the students to not let the colour of their skin hold them back, that they are not less than white people are, and emphasised the

49 *Madarch* is the Noongar word for police.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

importance of education. The excerpt below comes from Caroline who was speaking to Aboriginal students as part of the storytelling circle.

But we got to still live our life day, from each day and make a change but I think now our kids now here, we need youse, we need ya's, get your education, if you don't have your education, we'll have nothing, you know, all our generations we been thinking about, but you're the one, that we looking to, get on board and do the right thing, don't care about the colour of your skin, don't let that be in your way, because you're a human being and you're going to do something to help your Aboriginal people and white people too that's all I can say...

Also captured in the stories were some of the strategies, used by parents whose children were taken from them, to maintain connection with and keep a watchful eye over their children. For example, Caroline shared a story about how her mother sent her eldest daughter to work at the mission so that she could look after her and her siblings, and thus how her mum “never left [them]”. She said

One good thing I recognised about my mum – kept on being a mum even while we was in the mission. She never left us. She sent our older sister to stay with us in the mission to look after us. So she'd always been a mum even when we was taken from her.

She continued,

Well, it's a great to have a mum that did that you know—that had her daughter there to help us...I was grateful for mum too...She's always been a mum even while I was in there... I'm that proud that she was my mum.

Caroline's mother managed to find a way to be a mum, even though this was taken away from her. Caroline tells how she came to recognise the strength of her

mother and the love she had for her children, and expressed pride in her mum. This is significant given that many Aboriginal children taken from their families were told that their families did not want them (HREOC, 1997). Similarly, Frank often shared a story of how his mother walked all the way to Wandering⁵⁰: “she had blisters all over her feet, you know, and she had no shoes or nothing, she walked barefoot. It was hard. And that’s, that’s a long way from here”. Through these stories of their parents care and love for them, the Elders were pointing to the strategies used by their parents, but the telling of these stories also works to challenge stock stories of white benevolence and of Aboriginal parents as neglectful.

Storytelling, Resistance, and Survival

The Bush Baby storytelling also showed symbolic responses by Noongar people to oppression including the telling and re-telling of concealed stories of oppression, often-using humour, as well as the sharing of resistance stories (Bell, 2010; Case & Hunter, 2012; O’Neill, 1994).

Concealed stories of oppression: “Noongars have a way of laughing”. A central aim of the Bush Babies project and the Rekindling Stories on Country strategy was to elevate the stories of Aboriginal people, including stories attesting to the history of dispossession, which are so often silenced or sidelined in Australian public memory (Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016). Bell and Roberts (2010) have described such counter stories as concealed stories, through which marginalised and stigmatised people, “recount their experiences and critique, or ‘talk back’ to the mainstream narratives; they portray the strengths and capacities in marginalized communities” (p. 2310). As noted by Bell and Roberts, these stories “often remain in the shadows,

⁵⁰ Frank is referring to Wandering Mission. Wandering is approximately 77 kilometres from Narrogin.

hidden from mainstream view, and they provide a perspective that is often very different from that of the dominant group (Scott, 1990)” (p. 2310).

Numerous examples of concealed stories have been illustrated across the previous findings chapters. The stories Elders told about oppression were often accompanied by laughter. Humour has been important in Aboriginal survival and resistance (Duncan, 2014). Huggins (1987) wrote, “Humour allows for relief and pleasure and this helps to explain why it has been notably present among people who seem to outsiders to have little to laugh about ... things can be so funny, yet so deadly serious” (p. 8). In CANs (2014c) Karla Kurliny: Coming back home, Noongar Elder Les Wallan identified humour as an important part of Noongar culture:

Noongars have a way of laughing – laughing at situations. That’s the best way that we’ve got. That’s part of our culture – a way of dealing with pain or grief. We do have this ability to laugh at situations and see the funny side of things. (p. 35)

This way of laughing at situations to deal with pain and grief was evident in the Elders’ storytelling. For example, Caroline responded when asked if she was born in the bush, “No I was born in the hospital, because I had green eyes, nah joking” (*laughing loudly*). Similarly, Matthew when asked by interviewer Geri Hayden, if any of the children in his family were taken away commented with laughter, “They take the fair ones leave the blackfellas” (*laugh*), who also responded with laughter. They were speaking about mixed race children being forcibly removed from families, laughing at the absurdity of this dehumanising practice (O’Neill, 1994).

Mick described the significance of the Elders’ portraits being displayed in the Western Australian Museum in terms of finally being recognised after all these years of “being invisible...like those animals”. In the following exchange, he is recalling a

comment that Marcelle had made when walking past the exhibition of stuffed animals in the museum to where the portraits were on display.

Mick: Because all these years, like um Noongars was invisible, we was like those animals in, at the museum there (*laugh*). I think one woman said ‘they is all stuffed’ (*laughing, waiting for Marcelle’s response*). They stuffed alright (*laughing*), Marcelle, they all stuffed (*laughing*)

Marcelle: Oh what I said to the other night?

Interviewer: What did you say?

(*Mick laughing*)

Marcelle: I said the wadjelas stuff everything (*with bewilderment*)

(*Everyone laughing*)

Mick: All the animals all stuffed (*big laugh*)

Laughing at wadjela ways mocks white people and their practices (O’Neill, 1994). Moreover as noted by Huggins (1987) “This humour is shared by group identification which widens the gap between those within and those outside the circle of laughter” (p. 8)—it therefore fosters group solidarity.

Elders often shared stories of oppression with amusement. For example, Mick shared the following.

Another thing back in the early days, there was only the Noongars who knew how to shear, shear sheep’s [sic] around here, they learnt the white fellas.

Then the white fellas took over, and formed their own... shearing teams, and then they shut the Noongars out and they took it, you know, and the Noongars left standing holding on to the end piece (*laughing*).

This is a story of exploitation that juxtaposes the reprehensible behaviour of white people and the hard work, knowledge, skills, and generosity of Noongar people.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Through such stories, Noongar people invert racist colonial stereotypes and expose the exploitative nature of the oppressors (O'Neill, 1994).

The moral deficiency of white people was evident in stories about the exclusion of Aboriginal people from football—which has been a bastion of colonial racism historically (Tatz, 1995).

Mick: I think Kevin Sheedy⁵¹ said he wanted to have an Aboriginal team, but the AFL said no, why do you reckon that was?

Interviewer: (*pause*) I don't know, what do you reckon?

Mick: 'Cause they're too good.

Interviewer: (*laugh*) Yeah they'll show 'em up

Mick: They'll show 'em up that's true they'll show 'em up, just imagine.

Interviewer: AND they need them to play in their teams

Mick: They need, that's why they said we better spread them around a bit you know, have a couple there and a couple there...

Through these stories, the exclusionary racist behaviour of white people, organisations, and institutions, is highlighted. Along with the reprehensible behaviour of racist white people, the superiority of Aboriginal people on the football field was also emphasised. Thus these stories also challenge dominant cultural narratives of deficit and reveal the strengths and capacities of Noongar people, and their success within adversity. In the previous examples, Mick emphasised the knowledge and skills of Noongar people in relation to shearing, and also their superiority on the football field.

51 Kevin Sheedy is a former coach and player of Australian Rules Football in the Australian Football League (AFL). (see Butler, 2014 on Sheedy's "salute" to Noongar footballers).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Scott (1990) discussed tales of banditry as low disguised form of resistance to ideological domination. Similarly, Duncan (2014) wrote,

Tricking, by a process of inverting stigma, helps to consolidate Aboriginal identity. It is one of the ways by which Aborigines live their social lives with some self-respect; and how they come to terms with themselves as a minority group in Australia.

Within this literature, such acts are understood as creating an area of dignity for powerless and oppressed groups (Cowlshaw, 1988; Duncan, 2014; Scott, 1990; Sonn, 2012). An example of such trickery was captured in a story shared by Enid about her uncles who she described as “rogues”:

A couple of our uncles were rogues too, you know, they'd come home with a big lot of food, we'd be all asleep and they dug a hole in front of the fire place, they'd put the old ... pack on top and police came and done the dance, you know pulled the blankets and mattresses apart, couldn't find nothing and went away but had it there, they was walking on top it, you know the tin stuff...it was just food to keep us going. We didn't live on, mainly on damper and what we could get from the um (*pause*) bit of meat or whatever, so, yeah we survived, we still here (*laugh*).

Captured in this story of banditry, was how her uncles outsmarted the police by hiding the bag of food they had stolen. Enid emphasised that this stealing was “just food to keep us going”—to enable them to survive.

Concealed (counter) stories of oppression privilege the “subjectivities and experiential realities of... marginalized individuals” and are affirming because they enable people “to feel visible and heard in an otherwise silencing and invalidating social milieu (hooks 1990)”(Case & Hunter, 2012, p. 263). As has been noted about

other oppressed groups, the stories often involved humour which has been recognised as a social and cultural strategy for navigating oppressive social realities (Sonn, 2012), and has come to be identified as an important part of Aboriginal (Duncan, 2014) and Noongar culture and identity (CAN WA, 2014c). Further, the stories often involve the inversion of colonial stereotypes and can be understood as an overarching strategy by which “powerless and oppressed groups ... create their own area of dignity” (Cowlshaw 1988, p. 97).

Resistance stories: “They couldn’t kill the spirit”. Not only were the Elders sharing stories of their experiences with oppression— an act which itself can be understood within the domain of everyday resistance or infrapolitics (Scott, 1990), they also shared resistance stories. Bell (2010) defined resistance stories as those stories that “narrate the persistent and ingenious ways people, both ordinary and famous, resist racism and challenge the stock stories that support it in order to fight for more equal and inclusive social arrangements” (p. 61).

In interviews, both Frank and Mick discussed the success of Aboriginal people (and Noongar people specifically) on the football field. In the example below, Mick tells how in the 60s Noongar people formed their own teams because of the racism of the times which restricted local teams from having any more than three Aboriginal players per side (Butler, 2013).

‘Cause back in the 60s, us, we had our own football team in Pingelly, the white people didn’t want Noongars playing in their footy club so we formed our own teams, we had four, we had four Noongar teams... and I tell you what, a lot of those fellas back then, sort of just walked into the VFL (i.e., Victorian Football League) but no one didn’t want to know (*laugh*). No one didn’t want to know. We were the first Noongars, to have our own footy team,

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Aboriginals in Australia. That was a big achievement for— that was a big achievement for us Noongars back then.

Mick emphasised the significance of this act of resistance, given the blatant racism of the times. As noted by Butler (2013),

Back in the 1960s when several Nyoongar players in Pingelly... were denied opportunities in the local league, they decided to create their own competition with indigenous players from surrounding towns.

So the Pingelly Tigers were born and the path their bloodlines have since woven through the AFL is simply remarkable (para. 1).

While Australian Rules football, particularly in small country towns, was understood as a bastion of colonial racism, it was also a space where Noongar people excelled and where they fought for social justice (Grant, 2015; Tatz, 1995).

Like Mick, Frank also emphasised the great success of Noongar people playing football.

Frank: 'Cause we had a lot of people playing out there..., all our family, ... We was happy for our family you know and they still got the proof out there all our family, that's why I was telling you about all the Noongars out there... Three white people in the league side and they won seven grand finals in straight years.

Interviewer: So is that hanging up in the pub?

Frank: Yeah that's hanging up in the pub out there, all the photos up in frames and all, and its all there. It's all there you know... This is what we should be bringing back and showing us our kids know— look what they was doing. They used to walk to the footy, couldn't get a ride so had to walk...

Recognising this story of resistance and achievement as a resource, Frank expressed the importance of showing the younger generations their successes as part of instilling pride in identity. The overall message of the story being, that despite the adversities they faced, including not being able to get a lift to the games, they resisted exclusionary practices, remained resilient, and achieved great things including playing in seven grand finals.

These examples pertained to the football field which different authors have argued as being a key site of resistance for Aboriginal people in Australia (e.g., Gorman, 2012; Gorman et al., 2015; Marshall, 2016; Tatz, 1987, 1995). As noted by Tatz and Tatz (2000) sport has been,

the avenue by which Aborigines and Islanders have earned and demanded the respect of non-Aboriginal Australia; it has given them a sense of worth and pride, especially since they have had to overcome the twin burdens of racism and opposition on the field. (p. 33)

Both Frank and Mick expressed great pride in this history and recognised these stories as an important resource for instilling pride in their young people.

These stories are important in showing the resistance of Aboriginal people and their success within adversity, but also because they highlight a part of sporting history that is often not acknowledged or too easily forgotten. As noted by Gorman et al. (2015) in writing about Aboriginal footballer and activist Pastor Doug Nicholls

Australian Football has become deeply significant in their social and political struggle for civil rights, land rights, and the cultural right to remain distinctive peoples within a contemporary Australian nation state dominated by non-Indigenous peoples and values. Yet Nicholls is also unfortunately significant in the way the legacy, tales, and deeds of many significant Indigenous

Australian activists have largely fallen out of the popular memory of non-Indigenous Australia. (p. 1951)

In discussing the history of Aboriginal resistance to racism in sport (and the AFL in particular), Mick had shared with me the story of Doug Nicholls, emphasising the racism Aboriginal footballers still had to endure when they were playing, including being told to deny their Aboriginality. Mick also spoke about the significance of Nicky Winmar⁵² “when he pulled his jumper up and showed the colour of his skin”, and Cathy Freeman⁵³ who “grabbed that flag that day, the two flags (*laugh*) and runned around”. For Mick, it was important to remember this history of racism and acts of resistance against it. These stories are resources that show that Noongar/Aboriginal have not passively accepted colonial dispossession, assimilation, and racism, but actively resisted it. These stories serve as reminders of what they have been through, fought for, and continue to fight for.

Many authors have shown how the histories of the oppressed are silenced, minimised, or denied in official histories and have been made appendages to European history (e.g., Bulhan, 1985; Fanon, 1952/2008; Godreau, Reyes Cruz, Franco Ortiz & Cuadrado, 2008; Moreton-Robinson, 2004; Smith, 2012; Sullivan, 2007). Memmi (1974/2003) noted how the colonialist “endeavours to falsify history, he rewrites laws, he would extinguish memories. Anything to succeed in transforming his usurpation into legitimacy” (p. 52). Yet, this history remains in the collective memory of Aboriginal people and is passed on through their stories. For example, in

52 Nicky Winmar is a former Australian rules footballer originally from Pingelly, WA. In 1993, during a match between St. Kilda and Collingwood, Collingwood fans racially abused Winmar. At the end of the game, which St Kilda won, Winmar lifted up his jumper and facing to the crowd, pointed to his skin. This became an iconic moment and photograph in Australia’s sporting history.

53 Cathy Freeman was the first Australian Aboriginal woman to win a gold medal at an international athletics event. At the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Freeman won gold in the 400 meters race. For her victory lap she famously held both the Aboriginal and Australian flags.

an interview with Enid, she shared the story behind the doll she made as part of the Yarns of the Heart project:

Marcelle: Did it have a story?

Enid: Mine was Jandamarra⁵⁴... it sort of reminded me of an Aboriginal leader,... yeah I made him black um with a red g-string or whatever you call it you know, yeah I think it was good to make something Noongar, you know Aboriginal, and yeah 'cause I really admired our leaders you know, because they fought hard to, you know.

Interviewer: Yeah, to be recognised?

Enid: Yeah, well not to be recognised, they fought for our safety, they didn't know I suppose they were going to become famous somewhere down the track, but um I really feel that ah a lot of our heroes, you know 'cause they were cunning too unna, they were just as cunning they'd be waiting on the white man and the white man turn around and use that same sort of cunning to kill a lot of them you know.

Enid emphasised the admiration she has for their leaders who fought for their safety and survival. She tells how cunning they were. Enid also shared the story behind her doll⁵⁵ in CANs (2011) Yarns of the Heart publication.

This is the first time I've made this doll, and I feel like it's something strong – what our Noongar people carry with them, some strongness in them. A lot of people think they're weak, but I thought that maybe this little doll would give me strength, to fight battles. It reminds me of a strong leader – like Yagan⁵⁶,

54 Jandamarra is a legend of the Benuba people of the southern Kimberley region of WA, see:

<http://www.jandamarra.com.au/index.html#home>

55 In the publication, Enid named the Noongar warrior Yagan rather than Jandamarra.

56 Yagan was a Noongar resistance warrior: see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/the-spirit-of-yagan/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

or a lot of our Noongar Elders, who are pretty strong, and took a lot of put-me-down things, but they still stood up amongst them all. They might have killed the body, but they couldn't kill the spirit. (p. 24)

In making her doll and sharing this story, Enid was commemorating the resistance of Noongar warriors emphasising that “they might have killed the body, but they couldn't kill the spirit”, and thus the strength of Noongar people.

Enid spoke about the Pinjarra Massacre and said that she was in the process of writing the story about her surviving ancestor and how he managed to survive, which has been passed onto her orally.

So I wrote a little story to say that he found his way home and they thought he was dead, he died with the mob in Pinjarra see, but he walked, and ah in this story I writ that, but I nev', I just showed it to (NAME) but she hasn't contacted me to see where I went wrong or thing see 'cause I said he, only thing we could think of that *mammari's* (i.e., *little hairy men, also known as buliyitis or woordarji*) got him and looked after him, you know and kept him alive 'cause when he got home they only just seen him comin' over the hill and they was all rushing you know and crying and (*laughing*) and I just said, he fell in his mother's arms so, and all this...

Historically, this massacre has been described as a battle (Contos, 2002), reflecting the fact that Aboriginal people and Aboriginal resistance was written out of Australian history during the first half of the 20th Century (Reynolds, 2013). As emphasised by Reynolds,

This had the convenient effect of hiding much of the domestic bloodshed allowing the celebration of what came to be viewed as a uniquely peaceful history of settlement. For generations weaned on this soothing syrup the new

history of the frontier came as an unwelcome revelation and one often stoutly resisted. (p. 16)

Enid emphasised the importance of telling the younger generation about “**our** history”, and this included the history of the Pinjarra Massacre as well as of Aboriginal resistance—how “they still stood up amongst them all”. These stories about Noongar history are counter stories that show the resistance of Noongar people historically. The storytelling itself can also be understood as part of the practice of counter-memory (Watkins & Shulman, 2008). As noted by Watkins and Shulman,

...normal processes of education about official national history, and the heroic monuments and museums that are built to memorialize celebrated events, are actually a form of amnesia and deadening, pushing away the real suffering and violence experienced in the past and covering it over with national myths. (p. 238)

In centring Aboriginal versions of history, the stories also centre alternative heroes and problematise celebrated and memorialised figures in Australian official history (e.g., Governor James Stirling). Following her discussion of the Pinjarra Massacre, Enid went on to share a story about her grandmother who knew about the gold (i.e., Boddington gold mine) before the white people found it. She discussed how her ancestors had hidden the gold in order to protect their campsite and in turn, their access to fresh water and hunting ground.

Enid: We just knew that the Abraham brothers and sisters laid on gold in Boddington area ‘cause they wanted that campsite that was their fresh water, their hunting ground, if they'd exposed that gold to the white people they might even got shot over it unna, to get off the land... yeah but they, bury it or something ‘cause grandmother used to talk about that gold before that mine

came, yeah, they knew about it... they all knew about it, so I believe our family is the famous family not the (*laugh*) James Stirling of the time.

Marcelle: Yeah, we live, we exist!

Captured in this story is the act of resistance to material domination (Scott, 1990) by her ancestors, who buried the gold to protect their campsite. Further, in this example, Enid alludes to the greed of white settlers and their exploitative relationship with the land, with Aboriginal/Noongar people in contrast, positioned as the protectors of country (Bishop, Vicary, Mitchell, & Pearson, 2014).

In the excerpt below, Enid describes the heroism of an Aboriginal soldier who came back from war⁵⁷ to still not be counted as a citizen and speaks of how this history is not acknowledged.

Enid: We did have one from here... They reckon he saved his whole platoon you know through killing a lot of ... the enemy but I never see anything recognised about him you know.

Interviewer: 'Cause when they came back they still not counted as citizens

Enid: Still not counted.

Marcelle: Yeah they still weren't citizens of their own country

Enid: They should be unsung heroes, you know, they was there.

Through her storytelling, Enid is amplifying the stories of Aboriginal soldiers and thereby engaging in the work of counter-memory (Watkins & Shulman, 2008), given that this history is only recently being official acknowledged as part of public

57 The speaker did not specify the war they were referring to specifically. As noted by SWALSC (2017g), "Aboriginal Australians fought in the second Boer War (1899-1902) through two World Wars and in the Vietnam war" (para. 1), but it is only in recent years that this has begun to be acknowledged.

memory (SWALSC, 2017g). Enid also shared a story about an Aboriginal person who had fought in the war only to come back to be refused service at the pub.

Enid: You know he'd been to war, and we went to go have a drink in the pub and they told him get your black ass out of here you black so and so. And he came back with a gun and he shot that publican... He did 50 years for it

Interviewer: He killed him?

Enid: He killed him. I did a lot of killings for youse. You know he killed a lot of ...whoever he, they was fighting against, and he came back and they treated him like a dog, so he showed him, put him in his grave.

Scott (1990) wrote about how tales of revenge such as this, become part of the hidden transcript.

As part of the storytelling workshop, Revel shared the following story⁵⁸ of his father's resistance. As noted in the Elders portrait project catalogue,

Revel tells how his father returned from war service to find that his children had been placed in a mission. He was so furious; he turned up with grenades and lobbed them into the river next to Carrolup Mission. He threatened to blow the place up unless they released his children. The missionaries relented and released them. Revel and his family went on to live on reserves and farms in the region, but most importantly, they remained together. (CAN WA, 2014b)

While the truth of this story has not been verified, what is important here is the role that the story plays for Revel, his family, and Noongar people more broadly. The story can be read as one of resistance to white power and control of Aboriginal lives.

⁵⁸ To watch Revel's digital story, see: <https://vimeo.com/155489476>

The story also highlights the injustice of Revel's father fighting a war for the same country that imposed policies of forcible child removal.

Elders shared stories about Noongar resistance to oppression and achievement in the face of adversity. Some of the stories centred versions of history that have been silenced from official history, and the storytelling can therefore be seen as a form of counter-memory (Watkins & Shulman, 2008). These stories of resistance are important symbolic resources for constructing a valued identity as a Noongar, Aboriginal person and attest to the fact that Aboriginal people and Noongar people specifically have not passively accepted colonial domination but actively resisted it.

Cultural Continuity and Survival

The stories shared by Elders were not only counter-stories existing solely in a relationship of domination. Some stories were anchored in Aboriginal frames of reference, thereby pointing to the processes of cultural maintenance and renewal. These stories, while they are told in a context of whiteness/coloniality, also exist independently and reflect how Noongar people have created alternative settings away from dominant culture where they have been able to hold on to valued ways of knowing, doing, and being (Sonn & Fisher, 1998). Of specific relevance to Noongar experience is L. Collard et al's (2004) trilogy of *boodjar* (country), *moort* (family or relations) and *katitjin* (knowledge). As noted by L. Collard and colleagues,

In our Nyungar Cosmology...the Waakal⁵⁹ is the Creator, the keeper of the fresh water sources. He gave us life and our trilogy of belief in the boodjar - the land - as our mother and nurturer of the Nyungar moort - family and relations - and our katitjin - knowledge so that we could weave that intricate

⁵⁹ *Waakal* is the Noongar word for rainbow serpent (and may be spelt in different ways).

tapestry known as the 'web of life'. This is the trilogy of our Nyungar theory.

Our stories reflect this belief. (p. 24)

The stories told by Elders pointed to the ongoing significance of the trilogy of *boodjar*, *moort*, *katitjin* to Noongar people, and are displayed in Figure 9 below.

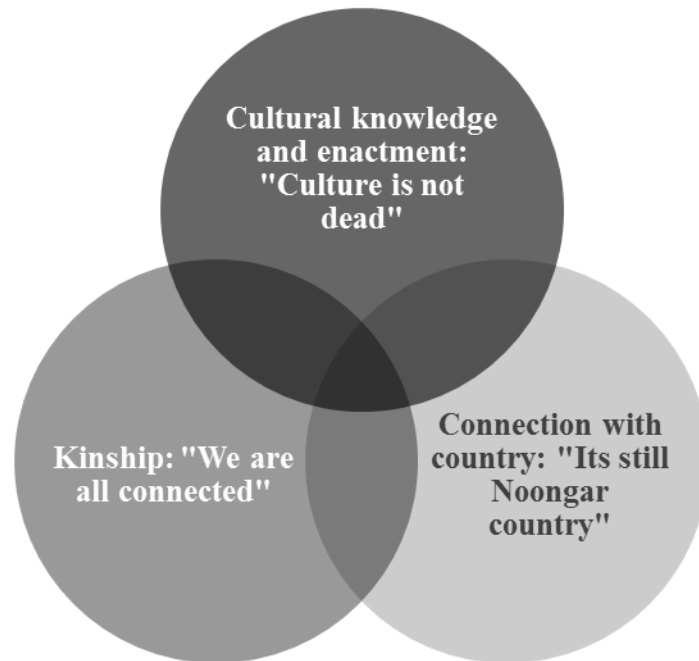


Figure 9. Cultural continuity and survival

Cultural knowledge and enactment: “Culture is not dead”. Through their stories, the Elders discussed the significance of cultural understandings and practices that enabled them to survive on the fringes, as well as how Noongar people found spaces to express their cultural identity and engage in cultural practice. Janet shared memories of her own family’s survival on the fringes:

We had the cemetery on one side and we had the Rusty Bridge on the other side where we had the campsites and we had farmers who supported us in getting water, we had fresh water because the councils⁶⁰ never supported us.

⁶⁰ Councils is used to refer to local government.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

They didn't care one way or another. We had to live on our own survival skills and a lot of the farmers around that area...they supplied a lot of the jobs. As expressed by Janet, councils never supported them and so Noongar people survived because of their "own survival skills", and the support of some farmers who accepted Noongar people.

The cultural knowledge of Noongar midwives was also captured in the Elders' storytelling. Indeed, the Bush Baby project began with Winnie McHenry who wanted to honour the babies born in the bush and the midwives who delivered them (CAN WA, 2017a). For example, Janet shared memories of her grandmother who was a Noongar midwife.

My grandmother ... she took care of a lot of babies, she delivered most of her daughter's children and a lot of her nieces, maybe in my lifetime of remembering there would have been about two or three babies that died, not at birth but along the way. Most of those babies, they were healthy babies growing up. The rate of survival was very high because the old women took care of those girls you know took care of the mothers, and the men just kept out of the way, they didn't interfere and that was one good thing. When our babies were born, like when the little ones before the hospital time came along, the old grandmothers used to always give the babies a special bath you could say....

Enid similarly expressed pride in her ancestors and the knowledge they had, specifically in relation to birthing stories: "my grandmothers didn't have the knowledge of the graduates, or whatever, the training, they just learnt from their oldies".

...they did what they had to do, you know as I said they didn't have the skills what a graduate had from a midwife thing you know, they just did what came naturally 'cause they'd been taught through the ages, you know, from their grandmothers and stuff like that you know, or cousins or, knew what to do.

In the excerpts below taken from Wendy's digital story, she shared memories of her 'tough' grandmother catching crayfish and kangaroos.

She was one that actually um Nan took us to catch gilgies⁶¹, she'd just drive her hand straight down the hole (*laugh*) come out bleeding, (*laugh*) but that's what she'd do. Pull out the gilgie, (*laugh*) so that was really good.

She was tough alright. Yeah she used to catch kangaroos by snares and ah you know, they said,...my father, he was on one side, and the kangaroo in the back, she was really, really, really tough, yeah.

Janet also reflected on the resourcefulness of her mother and the knowledge that Noongar women had about food available in the bush.

Mum would take everything with us, she'd always have her two ovens, one for the dampers, and the other oven for making a big pot of stew or whatever and I used to wonder, where mum getting all-this foodstuff from? She would go walkabout for about an hour or so with my brother and they'd come back with a bag full of stuff so that was the kind of person mum was and she wasn't the only one. A lot of the old women knew that. The old women knew more about what was edible than the men, the men was too busy chasing kangaroos or goannas and that. Women did all the um hunting for the other stuff.

61 *Gilgie* or *jilgie* is the Noongar name for a small freshwater crayfish.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

These snippets of stories highlight how Elders were remembering the survival of their family on the fringes, which was dependent upon specific cultural knowledge and practices such as hunting and food gathering, and traditional birthing practices.

While Noongar people were pushed to the fringes of towns where they experienced grinding poverty, the bush was also identified as a space of freedom and healing. These stories therefore highlighted how Aboriginal/Noongar people created alternative settings where they were able to protect, maintain, and renew valued aspects of identity and culture that were devalued within the larger society (Sonn & Fisher, 1998). In the excerpt below, Janet described being in the bush as an escape, a place where they had a greater sense of freedom.

...they would leave the towns and they'd work, they'd stay out, they'd take all the young people out and most of the time, the young people didn't see town for months on end because the old people had their old horse and carts and they'd lived out places ... where the old grannies were buried and they would do a lot of getting back to their original I suppose you could say identity because a lot of them seemed to think once they got into town, with the problems that were existing in towns and the racism that existed in most of the country towns around where I grew up, it was better to be in the country, it was better to be in the bush because out there you had a freedom to express yourself and a freedom to work with the people who accepted the Noongar people so it was really good.

Janet explained that in the bush Noongar people could “get back to their original identity”; they had the freedom of cultural expression. As captured here, keeping the young people out of the towns was also a way in which Elders protected

them from the problems that exist in towns (e.g., alcohol and drugs), and to ensure that they grow up strong in culture.

These alternative settings—out bush, on reserves— were spaces where Noongar people could speak language and practice culture. For example, Revel, who grew up on a reserve on the outskirts of town, emphasised the knowledge he learnt from his ‘old people’ on country, and expressed “Culture is not dead, through my life I’ve been through it I know what’s it’s like”.

Very hard to talk Noongar way because a lot of them are lost. Sometimes I talk Noongar way to my kids and they’ll ask me what I’m saying and I can tell them what I’m talking about. ...Some of our grandparents are teachers. When they in the bush, they’ll talk Noongar way. When they’re where someone else, they’ll talk English.

Thus Noongar people found spaces to be free—to practice language and culture away from white people/society and thus engage in practices central to the continuity of a valued identity and way of life. Revel says that he now tries to teach his children and grandchildren language when he takes them out bush.

Revel also shared memories of hearing his old people talk Noongar language and engaging in cultural practices.

Revel: This is where all old fellas used to talk their language, the Noongar way, they wouldn’t talk very much but they would talk to their self,...on their own, picked up a little bit... the old people used to say when we go in the bush we make a fire and smoke the kids and all that then keep the devils away from them.

Michelle: They weren’t allowed to do any of that stuff on the missions were they?

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Revel: Nah, but we had, but that's the way they taught us and they learned us to do the right way

Michelle: Bring you out places like this, out bush?

Revel: Yeah, if anyone wants to go out bush, like I'll tell you where, the old prison farm where the big rock is, you go there late in the afternoon, about 5.30, you go sit on the rock, then you can hear all the old Aboriginal people talking their language. ... don't be frightened for 'em ... little kids and all crying, they'll its beautiful if you hear 'em. The way they goes on.

Revel commented that their old people were their teachers, they taught them “the right way” (i.e., Aboriginal way). He described how he still goes back to particular places in the bush and can hear his old people speaking Noongar language. As captured here, the bush was a place where Aboriginal people could speak language, practice traditional ceremony, and share stories. Therefore, going back to places on country brings back memories of his old people.

Caroline also discussed how they weren't “allowed to learn no Noongar culture”, however they managed to pick up bits and pieces as they went, though not from their immediate families.

So we never, we had to learn as we went, you know, as we was growin', we learnt, but it wasn't from our immediate families. I know they used to tell us be careful (Saying Noongar words), all that, all them things, you know, careful about what's in the bush.

In an interview she explained how just being with your family, you learn culture.

Well, like being with your family... you learn about culture every day, because they practice it with us you know and what they do for everyday life,

we're learning that. So that's the culture in itself. Without 'em, like an educational sort of thing, or telling us about straight to our face, they're practicing it in front of us and we're learning it. That's the best way to go too, you know cause it sort of stays with us.

Caroline expressed that while they were not supposed to learn their culture because of policies of assimilation, they did still learn just by being with their families, emphasising that it "stays with us". Therefore while they mourned the loss of culture brought about by forcible removal, this was not a total loss and they have found ways to hold on to cultural knowledge, practice, and in some cases, language, and also communicated that they were engaged in these processes of reclamation.

Geraldine who grew up on a reserve with extended family, shared memories of the cultural practice of her 'old people' telling stories around the campfire:

There were lots of times where we would sit around the campfire and the oldies would tell us stories, you know dreamtime stories and stories about where they worked and where they came from you know, so yeah it was um, it was really, really wonderful 'cause we heard those stories.

Geraldine recognised the privilege of getting to hear all those stories given that many who were taken from parents did not get to.

In her digital story, Geraldine spoke about an old rock formation that resembles the old *Waakal* (i.e., rainbow serpent).

There was a rock formation of the old *Waakal* that runs from top of the hill all the way down and when you stand back you look and one of the waterholes actually looks like the eye of the *Waakal*, its really you can see it, but over the years its um, its um, with the sheep and that it sort of destroyed the artefactsmum takes all her grannies there and wash their feet in that um narma hole

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

and the kids are quite refreshed and um she tells 'em you know 'come and wash, you never been here before this is your old peoples home, this is your old peoples land this is what you must do, you must respect your old people, and their culture and their lore'.

Geraldine described how her mother takes her grandchildren to this place on country and the cultural practices that are followed in paying respect to their 'old people', country, culture, and lore.

In a digital story made about Nana purple whose photograph inspired the Elders portrait project, one of her daughters shared the following story:

She was telling us a story about the frog... She reckoned when she was a little girl at five or six. In the early days they had no modern medicine and long way from town and that you know and years ago they never let no Noongars in the hospital here when they were having their babies... Anyway she had this um bout of pneumonia out in the bush and didn't know what to do, so old Grandfather ... great grandfather. Noongar days, old fellas they... had the gift of healing.... So old grandfather of ours had the power of healing. And years ago they used to have some sort of symbol you know, and um Bennell's is a frog, Bennell's is all our ancestors, like where we come from and um Bennell's is a frog and old grandfather got this big frog and put it on her chest...rub it rub it, and the frog disappeared. She reckon, next, that it feel like a clock was ticking in her. From that day on no sickness. Nothing, not even now. Yeah so we believe it must have been that frog.

This story of her 'old grandfather' who had the power of healing conveys cultural understandings, meaning systems, which continue to be passed on within families.

Connection with country: “It’s still Noongar country”. The continuing significance of country for Noongar people and the act of going back to country with their children and grandchildren was captured in the Elders’ storytelling. For example, Janet shared the following:

A lot of our old people did a lot of work along there, especially my grandparents and my mum and dad, and um to me taking my kids back there and taking my grannies back there, it sort of reliving a lot of that, it brings back a lot of memories.

As captured here, going back to these places—places where her old people worked and camped therefore “brings back a lot of memories”. Janet emphasised the connection between kinship, country, and the cultural knowledge that comes with it, as she described her families “Noongar run”, or *Moort Boodja* (family country).

The York Williams⁶² always a symbol of kinship,...for our Noongar people. ... that run ... that was always special, it was always a symbol of family, kinship, getting together, new birth, all the birthing places along that river, along that road and most of the camp sites along there.

For Janet then, going back to country was connected with memories of her family, and the stories of those places.

...to me going back to those places today, and taking my family back you know it makes you feel good because it’s your country, you feel like you haven’t lost it, It’s still Noongar country and there’s a lot of stories relating to all those countries.

⁶² York and Williams are different towns in Western Australia. York is situated 97 kilometres east of Perth. Williams is 160 kilometres south east of Perth.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Just as Revel emphasised that culture is not dead, Janet asserted that it is “still Noongar country”, and the practice of going back to country, makes her feel that they “haven’t lost it”.

Similarly, Enid expressed the significance of the old reserve: “I mean the reserve up here's special”.

Interviewer: So you have a really strong connection with Narrogin?

Enid: Yeah Narrogin is my home. I've been away for 15 years, but I came back, wanted to come back. I feel, I can walk around the reserve and feel their presence, you know, they're not there, you know, but as I say, I go to the reserve and I can, you know I know where everyone's been or where everyone camped and you know it's so....

Interviewer: So you go out there a lot?

Enid: I take my Grannies out there, I took my grannies out there the other day only I couldn't get over the little creek 'cause it's still flowing with water, but ah...we gonna show where my son was born (*laugh*). He said he's going to claim that little spot there (*laugh*).

Enid described her strong connection with Narrogin, because it is the country of her parents, grandparents, ancestors and she can “feel their presence” when she walks on the reserve. She shared that she still takes her grandchildren to these places.

Wendy also shared a story of an uncle who took her back to where her father grew up.

He took us there, and that was really good, ..., so he showed us around, he showed us where his, where the other brother was born, and without that knowledge we wouldn't have known, you know because it was just on the side of the road at a particular dam... I'm kind of a person too who actually likes to

find out about that stuff 'cause it connects to land and just makes us who we are.

Wendy emphasised the importance of this knowledge about place, and of connection with country to Aboriginal/Noongar identity, stating this knowledge connects her with country and makes her who she is (Bishop et al., 2014; Dudgeon et al., 2002). As these examples illustrate, knowledge of these places, passed on through stories plays an important role in constructing identity as Noongar people, in the present (CAN WA, 2014c).

In Revel's storytelling, connection with country and the cultural knowledge that comes with it was particularly emphasised.

In the bush is different. If you looking for a feed, its right in front of you.

That's my life living, when I was young. But my life changed 'cause I got three grannies and they're my little shadows or I'm like their mother and father. I like, whatever they want me to do, I'll do it for 'em. They want to go catching gilgies⁶³ or want to go somewhere I go and catch 'em some and they'll come with me. They come with me, they go out the bush, they watch me, what I eat and they want to fight me for it, to give them some of it.

Culture is not dead; through my life I've been through it I know what's it's like.

Revel described how he teaches his 'grannies' what food they can eat when they're in the bush. Evidently, culture for him is inextricably tied up with being on country, and he proudly asserted that culture is not dead.

⁶³ *Gilgie* or *jilgie* is the Noongar name for a small freshwater crayfish.

Revel emphasised that Aboriginal people “know everything about it” (i.e., the bush), in contrast to the lack of knowledge that “Europeans” (i.e., non-Aboriginal people) have:

Michelle: What do these sort of places mean to you?

Revel: ... Like there's some people been buried here, some old fellas, womans [sic] and kids been buried here, ... we don't like to dig up because there's some old burial grounds here, but you can't tell Europeans, you can't tell 'em properly, I said you fellas' don't know nothing about the bush, you understand we been there, we been reared up, we been walking through the bush and we know everything about it and youse don't, we'll take youse out the bush, you won't come back, 'cause we'll leave you there (*laugh*).

In this example, Revel was expressing frustration with “the Europeans” who do not listen to them and the knowledge they have about particular places (e.g., “old burial grounds”) that need to be protected. He is conveying cultural understandings that are not acknowledged or valued by non-Aboriginal people. Revel positions Aboriginal people as the custodians of the land, and reflecting the hidden transcript of indignation (Scott, 1990), said that he would take ‘Europeans’ out in the bush and they would not come back because they do not have the knowledge to survive in the bush.

Caroline also discussed the sacred connection that Aboriginal people have with the land, and expressed frustration with non-Aboriginal people not following cultural protocol.

‘Cause everything that Aboriginal people had, even before the white people came, it was all sacred country, they did all their ceremonial, and they did all their storytelling, you know, they bonded with the land, and what's ‘sturbing

(i.e., disturbing) it, is bringing foreign people over and not introducing them to the (*pause*) to the real people of the land.

Here she positions Aboriginal people as “real people” or the custodians of the land.

She continued,

That land is still in Aboriginal lands. White people don’t know that ‘cause the Aboriginal people ...their sacred lives have been going and are still going, no one’s stopping it, no one can stop it. It’s just that white people should never have overcome Aboriginal people, for their country...

Caroline emphasised the sacred spiritual connection with country that Aboriginal people have that “no one can stop”.

‘Cause the owners of the land are the ones got the link to it, they got the key to open the door to safety and respect, so they did it wrong.... it’s very important, Aboriginal people put these things in front of other people you know because they’re more important, because they’re the ones that can release the real true um identity of who they are on the land, and what relationship they have...for each other...

In this example, Caroline explained the importance of recognising Aboriginal people as the custodians of the land because they have “the link to it”—they have the knowledge to “open the door to safety and respect”. Enid similarly expressed that Aboriginal people are the real storytellers. She said, “we’re here, the real storytellers you know” (*laugh*). She was expressing her bewilderment that an “English bloke” would be employed to talk about wildlife, when they are the real storytellers. These stories point to the ongoing significance of country for Aboriginal/Noongar people (Bishop et al., 2014; Dudgeon et al., 2002; Moreton-Robinson, 2003).

Kinship: “We are all connected”. For Noongar people, *moort* is your family or relations (L. Collard et al., 2004). The Elders’ stories about family and kinship communicated the significant role that extended family played in mediating the impacts of oppression and thus of surviving on the fringes. These stories pointed to the relational processes or forms of support provided by extended family units on reserves or the fringes of towns (Case & Hunter, 2012; Sonn & Fisher, 1998). Further, the maintenance of kinship and extended family structures is an important part of cultural continuity, particularly given the disruption of the family and cultural unit through assimilationist policies and practices.

Across their storytelling, Elders described the difficult conditions on the reserves. However, despite the hardships, Elders often reminisced about happy times with their extended families, and emphasised that nothing worried them—they were happy. For example, Joan said, “It was a hard life but it was a happy life you know”, “Yeah tough days, but we never, it never worried us. We got on with our life”. This emphasis on the ‘good old days’— of happy memories despite the hardships, was something that was common across the storytelling. Apart from one Bush Baby storyteller (Arthur), who when asked this, responded, “no it was just hard”. The hard life they had was offset by good memories with family, and of cultural practices such as sitting around the fire. For example, Enid said,

We had everything we needed, we didn’t need anything flash, just the family around, the old cooking pot, billy can unna, old enamel plates or something. Mightn’t have had many but you know, we just knew how to sit around the fire and dip in the pan and you know.

Enid emphasised the closeness of extended families on reserves. She shared the following with students as part of the storytelling workshop:

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

That was our place, that was our home, you know, we thought we never leave there, or anything would ever happen to us, we had family connection, we had our own tin house, but around that house, your uncle would have a tent, grandmother and grandparents, you know two grandmothers, and two grandfathers were there, sort of all helping one another, one went to town the other would mind the kids, all babysit, the respect we had to give to our Elders we didn't get away with it if we was naughty, they'd use a little switchy stick on us if we was naughty (*laughing*), ... they was all loving, they all cared for us, they did without for us, they um hunted for us.

Enid spoke about the importance of having extended family to look after each other, stating “we had family close together because um the closer you were you know, you could just, the parents might go to town and you had someone to care for the kids you know”. She said, “...a happy childhood, that’s all I knew, just family you know... I'd run off with anyone, ‘cause everyone was trusted you know. Mum just knew that she had someone who she could trust to look after me”.

I wasn't only looked after by mum you know...you know it wasn't always the parents because babies were special in those days. Like I cuddle my brothers and walk around with ‘em and thing, they must have done the same to me you know not only your sisters but uncles and aunties and all, people would come from far just to come see a baby, you know, even if they had to walk from a place and take days to get there it was a big thing, got to go see the new baby you know. They didn't bring gifts or big money or big you know they just brought their own selves and that was worth more than gold or whatever to see coming and all sharing, talking about the new name I suppose...

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

In these excerpts Enid is reminiscing about the strong sense of home on the reserve, the closeness of extended families, the sense that everyone could be trusted, and the discipline that there was for their for Elders. Through this storytelling, she is centring the love and care that characterised family life and the family and social structures that were in place that were fundamental to community resilience (see Atkinson, 2002). In speaking about the strong extended family units, Enid is pointing to the role of support and sense of community that is provided in these alternative settings (i.e., reserves, fringes of towns) by extended family (Sonn & Fisher, 1998).

In one of her digital stories, Geraldine also spoke about the discipline and respect for Elders that the young people had in those days, as highlighted in the following two excerpts.

In those days, early days, bringing kids up and the discipline that we'd actually come under was a really strict one, our grandfathers Nannas and Pops or our Uncles and Aunties ... they actually could actually discipline us in a way that you know we would respect 'em.

And old nannas they'd all cook a feed for us, and we'd get our supper and then we'd have to go straight to bed, we wasn't allowed to, 'cause, at night they'd all make a big fire and all the oldies would sit around that fire place, and they'd yarn you know, and we wasn't allowed to you know they told us that we had to sit down have our feed and then get to bed ready for school in the morning.

These examples point to the strong family structures that were in place and which have been disrupted (as highlighted in the previous chapter). These memories about strong connected families therefore point to the disruptive impacts of

successive government policies, for Aboriginal families (Atkinson, 2002; Babidge, 2016; Haebich, 2000; Shaw, 2012).

Enid, a member of the Stolen Generations, communicated that it was family that kept them strong while they were in the mission.

They tried to kill a lot of the kids, the spirit in ‘em but you know, or the thing in them, but the love, or the something just kept us going you know, we knew we had families back in town, we knew we thought we were thousands of miles in the bush, now we realise that Wandering⁶⁴ about an hour’s drive.... You know even though they tried to tear us away, a lot of the kids come back (i.e., to the reserve).

At the storytelling workshop she shared similar sentiments with the students, explaining that “They never killed our spirit you know, they never killed it. We knew when we was in there, they loved us, where our family was”. She reiterated this point at the end of her story, stating, “they can kill the body you know, but they can’t kill the spirit (*laugh*) in all of us, you know wadjelas could put us down as much as they like, but somehow we always bounce back”. This individual and collective resilience was connected with the familial and social structures (Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson, 2011), which was captured by Enid’s memories of life on the reserve.

While the Elders’ stories pointed to the disruption caused to extended families and community connectedness, the ongoing connectedness of Noongar people was evident in the Bush Baby storytelling and throughout fieldwork—people constantly emphasised how Noongar families in Narrogin are all connected, and often spoke about the family history research they had done. Generally when people began their

⁶⁴ Wandering mission, where both Frank and Enid were taken.

storytelling they would say who their family was, and which families they are connected to, and where their country is, based on “who their mob is”. This was not the case for Joan however, who responded when asked who her mob was, “what do you mean?”

This sense of connection is epitomised by the quote from Enid, who commented, “we are all connected to the one group of descendants, we just split up like (*laugh*) the river... but it still flows with the one thing you know (*laugh*)”.

In the excerpt below, Janet discussed the significance of kinship for Noongar people.

My daughter always say ‘Mum what are you cooking so much food for?’ and of course, sometime you have plenty over the next day but it’s always good to share and that’s one thing about Noongar people, you know black fellas, we love to share, we never let someone go starving, we never let someone go hungry or anything like that. Doesn’t matter where that person come from you’d ask em ‘where you from mate’ (*Speaking in Noongar language*). And they’d say ‘oh’ they’d name a town, name a country and you know, ‘hey you my you my cobber mate, hey you my *moort*’, you know, ‘you’re family’. And everything else would be forgotten, you’d just want to feed that person make sure they taken care of, and that kind of kinship is slowly dying away with Noongar people because you know, Noongars are getting so embedded in I guess the towns and the cities and that, that kinship is slowly fading and we’re trying to revive that, we’re trying to bring it back.

Janet emphasised that while they are slowly losing their strong kinship networks, they are actively seeking to keep it alive. In this example, it is the practice of cooking plenty of food to share that reflects the fundamental importance of sharing—of

kinship. Similarly, Enid commented, “It doesn't seem so close now with all the families with their own houses. Everyone wants to be independent”, yet they “still got a connection” and will always share food:

Enid: When we have a big dinner we are all there (*laugh*), so when the dog barks, ‘oh who’s out there’ you know, if it’s someone we know, we share the food or share the tucker or whatever we having yeah. Something still left there for you if you feel hungry and that, mmm.

Marcelle: And they always come along when you're cooking a feed (*laugh*)

Enid: Yeah. They seem to time it too, yeah.

Thus, kinship remains an important part of what it means to be Noongar, even though it may not be as strong as it used to be given the history of dispossession.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented an analysis of the Elders’ stories that showed the resistant responses by Noongar people to oppression and speak to the survival of people and culture. Identified in the overall community narrative, “we survived, we’re still here”, were the various ways Noongar people have resisted oppression including psychological and behavioural strategies at an individual and interpersonal level, and symbolic responses. Importantly however, the stories were not only stories of oppression and resistance, but showed the continuity of culture. In particular, the stories highlighted the continuing significance and interconnectedness of *boodjar*, *moort*, *katitjin* (L. Collard et al., 2014). Therefore, while Noongar people spoke of the loss of culture and mourned for culture, the storytelling also showed how Noongar people have fought to hold on to, and found strength in *boodjar*, *moort*, *katitjin*. Elders shared memories of cultural knowledge and practice from the past, but they also expressed the continuity of cultural knowledge passed on from generation to

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

generation and the enactment of culture in the present. While these stories problematise whiteness, they at the same time centre another way of knowing, doing, and being in the world—they are articulating a Noongar ontology and so are not merely counter stories.

Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion

This current study was conducted in the context of a community arts and cultural development project, Bush Babies, delivered as part of the Rekindling Stories on Country strategy, which was co-developed by Community Arts Network (CAN) with Aboriginal, Noongar communities in Western Australia. This strategy followed persistent requests from Noongar people across the Wheatbelt who told CAN staff, “Our young people are dying; they need their culture” (CAN WA, 2014a, p. 73). Bush Babies was one project delivered as part of this broader strategy across a number of Western Australian towns, and this research focused on its Narrogin iteration. Central to Rekindling Stories on Country was the creation of opportunities for intergenerational storytelling and cultural transmission, and a platform for Noongar stories to be shared with a broader audience (CAN, 2013, 2014a).

This research, which set out initially to examine the role of community arts and cultural development became more focused on exploring the narratives that Noongar Elders shared as the project unfolded. Of particular interest was the narratives through which Noongar Elders in the context of the Bush Babies project give meaning to their past, present, and future and the key themes in these stories of growing up on missions, reserves, and the fringes of towns, about oppression and resistance. Specifically, the research questions were: 1) what are the narratives through which Aboriginal people in Western Australian give meaning to their past, present and future; 2) what are the key themes in these stories; and 3) what strategies are evident in how they construct their identities and sense of self?

The research framework drew from the broader areas of critical community, liberation, and cultural psychology. Key features of the framework included the recognition of the historicity and relationality of oppression and privilege, the

interconnectedness of structure and lives, and the dialectic of oppression and resistance, which can be examined through stories and narrative (Fine, 2014; Hammack, 2008; Montero, Sonn, & Burton, 2017; Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013; Squire, 2003; Weis & Fine, 2012).

Based on critical narrative analysis of the personal stories of ‘Bush Babies’, the findings produced were organised around three broad community narratives. The shared community narratives provided important insights into culture and context and its profound effects on individuals’ lives. The shared narratives shed light onto the deleterious impacts of colonial dispossession, assimilation, and racism, but also the ways in which individuals and communities have sought to protect themselves and hold onto valued aspects of identity and culture, including through storytelling about self, other, and the social world. In each of the community narratives there are specific features that speak to the lives of the different narrators. These key narratives are discussed below.

The Circuits of Dispossession in Post-Colonising Australia

The first community narrative showed the circuits and accumulation of dispossession for Aboriginal people, past and present. The Elders narrated how “life was put on [them]”, but they also emphasised that “it’s still going on”. The stories shared by Elders included references to the mechanisms of control that were central to colonialism historically (Moane, 2011), as well as the modes of violence/injustice that continue in the present and function to reproduce the colonality of power (Quijano, 2000). Moreton-Robinson (2003) referred to this colonality in her description of Australia as a post-colonising as opposed to post-colonial society. Atkinson (2002) discussed these ongoing forms of violence as covert structural violence and psychosocial dominance. It is therefore important to challenge assumptions that settler

colonial societies like Australia, are ‘post’ colonial, whilst at the same time acknowledging the differences between then and now.

Drawing from historical memory as well as their own personal memories, this shared community narrative revealed the interlocking mechanisms and practices of oppression that have shaped and constrained the lives of Aboriginal people historically. The mechanisms included the ideology of white supremacy/race and racism, which legitimised direct physical violence, exploitation and exclusion, the deliberate fragmentation of families and communities, and the removal of culture and language through assimilationist policies and practices. A central aspect of narrating the circuits of dispossession for some of the Elders was the recollection of the experience of being removed from their families and growing up in missions as part of the Stolen Generations. The Elders shared memories of the day they were taken and of everyday lives in the mission where they (and/or sometimes their parents before them) were dispossessed of their families, their childhoods, and their “inheritance of cultural knowledge, identity and strength” (Pat Dudgeon in *People, Culture, Environment*, 2014, p. 7). Evident in their stories was the fact that these memories stay with them; they “can’t get away from it until [they] die”. The stories highlighted the impossibility of simply ‘moving on’, as they spoke back to dominant cultural narratives, which others have reported, that construct Aboriginal people as having a ‘nostalgia for injustice’ (Grant, 2016) (i.e., as wallowing in self-pity), and needing to move on (to forgive and forget) (Quayle & Sonn, 2013). The calls to move on are tantamount to the denial of history and personal experience and biography.

Importantly, the circuits of dispossession were not only memories of past forms of colonialism and its mechanisms of violence/injustice but was expressed in the continuity of structural, cultural, and interpersonal forms of violence, in the

everyday lives of Aboriginal people. The Elders spoke of how their lives continue to be shaped and constrained in a context of whiteness/coloniality—a context where they are “still underneath”. The Elders’ stories pointed to the institutionalised/structural violence experienced in relation to criminal justice, education, employment, housing, and decision-making on issues affecting their lives. In highlighting ongoing structural violence, the Elders’ stories showed how Aboriginal people, and young people in particular, continue to be dispossessed of hope for an alternative future (Walter, 2010a). The Elders’ stories about their lives therefore captured the ongoing “conditions of misery, inequality, exploitation, marginalization, and social injustices” (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996, p. 130) produced and normalised by structural violence.

In relation to cultural/symbolic forms of violence (Collins, 2000; Galtung, 1990), the Elders emphasised the silencing and erasure of a history of dispossession and the accumulation of privilege on the other side, as well as the failure to acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal/Noongar people (“It’s got to be exposed one way or another”). This silencing and erasure of the circuits of dispossession and privilege is central to the reproduction of the structural violence of whiteness/coloniality. This shared community narrative therefore pointed to the need for acknowledgement of this ongoing history of dispossession, and the Elders (and Mick in particular) problematised white Australia’s investment in ignorance—“they don’t want to know”. Different authors have discussed this investment in ignorance using the concept of an epistemology of ignorance (Bailey, 2007; Mills, 2007; Sullivan, 2007; Sullivan & Tuana, 2007). Hoagland (2007) and Levine-Rasky (2016) have suggested that the denial of relationality between the oppressed and the oppressors functions to reproduce colonial and racialised power, specifically,

whiteness. In the stories shared by Bush Baby Elders, there was a clear recognition of the way in which structural violence depends upon distortions of meaning (Farmer, 2004), including dehistoricisation and universalisation (Bourdieu, 2000), which serve to naturalise social power relations, and reflect the denial or forgetting of the specificity that has produced these relations. The stories therefore highlighted how structural violence is supported/legitimised through cultural/symbolic violence (Collins, 2000; Galtung, 1990).

At the interpersonal level, the stories indicated that while incidents of racism are now less overt and less common, they still occur, and Aboriginal people often feel unwelcome in ‘white’ spaces. These stories pointed to ongoing experience of individual level racism (Glover, Dudgeon, & Huygens, 2010), but also to the implications of coloniality/whiteness for subjectivities and intersubjective relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Australia. Coloniality/whiteness means that Aboriginal people can still feel like intruders, or as though they are trespassing, when they are in public space. The stories therefore showed how dominant cultural narratives about Aboriginal people continue to get under their skin, shaping and constraining how they experience themselves (and the strong presence of racial gaze) in public spaces, which are often described as ‘white spaces’ (see Fredericks, 2009; Sullivan, 2006).

Having lived through policies of protection and assimilation, the Elders’ stories provided insights into the circuits that produced relations of domination, how this dispossession has accumulated over time, but also how it continues in contemporary times, albeit in more subtle forms. The Elders’ storytelling therefore illustrated the relevance of the concept of coloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Grosfuguel, 2007; Quijano, 2000), and the ongoing power, privilege, and normativity

of whiteness in post-colonising Australia (Moreton-Robinson, 2003). The Elders' storytelling about contemporary lived realities also resonated with Walter's (2009, 2010a, 2010b) writing on the domain of Aboriginality in the era of neoliberalism, specifically, her identification of the continued absences, dispossession, disregard, and socioeconomic inequality.

Psychosocial Suffering: A Consequence of Dispossession

The second community narrative, "This is where it all stems from" provided insights into psychosocial suffering, then and now, as narrated by the Elders. Psychosocial suffering is an approach that recognises the generation of psychological distress—intrapsychic and relational wounds—in conditions of structural violence (Farmer, 2009; Frosh & Hoggett, 2008; Kleinman, Das, & Lock, 1997; O'Loughlin & Charles, 2015; Segalo, 2013). Specifically, the stories showed the psychic burden carried by individuals ("It's burnt in our brains"), the disruption to culture and community ("No one listens anymore"), and the effects across generations ("Our kids are carrying what we been through"). This narrative brought into sharp focus the devastating consequences for the Stolen Generations, with the impacts of these policies and practices understood as insidious and cumulative, and transmitted across generations. Twenty years since the Bringing Them Home report (HREOC, 1997), the Elders' stories therefore showed the devastating consequences and reverberations, which continue in the present (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017). The stories therefore resonated with writing on the internalisation of oppression as a destructive and insidious consequence of colonisation (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017; Australian Human Rights Commission [AHRC], 2011; David, 2014; Feeney, 2009; Gonzalez, Simard, Baker-Demaray & Iron Eyes, 2014), and a possible manifestation of historical trauma,

cultural/spiritual genocides (Atkinson, 2002), or soul wounding (Duran & Duran, 1995).

The stories conveyed the Elders' understanding of issues such as substance abuse, violence, incarceration, suicide, and early death, as stemming from oppressive social realities, including the policies and practices of child removal (i.e., the Stolen Generations), and the pressures of assimilation (i.e., the expectation to live like white people) more broadly. The Elders expressed concern for their young people, with the narratives at times, conveying a sense of hopelessness and despair given the predictable and perpetual cycle that "keeps going round and round". Through their stories, which captured the harsh daily realities of Aboriginal lives (Walter, 2010a), the Elders thereby conveyed the consequences of the circuits of dispossession, and emphasised the link between past and present conditions. They spoke of the risk of Aboriginal young people going down the wrong path, related to their exposure to violence, drugs and alcohol, as well as issues of unemployment and incarceration. The Elders understood these issues as part of a cycle, and as connected to a 'live for the day' mentality produced in this limit situation they were narrating. This mentality is the product of marginality, where opportunities for imagining a different future are severely constrained.

Across their storytelling, they made clear, that the issues of psychosocial suffering stemmed not only from past trauma, but also from ongoing forms of structural oppression. This is in line with critical discussions on the use of the concept of trauma in Indigenous contexts (e.g., N. Clark, 2016; Kirmayer, Gone, & Moses, 2014). For example, Kirmayer, Simpson, and Cargo (2003) argued that the framing of issues in mental health language may "deflect attention from the large scale, and to some extent, continuing assault on the identity and continuity of whole peoples" (p.

597). Indeed, this continuing assault on Aboriginal people in Australia was emphasised in the Elders' understanding of current issues facing communities.

Evident in the storytelling, was the Elders' understanding that current issues are further exacerbated by the fact that "no one listens anymore", which reflects the diminishment of the traditional role of Elders in community as a direct result of the systematic processes of cultural disruption and community fragmentation (Atkinson, 2002; AHRC, 2011). The Elders' stories thus showed how because of the systematic and forceful removal of culture, Aboriginal/Noongar people are often, as Atkinson (2002) noted, "unable to function from either their own cultural relatedness, or from the culture of the oppressors. They feel in a world between" (p. 71). Moreover, the stories highlighted the issues of intragroup conflict such as feuding (AHRC, 2011; David & Derthick, 2014), which further compound the issues facing communities and make it difficult to work together towards change. As captured in their storytelling, the psychosocial wounds produced by the circuits of dispossession, make some Aboriginal people and communities vulnerable (Shaw, 2012). Shaw (2012) conceptualised this vulnerability as an "affliction of the powerless" (p. 1). Vulnerability, stemming from the fact that Noongar people are "still coming up from behind", was evident in the personal stories shared by Elders and this shared community narrative.

Following Segalo (2013), suffering is defined broadly as "encompassing more than the physical pain"; it "also includes situated, social, embodied, and shared experience of painful/traumatic/hurtful physical and psychological pain" (p. 151). Segalo discussed suffering "as a deep and collective experience of everyday life" (p. 151), and in so doing, problematised a "focus on cognition and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder", which she argued has prevented psychology/psychologists "from

hearing/knowing the relentless pain shooting through bodies, and relations over time and generations” (p. 151). Candib (2002) emphasised that “Suffering goes into the body and comes out, translated, as pain, as symptoms” (p. 47). Indeed, this understanding of suffering and embodied trauma was evident in the Elders’ stories, as they explained issues of substance abuse, suicide, and early death in relation to the experienced trauma (particularly of the Stolen Generations).

Resilience, Resistance, and Survival of People and Culture

The third community narrative “We survived, we’re still here” captured the various ways in which people resisted and survived oppression. The stories included individual and interpersonal strategies for protecting self and community, and resisting racialised oppression that have previously been reported in the literature (e.g., Case & Hunter, 2012). This included standing up for oneself, fighting back, but also preparing their children to survive in a white world. The act of storytelling itself is also conceptualised as a central part of this ongoing dynamic process of resistance, that is, as an “empowering act in the service of the construction of a positive group identity” as noted by O’Neill (1993, p. 95). Informed by Bell’s (2010) model, this shared community narrative included concealed stories of oppression, often involving humour, as well as resistance stories that commemorate Noongar/Aboriginal histories and Noongar/Aboriginal heroes (see also Case & Hunter, 2012). Concealed and resistance stories can be viewed as what Scott (1990) referred to as the hidden transcript; stories told away from public spaces and away from oppressors. These stories are examples of how Noongar people have responded to protect, maintain, and renew identity, community, and culture in the limit situations produced by racist/assimilationist policies, practices, and discourses. The stories show that the narrators do not necessarily buy into the stories they have been told of who they are

(Jones, 2014)—the ‘not as good mentality’ referred to by Gonzalez et al. (2014).

Instead, they show how people have created spaces and collective symbolic resources to deconstruct and speak back to dominant cultural narratives constructed about them, and maintain pride in and connection with their Aboriginal/ Noongar identity, history, and culture.

While the second community narrative highlighted the removal of culture and language and the destructive effects of this history for connectedness and relationships, the third community narrative highlighted the continuity of cultural knowledge and practice. In particular, the stories shared captured the ongoing significance of Aboriginal knowledge reflected in *moort* (family and kinship), *boodjar* (country), and *katitjin* (cultural knowledge and practice) for Noongar people (L. Collard, 2007, 2008; L. Collard, Harben, & van den Berg, 2004). Through the Bush Babies storytelling, Noongar/Aboriginal ways of knowing, doing, and being were centred, celebrated, and valued. The Elders shared stories of cultural practice and enactment (Montero et al., 2017) such as going out bush, often at the same time as they lamented the loss of and disconnection from culture and language. These are important symbolic resources that Noongar people have and continue to draw on in constructing identities and communities in the present. Through this narrative, Noongar people asserted pride in identity and belonging, and the continuity of Noongar cultural practice and knowledge despite the systematic efforts aimed at cultural annihilation/genocide. This community narrative, “we survived we’re still here” included both counter stories of oppression and resistance, as well as stories of cultural identity and belonging, which together with stories of oppression and resistance (Bell, 2010; Case & Hunter, 2012), play a central role in constructing

identities and fostering community connectedness in the present. Importantly, the knowledge shared by Elders was not only in reaction to colonialism, but despite it.

Storytelling, the Recovery of Historical Memory, and Decolonisation

The critical project of decolonisation has been described as co-intentional, involving different tasks for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Glover, Dudgeon, & Huygens, 2010; Huygens, 2011, 2016). As noted by Glover et al. (2010), for Indigenous people, the process of decolonisation supports them to “identity as members of a racial group systematically oppressed by a dominant culture”, and “to take action towards social transformation” (p. 355). Whereas, for members of coloniser groups, decolonisation necessarily involves coming to “acknowledge [our] personal participation in the structural and cultural racism” that perpetuates relations of domination/subordination (p. 355). This necessarily involves engaging with voices from positions of alterity as a means of challenging the wilful ignorance of the ongoing history of dispossession (Quayle, Sonn, & van den Eynde, 2016; Salter & Adams, 2013), and acknowledging different ways of knowing, doing, and being (Santos, 2014; Smith, 2012).

Critical and liberation oriented scholars have advanced the role of storytelling and the recovery of historical memory in the critical project of decolonisation (Martín-Baró, 1994; Lykes, Blanche, & Hamber, 2003; Lawson-Te Aho, 2014; Smith, 2012; Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013; Salter & Adams, 2013; Seedat, 2015; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). Storytelling has been advocated as an important means of democratising or decolonising research, and a way of bearing witness to and engaging with the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples (and other marginalised groups) as legitimate and valuable sources of knowledge (Fine, 2006; Seedat, 2015; Smith, 2012). Engaging with the voices of those from positions of alterity through

participatory and biographical approaches has also been central to liberation-oriented approaches (Montero, 2007, 2009; Montero et al., 2017; Teo, 2015; Watkins, 2015), and Critical Race Theory (Bell, 2010; Delgado, 1989; Ladson-Billings, 2003; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015; Salter & Adams, 2012; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Within these frameworks, the mobilisation of storytelling as decolonising method is part of enacting relational ethics and engaging in what Sonn, Stevens, and Duncan (2013) have discussed as a transformative psychosocial praxis (see Stevens, Duncan, & Hook, 2013).

Through the Bush Babies project, settings were created for Aboriginal/Noongar people to tell their stories. I first discuss the significance of the stories that were shared and elevated in this research as part of a transformative psychosocial praxis (Sonn et al., 2013), to challenge the collective amnesia of this ongoing history. I then discuss the significance of this storytelling and the recovery of historical memory for Aboriginal people as a means of responding to the destructive impacts of colonisation/coloniality.

Naming social realities, reframing issues and challenging wilful ignorance. Supporting communities and particularly those from positions of alterity, to tell their stories is important in seeking community perspectives on the issues affecting their lives (Hartmann & Gone, 2014; Kral, Ramírez García, Aber, Masood, Dutta, & Todd, 2011; Orford, 2008; Sonn & Quayle, 2012). Researchers can play a role in amplifying those stories as part of the co-intentional work of decolonisation (Huygens, 2011, 2016). We can provide resources to assist Indigenous communities, but it should be their voices that are centred with the gaze directed at whiteness (Evans, Hole, Berg, Hutchinson, & Sookraj, 2009; Lavalee & Clearsky, 2006; Sonn & Quayle, 2012). In this research, I sought to re-present/organise these stories by

adopting the supportive voice as described by Chase (2005). In so doing, I sought to enact “deep, respectful, and empathic witnessing in the present to the ancestral narratives and life experience of all those in our communities” (Shulman & Watkins, 2001, p. 8). Aboriginal Elders were thereby positioned as the ‘knowers’, rather than as objects (i.e., ‘the known’) (Moreton-Robinson, 2004). The Elders are the experts of their lives, and their stories needed to be centred (People, Culture, Environment, 2014; Kral et al., 2011; Seedat, 2015; Wendt & Gone, 2012). Thus, the role of the researcher becomes one of psychosocial accompaniment (Watkins, 2015). Watkins (2015) argued that psychosocial accompaniment necessitates

a reorientation of the subjectivity, interpersonal practices, and critical understanding of the accompanier so that (s)he can stand alongside others who desire listening, witnessing, advocacy, space to develop critical inquiry and research, and joint imagination and action to address desired and needed changes. (p. 324)

The stories, developed as part of a community based transformative psychosocial praxis (Sonn et al., 2013) are important for raising the consciousness, or awakening the social imagination (Christens, Hanlin, & Speer, 2007) of non-Indigenous Australians to create receptive social environments for social change and social justice (Campbell, Cornish, Gibbs, & Scott, 2010; Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2012).

The Elders provided testimony of a history of dispossession and the legacy of this history and in doing so had an opportunity to name contemporary social realities (Seedat, 2013; Segalo, 2013; Sonn et al., 2013), specifically, the harsh daily realities of Aboriginal lives (Walter, 2010a). The stories showed the ongoing forms of social injustice and the insidious and cumulative impacts of the longer history of frontier

violence, and protectionist and assimilationist policies and practices (including the Stolen Generations) which remain in the collective/historical memory of Aboriginal people. The stories also helped to reframe discussions about Noongar/Aboriginal people and culture by highlighting the social genesis of contemporary issues facing communities, specifically, as the legacy of past policies and ongoing conditions of social suffering. This reframing was also enabled through the articulation of the resilience, resistance, cultural continuity and survival of Noongar people, against dominant cultural narratives of individual and community dysfunction. Through naming social realities and offering their understanding of the issues individuals and communities face, the Elders challenged wilful ignorance of history and Noongar contributions, and reframed discussions of the 'Aboriginal problem'. Moreover, in this reframing, they challenged individualistic understandings of these issues, which has been emphasised as important by critical and Indigenous scholars (N. Clark, 2016; Gone, 2008; Krieg, 2009; Lavalley & Clearsky, 2006; Smail, 2001; Tuck, 2009; Wexler & Gone, 2015). The Elders' understanding of psychosocial suffering was thoroughly contextualised.

In reflecting on what the Elders chose to share, possible solutions to contemporary social issues were discernible. Similar to what others have argued (e.g., Dion, 2009; Dion & Dion, 2004; Lavalee & Clearsky, 2006), through their storytelling the Elders emphasised the need to create opportunities for people to tell their stories, and for people to bear witness to these stories, and listen responsibly. These stories are resources for strengthening social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people (Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; People, Culture, Environment, 2014; Zubrick et al., 2014), that is, cultural and community protective factors (Moorhead & LaFromboise, 2014; Wexler, 2014; Wexler, White, & Trainor, 2015). They are also

resources for challenging wilful ignorance of past and present structural violence (Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016). Importantly though, whilst highlighting the importance of younger generations of Aboriginal people having access to these stories, the Elders emphasised the need for real material changes in the lives of Aboriginal people. For example, they emphasised the need to put money into supporting young people, rather than “building all the jails for the Noongars”. Indeed, as noted by Segalo et al. (2015) in their work in South Africa and Palestine, drawing on the work of Nancy Fraser, the critical project of decolonisation necessarily involves both the politics of recognition and of redistribution. In Australia, engagement with the politics of redistribution is reflected in the grassroots push for a treaty and the recognition of sovereignty. This has involved the rejection by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of constitutional recognition, as merely symbolic.

Given this, the stories conveyed the need to awaken a sense of injustice (Deutsch, 2006) in those in the dominant group. Giroux (2004) argued for a pedagogy of public memory, which involves “making connections that are often hidden, forgotten, or wilfully ignored. Public memory in this sense becomes not an object of reverence but an ongoing subject of debate, dialogue, and critical engagement” (p. 68). The creation of spaces and resources for contesting public memory, and of creating new national stories based on greater historic consciousness (Maddison, 2011), and expanding the ecology of knowledge (Santos, 2014; Sonn & Baker, 2016) has been emphasised as important for reconstructing Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationships. Through community arts and cultural development action, counter-stories can be elevated to stimulate critical consciousness – an important foundation

for personal change and social activism in local contexts (Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016).

What has been produced through this research is situated knowledge (Montenegro, 2002), knowledge that is partial, because all knowledge is situated and partial (Cisneros-Puebla & Faux, 2008). However, it is knowledge grounded in the lived experience of Aboriginal people, and is part of developing transformative psychosocial praxis in and with communities (Sonn et al., 2013).

Reclaiming voice, history, identity, culture and community. Through the spaces created by the Bush Babies project, and the Rekindling strategy more broadly, Aboriginal people could voice histories of individual and collective suffering. Many have highlighted the importance of remembering and voicing suffering as part of the process of healing from experienced trauma and struggles for social justice (Apfelbaum, 1999, 2000; Delgado, 1989; Lawson-Te Aho, 2014; Seedat, 2015; Segalo, 2013; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). Healing necessarily involves both learning about history and its legacy but also engaging in processes of cultural reclamation and renewal. As defined by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), in the Canadian context,

Healing, in Aboriginal terms refers to personal and societal recovery from the lasting effects of oppression and systemic racism experienced over generations. Many Aboriginal people are suffering not simply from specific diseases and social problems, but also from a depression of spirit resulting from 200 or more years of damage to their cultures, languages, identities and self-respect. The idea of healing suggests that to reach 'whole health', Aboriginal people must confront the crippling injuries of the past. (p. 109)

In many ways, the notion of healing is akin to the concept of decolonisation, as described by Glover et al. (2010), as it is through this critical project of decolonisation that healing becomes possible—and Aboriginal people are empowered to reclaim their past, present, and future (Lavalee & Clearsky, 2006; Stevens, Duncan, & Sonn, 2010).

Reclaiming voice. Writing in the context of post-Apartheid South Africa, Segalo (2013) highlighted the importance of creating spaces for the articulation of memory, so that people can express “what the past meant for them both as individuals and as a collective” (p. 155) (see also Stevens et al., 2010). Segalo noted that sharing stories and memories could provide a “release to silenced voices” and contribute to self-understanding and healing (p. 154). Segalo contended that people need a safe space to be able to “‘voice’ their layers of suffering and a platform to remember and rehearse the voices and the silences, and to be allowed to express their experiences...so that they may re-story these in the hope of moving forward” (p. 22; see also Watkins & Shulman, 2008). Similarly, Atkinson (2002) in her *We Al-li* program discussed the importance of creating culturally safe spaces for people to share their stories as part of the relational process of healing. Atkinson discussed the significance of recognising your story as part of a collective story. In the context of a digital storytelling project in Aotearoa, Baltrán and Begun (2014) similarly discussed the transformative power of storytelling in terms of people of finding and sharing their story, of seeing their stories reflected in the stories of others, and of the supportive environment created through such projects, which fosters feelings of safety, freedom, and interconnectedness.

The creation of spaces for Aboriginal people to tell their stories is particularly important in a broader context, where those who have suffered have not been given a

platform to tell their stories, and where this suffering has not been properly acknowledged (Lykes et al., 2003; Segalo, 2013; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). That is, in contexts where collective suffering is routinely minimized or dismissed, as ‘in the past’—“when the master narratives continue to be that of ‘let us forget about the past’ ” (Segalo, 2013, p. 27). As noted by Segalo (2013) in such contexts, “the particular/individual remains silenced and continues to be ‘haunted’ by pain, trauma, shame, and continuous suffering” (p. 27). This push to move forward and forget about the past is also true in the Australian context (Barta, 2008; Short, 2012), and was reflected in what the Elders said as they named this push to forget and the failure to properly acknowledge this history. The Elders who participated in the project and in research interviews chose to share these stories, stories of suffering, of dispossession, but ultimately of resistance and survival, and emphasised the impossibility of forgetting (Quayle, Sonn, & van den Eynde, 2016). This is testament to the perceived importance of telling these stories, and having others bear witness to these stories.

Whilst recognising the importance of voicing suffering, different authors have also highlighted the difficulty in doing so (Apfelbaum, 2000; Segalo, 2013). This was evident in what Elders in this research said. For example, Caroline expressed that she has not been able to speak to her children about her experience of being taken from her family and growing up in the mission, yet she was able to speak with the young people involved in the workshop. As noted by Segalo (2013), “untold stories lead to silences being passed on from one generation to the next” (p. 40), and so the suffering is perpetuated and accumulates over time. Indeed, this was reflected in Caroline’s assertion that “our kids are carrying what we’ve been through”. Enid also expressed that she had tried to write her story, but she only gets so far, because of “the bad feelings” that it brings to the surface. Lykes (1997) recognised that silence is often

“adaptive, survival strategy”, but emphasised that this strategy can further exacerbate “people’s feelings of isolation” (p. 727). During fieldwork, Noongar staff expressed to me the significance of particular Elders sharing their stories, as this was the first time they had done so. It was through a longer-term involvement with CAN and their projects that Elders were supported to finally be able to share their stories. Importantly, they were not being pressured to share their stories, and could choose what it was that they wanted to share.

Reclaiming history. Even though some of the Elders emphasised difficulty of telling these stories, they communicated that they felt a responsibility to tell their stories—to pass on their stories to the younger generations of Aboriginal people. The Elders wanted to communicate to Aboriginal students the need to understand issues within their own families (e.g., being in foster care, and issues of drugs and alcohol, jail) as related to this history. Their stories conveyed how young Aboriginal people are intimately connected with this history, even if their own parents or grandparents have not shared these stories with them.

It was evident in the storytelling (and particularly Caroline’s) that the language of trauma has been useful for naming the intergenerational effects of this history in the present. As discussed by Kirmayer et al. (2014), the historical trauma narrative has been important in avoiding the paralysing self-blame, and recognising the societal genesis of psychological distress which can lead to issues of substance abuse as an example of ‘double suffering’ (Frost & Hoggett, 2008; see also Atkinson, 2002; Milroy, 2005). Indeed, some of the Elders emphasised the need to “think of the parents”, to understand the social genesis of their suffering that has led them to issues with drug and alcohol abuse and affected their ability to care for their own children.

Mohatt, Thompson, Thai, Kraemer and Tebes (2014) reframed historical trauma as a public narrative “that connects histories of group-experienced traumatic events to present day experiences and contexts” (p. 129). They argued that trauma becomes part of the collective cultural narrative, because people draw on “narratives to express both individual and collective identities and to situate themselves in social contexts” (p. 130). It was evident in the Bush Baby storytelling, that some of the Elders drew on this narrative to understand the present, and to communicate the connections between past and present to others. Moreover, even if they did not specifically use the language of trauma, they alluded to the experience of historical trauma and its insidious and cumulative impacts. Importantly, in drawing on the language of trauma, Caroline emphasised the ongoing experience of social structural oppression. This is similar to the way in which Elders in Hartmann and Gone’s (2014) research interpreted and made use of the historical trauma discourse, specifically, to highlight the ongoing systemic oppression and need for socio-structural change (see also Kirmayer et al., 2014).

The telling of these stories and the recovery of historical memory is important for learning and understanding about the history and legacy of colonisation, thereby fostering critical consciousness both within and beyond Aboriginal communities. As Watkins and Shulman (2008) noted, the purpose of storytelling about the past is not simply

a retrieval of painful memories for their own sake . . . but the building of a shared understanding of history and social context in a community environment that will witness past events in order to prevent future violence and exclusion and build up possibilities for constructive social change. (p. 263)

Understanding history can be “a catalyst for healing”, and a means to pave “the way for mourning what was lost” (Archibald, 2006a, p. 16). Lawson Te Aho (2014) similarly argued that the act of storytelling facilitates healing for Indigenous peoples (specifically Maori) because it raises consciousness about the history and continuing impacts of this history in the present. Lawson Te Aho discussed the process of narrating trauma as “an exercise in self-determination through the re-empowerment of their voices and vision” (p. 181). Further, she noted that it provides testimony to the resilience of previous generations, including “knowledge of the strategies previous generations employed to survive the brutalizing effects of colonisation” (p. 181). Indeed, in the Bush Babies project, the storytellers were not only remembering and providing testimony to the suffering of Aboriginal people (individually and collectively; historically and contemporaneously), they also remembered and provided testimony of the resilience, resistance, and survival of Noongar/Aboriginal people, and their stories showed up the strategies and resources that have been central to this.

Reclaiming identity, culture, and community. In these spaces created through storytelling about past, present, and future, Noongar people mobilised resources central to the construction of positive Aboriginal/Noongar identities in the present (Ramirez & Hammack, 2014). Martin (2001) has discussed the importance of storytelling for Indigenous peoples, noting, “Stories give identity as they connect us and fulfil our sense of belonging” (p. 45). As discussed by Dudgeon (People, Culture, Environment, 2014), Aboriginal Elders are often very keen to be “involved in healing their communities and giving young Indigenous people their inheritance of cultural knowledge, identity and strength” (p. 7). This was certainly evident in this project,

with Elders stepping up to share their stories with young Aboriginal people, and to have their stories become part of the community archive.

Stories of resilience, resistance, and survival of people and culture play an important role in fostering pride in identity and belonging and processes of cultural reclamation and renewal. Resilience is conceptualised as residing in the resources people have available for narrating their lives (Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson, 2011) – the resources they have for making sense of past, present, and future, and of who they are. In reframing resilience, Kirmayer et al. argued that collective forms of narrative “help people make sense of their experience and construct a valued identity but also ensure the continuity and vitality of a community or a people” (Kirmayer et al., 2011, p. 85-86; see also Ramirez & Hammack, 2014). From this perspective, it is through stories and narratives that individuals and groups “articulate and assert their identity, affirm core values and attitudes needed to face challenges, and generate creative solutions to new predicaments” (p. 86).

In their work with Indigenous peoples in the United States of America, Moorhead and LaFromboise (2014) have argued, “If more resilience stories were told, people would reconnect with a sense of pride in their cultural identities and cultural practices” (p. 148). N. Clark (2016) also advocated the importance of centring images of strength, resilience and resistance, against the dominant cultural narratives of damage, risk, and harm. Lui, Lawson-Te Aho and Rata (2014) wrote of the need to create identity spaces for First Nations Peoples; spaces that affirm Indigenous identity and belonging, provide opportunities for the reclamation and renewal of culture and language, and foster empowering collective action (see also Case & Hunter, 2012; Sonn & Fisher, 1998).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

These spaces created through Aboriginal storytelling on country respond to this call for identity spaces for Aboriginal/Noongar people within which symbolic resources for constructing what it means to be Noongar are shared, strengthened, and renewed. In narrating resilience, resistance, and survival of people and culture, they pointed to the resources Noongar/Aboriginal people have for their own empowerment—symbolic resources that individuals and communities can be supported to (re)connect, (re)claim, strengthen and renew. These resources are being archived for current and future generations, and can be elevated and amplified to challenge broader dominant cultural narratives about Aboriginal people. This aligns with the model of psychosocial praxis exemplified in the Apartheid Archive Project in South Africa (Stevens et al., 2010; Stevens et al., 2013).

Through the settings created through the Bush Babies project (e.g., exhibitions, launches, storytelling workshops), Noongar people came together, and in these settings, they emphasised their continuing connectedness, despite the systematic efforts aimed at community fragmentation and issues of feuding. Exhibitions became opportunities to reconnect with extended family with participants in the project describing these launches/exhibitions as big family reunions. Often in discussing what it meant for them to be involved in the project, the Elders remarked that they felt proud that their families were there. Thus through the project, opportunities for connectedness were fostered and this is what was valued by many participants.

The telling of these stories is central to making sense of the past and its connection with the present, connecting the personal and the political, and in seeking healing and justice (Seedat, 2015; Segalo, 2013; Sonn et al., 2013; Stevens et al., 2010). In telling these stories as part of a community arts and cultural development project, these stories are put into the public record, acknowledged, and legitimised

(Lykes, et al., 2003; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). The Bush Babies project (including the stories captured and the portraits), and Rekindling Stories strategy more broadly has effectively created an archive of stories of suffering and of persistent survival, for current and future generations. Those bearing witness to these stories are asked to acknowledge this history and its legacy in the present, and through hearing these stories, can better understand the connections between past and present realities, the interconnectedness between the personal, the social and the political, and the ongoing need for justice and for healing. Importantly, the knowledge shared by Elders was not only in reaction to colonialism, but despite it. In these spaces, they were articulating Aboriginal/Noongar ways of knowing, doing, and being.

The Utility of Narrative and the Circuits Framework for Examining Oppression and Resistance

Through the centring of Elders' stories, the research has also provided insight into ongoing dynamics of oppression and resistance. The shared language, 'the talk', that as Indigenous peoples they have developed "about the history, the sociology, the psychology and the politics of imperialism and colonialism" (Smith, 2012, p. 20) provide insights that Noongar/Aboriginal people have into oppression and resistance, which help to broaden our understanding of the ongoing experience of oppression in the lives of Aboriginal people. In particular, the research has shown the continuities of oppression, and has highlighted the importance of dialectical frameworks such as those articulated by Fine and Ruglis (2009) and others (Stevens et al., 2013; Weis & Fine, 2012). These approaches recognise and make explicit the historicity and relationality of oppression/privilege, the interconnectedness between structure and psyches, and the dialectic of oppression and resistance (Fine, 2014; see also Weis & Fine, 2012).

The research has highlighted the importance of recognising the connections between historical and contemporary relations of power, the role of historical memory in making sense of social realities in the present, and thus the importance of acknowledging history to understand the present. In narrating the connections between past and present social realities, the Elders highlighted that while the mechanisms of control have changed over time, Noongar/Aboriginal people are “still controlled”, “[they’ve] still got nothing” and they are still “coming up from behind”. Therefore concepts such as coloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Grosfuguel, 2007; Quijano, 2000), and whiteness (Moreton-Robinson, 2004), continue to prove useful and necessary in the Australian post-colonising context in making sense of everyday social realities.

The research has also emphasised the relationality of oppression and privilege, the oppressed and the oppressors (Levine-Rasky, 2016). Through the stories, Elders emphasised that accumulation of privilege has depended on Aboriginal dispossession. Their stories spoke to the failure of non-Indigenous Australia to recognise them, their suffering, and the relationality of oppression/privilege (Hoagland, 2007). The Elders emphasised the investment of white Australia in ignorance of this longer history and its implications in the present. Recognising this relationality necessitates the adoption of relational ethics in our research and practice in and with communities (Montero et al., 2017; Watkins, 2015). Trimble and Mohatt (2006) discussed the need to develop a relational methodology. Kral (2014) also emphasised the importance of relationships, a relational motif, for research and practice in Indigenous contexts. Wexler (2011), and others (e.g., Berryman, Soohoo, & Nevin, 2013; Kickett-Tucker, Bessarib, Coffin, & Wright, 2017), have discussed this in terms of developing/ engaging in culturally responsive research and action.

Drawing on the personal stories of Aboriginal people, the research has also highlighted the interconnection between structure and lives—how the personal is always political (Segalo, 2013; Sonn et al., 2013; Squire, 2000; Weis & Fine, 2012). The stories highlighted the importance of bringing a critical psychosocial perspective (Fine, 2014; Frosh, 2003; Sonn et al., 2013) to understand contemporary issues affecting Aboriginal lives to avoid ahistorical, asocial, and acultural explanations that often blame the victims for their suffering. Personal stories are a powerful means of communicating the embeddedness of people within matrices of domination and the psychosocial consequences (Fine, 2014; Segalo, 2013; Stevens et al., 2013; Sonn et al., 2013). These personal stories and shared community narratives highlight “the extent to which human psychology is intimately linked to, and in some ways conditioned or limited by, the sociopolitical and historical forces of its situation” (Hook, 2004, p. 85). In this case, a critical psychological approach to the Elders’ stories has highlighted the “extent and damage of colonial/political oppression” (Hook, 2004, p. 86). Narrative was a powerful means of showing the interconnection between social structural oppression and personal lives, and showing up power and resistance to it (Sonn & Fisher, 1998; Stewart, 2011).

While it is important to understand the ways in which individuals, families, and communities have been made vulnerable (Shaw, 2012) through the circuits of dispossession, it is also important to recognise the resources that Aboriginal people and communities have for their own empowerment, and to bear witness (Fine, 2006; Watkins, 2015) to their resistance, resilience, and survival in the face of adversity. Thus the research has also highlighted the dialectic of oppression and resistance which is important in acknowledging the complexity of subjectivities that people construct, and the ways in which people are shaped and constrained by power, but

also have power to act on the world (Squire, 2000; Tappan, 2006). As noted by Frosh (2003), individuals

are constituted by social forces that lie outside them, in the workings of the world. But this does not mean that subjects have no agency; rather, their agentic status is what they are produced with, and it enables them to take hold of power and use it. (p. 1552)

Gonzalez et al. (2014), and Lavalee and Clearsky (2006) have emphasised that Indigenous people need to tell their stories, the many stories: stories of trauma, of loss, of despair, but also of survival and of healing. Through telling these stories, they are able to take hold of power and use it. The storytelling illuminated the multiple narratives they carry, thereby capturing the complexity of subjectivities (Segalo, 2013; Stevens et al., 2013). Recognising and elevating these stories is central to challenging discourses of deficit and dysfunction, and the preoccupation with woundedness (Lavalee & Clearsky, 2006) and victimhood, which epitomises what Tuck (2009) described as ‘damage centered research’. Moreover, it is central to recognising the various non-pathological responses to the historical trauma experience, including expressions of resilience and survival (Denham, 2008; Hartmann & Gone, 2014; Ramirez & Hammack, 2014).

Examining or theorising the dialectic of oppression and resistance is particularly important in research with Aboriginal people. At the same time, some have highlighted the risk of romanticising resistance, and constructing what Pyke (2010) has called the “‘model resistor stereotype’, a romanticized misrepresentation of the experience of oppression” (p. 562). In particular, Pyke (2010) emphasised how the “model resistor stereotype” can result in the failure to acknowledge internalised racial oppression. Drawing on the multiple narratives the participants carry, in this

research, both the internalised oppression and the resistance was explicated, thus avoiding the trap Pyke has warned about. Moreover, in focusing on the stories and narratives as resources that people draw on in constructing identities and making sense of past and present social realities, the research also sought to avoid psychologising, individualising, and internalising ‘internalized oppression’, which Tappan (2006) preferred to call appropriated oppression/privilege.

The research has sought to advocate a post-essentialist (Dhamoon, 2009) understanding of (identities) and culture by focusing on *the cultural*, that is, processes of meaning making through stories and narrative, as opposed to conceiving culture as a fixed entity or essence that can be recovered/retrieved (see also Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2011, 2015). Such a focus emphasises the resources that are available that can be taken up, or resisted, reconstructed, and/or renewed within particular contexts (Hammack, 2008; Rappaport, 2000; Tappan, 2006; Thomas & Rappaport, 1996). The cultural resources that people were drawing on also included stories of oppression and resistance, as well as stories of *boodjar*, *moort*, *katitjin*, representing Noongar ways of knowing, doing, being (L. Collard et al., 2004). Narrative approaches, within a circuits’ framework (Fine, 2014), are therefore important in showing up the complexities of subjectivities, recognising the constraints on subjectivities as well as the possibilities for agency through the contestation and resistance of symbolic resources.

Whiteness, Allies and a Decolonising Standpoint

If we recognise the relationality of oppression and privilege, and the possibilities for agency, including through creating spaces for storytelling and the recovery of historical memory, then as researchers we need to find ways to support communities to tell their stories and to amplify/elevate these stories in order for all

Australians to learn from them. In this research, I collaborated with Community Arts Network of Western Australia, an agency that has expressed a commitment to working with Noongar people across the Wheatbelt to Rekindle Stories on Country. Through their longer-term engagement, the agency has developed relationships and trust with Noongar people (Kasat, 2013; Sonn & Quayle, 2014). CANs relationship with the Noongar community of Narrogin, and the Noongar staff employed at the Narrogin office, was central to this research. CAN vouched for the research (Walker, Schultz, & Sonn, 2014) and Noongar staff at the Narrogin office, played an important role as cultural mentors throughout the research process.

Given the problematic history of research in Indigenous contexts, many have been concerned with developing culturally responsive and culturally safe ways of working with communities (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013; Kickett-Tucker et al., 2017)—to decolonise methodologies (Smith, 2012), or bring a decolonising standpoint to research and practice in the contact zone (Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2011, 2015; Sonn, 2011). Pratt (1991) defined the contact zone as the “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (p. 34). Reyes Cruz and Sonn (2011, 2015) advocated a decolonising standpoint in research and action, emphasising that we need to come to our work with strong awareness of our own social locations/positionalities, or what Harrell and Bond (2006) called ‘self in community’. Our positionalities have implications for how we are perceived, and our own subjectivities, and intersubjective relations with others. As noted by Kral et al. (2011), this involves paying attention to the “psychopolitical power realities that are always

present within and between the communities we work with, and in larger society” (p. 52).

As a white Australian woman, I struggled with what my role was and with issues around the politics of representation. At the same time, as a beneficiary of white privilege, I felt a responsibility to contribute to the co-intentional work of decolonisation (Huygens, 2011, 2016). Sullivan (2006) proposed a distinction between being white and being whitely. Being white is about physical features such as skin colour, while being whitely refers to the “deeply ingrained ways of being in the world that includes behaviours, habits, and dispositions” (Sullivan, 2006, p. 160). Sullivan argued that people who are white do not have to act in ways that are whitely. This is similar to Laubscher’s (2006) assertion of the continuous need to take up a performative position against racism. This distinction between being white and being whitely is important in moving beyond white guilt (Maddison, 2011), and finding possibilities for challenging whiteness in our research and practice. While it is necessary to recognise the ways in which we are all differently positioned in relation to the matrix of oppression (and privilege), we also must find ways to avoid being locked into these subject positions, that is, to work from these social locations in ways that are disruptive (Applebaum, 2013, 2016; Laubscher, 2006; Sullivan, 2006).

Sullivan (2006) noted that unlearning whiteness does not mean pretending to have no racial privileges or thinking of oneself as having renounced all racial privileges. Applebaum (2013), drawing on Yancy (2008) described “being an antiracist white as a project that always requires another step and does not end in a white person’s having ‘arrived’ in the form of an idyllic anti-racist” (p. 213). Applebaum (2013, 2016) emphasised that this recognition should not lead to hopelessness; rather it means exercising vigilance, and the continuous effort on the

part of white people to forge new ways of seeing, knowing, and being. While, I can never transcend my whiteness, I can seek to unlearn my whiteness. Being patient and flexible, allowing myself to be led, dropping my research agenda, reminding myself that I was not the expert there to ‘fix’ the problem but was learning from Aboriginal people as the experts in their own lives, were all part of working in culturally safe ways and involved unlearning whiteness, and this is an ongoing process. Taking on the supportive voice (Chase, 2005) in re-presenting the Elders’ stories, was also central to this. SooHoo (2013) has discussed the value of taking a stance of humility for culturally responsive methodologies, to decolonise research and create spaces for a liberatory praxis (Mutua & Swadener, 2004).

In Australia, unlearning whiteness as part of the broader decolonisation agenda necessitates coming to know and critically engaging with this history and its implications in the present for Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities, subjectivities, and relationships, as part of a transformative psychosocial praxis (Sonn et al., 2013). The research has shown how communities can be supported to create spaces and opportunities where storytelling, as resistance (Bell, 2010; Case & Hunter, 2012; N. Clark, 2016), can take place. These processes are central to challenging internalised oppression and fostering resilience, resistance, and survival, but also as pedagogical resources for critical consciousness of those in dominant groups. However, supporting communities to tell their stories (as cultural outsiders) requires ongoing vigilance (Applebaum, 2013, 2016).

Limitations and Future Research

Given time and resource constraints, it was not possible to speak to all the Elders who participated in the project. At the same time, it was important to make use of the archival resources that are already available, as these stories of growing up at a

time of strict control and segregation, and in particular, stories of the Stolen Generations, can be re-traumatising. Moreover, many Elders have shared their stories many times, and it is important to be mindful of this. Further, this research focused on one small part of the Bush Babies project: its Narrogin iteration. However, the project has been delivered in many different towns. In these different iterations, while the emphasis was on Rekindling Stories on Country, the project took different shape in each of the towns (see Appendix A). Ideally, it would have been beneficial to examine the project across different towns.

In this research, I sought to represent the Elders' stories using narrative analysis and taking on the supportive voice (Chase, 2005), as psychosocial accompaniment (Watkins, 2015). I recognise that I am an outsider to the community, and therefore, others may be better placed to re-present these stories, and may pick up and have access to part of the hidden transcripts that as a white person, I do not have access to. As an outsider, I had the privilege of hearing some of these stories that are generally part of the hidden transcript (Scott, 1990)—stories of oppression and resistance, and stories about culture, but as an outsider, I am not privy to all those stories.

The distance between Melbourne (Victoria) and Narrogin (Western Australia) (approximately 3,000 kilometres) made it difficult to spend extended periods during fieldwork. Ideally, it would have been beneficial to spend more time in the Narrogin community. This would have provided the opportunity to speak with more people, and to work more collaboratively through the process of data analysis. This however, would need to be negotiated with the agency and the staff, as they would need to be paid for their time. Further, different authors have discussed the importance of the relationships between researchers and the Indigenous people they work with to be

ongoing and long-term. This is particularly important in working in Indigenous contexts, where researchers routinely come and go, without necessarily giving anything back. Ideally, the relationship should continue long after the research has been undertaken (Kickett-Tucker et al., 2017; Smith, 2012). Given the distance between Melbourne and Narrogin, it was quite difficult to be as present and engaged with CAN and the Noongar community of Narrogin, as I would have liked. While, I travelled back to Narrogin to discuss preliminary themes, I have not been back since this time because of time and resource constraints and still need to negotiate with CAN staff the best ways to disseminate the research findings.

As discussed, the focus of the research changed during the research process. Had I started with the explicit focus on the Elders' stories through critical narrative analysis of the stories shared, I would have approached the interviews as narrative interviews. While the Elders did share their life stories, the interviews were perhaps somewhat constrained by my questions, and preoccupation with the perceived role of the community arts. Through the research process, I learned the value of inviting life stories, rather than as providing answers to our psychological or sociological questions (Chase, 1995). Further, had I approached the research in this way from the beginning, it would have been appropriate to offer the Elders an opportunity to reject anonymity as part of the ethics process, as they may have preferred for their real names to be associated with their stories.

Future research could examine the meaning of these stories for people across different age groups, including the way young people are making sense of hearing these stories, and why they think they might be important (or not). Future research could also make use of the stories that have already been shared and archived, as pedagogical resources that can facilitate intergenerational and intercultural dialogue.

Future research should also focus on engaging non-Indigenous people in Australia in critical dialogues on race and coloniality, and can make use of the stories and shared community narratives captured in this research. Research could also explore the benefits of different modes of storytelling through the arts. Research could also focus on examining individual life stories in more detail as here the focus was on the shared community narratives and the symbolic resources people drew on to make sense of past, present and future. Importantly, future research should endeavour to continue to expose the circuits of whiteness, as privilege, in political, social, educational and psychic relations.

Conclusion

Community arts and cultural development is a useful methodology in working in and with communities and creating a platform for shared meaning making. This research examined the stories shared by Aboriginal, Noongar Elders as part of the Bush Babies project. Grounded in the Elders' lived experience, the personal stories and shared community narratives provide important insights into oppression, psychosocial suffering, resistance and survival. Analysis of the stories showed the continuity of coloniality in their everyday lives, the generation of psychological distress in contexts of social suffering, past and present, but also the non-pathological responses to historical trauma: the resistance, resilience, and survival, or what Vizenor (1999, 2008) has called survivance, of people and culture.

This research has exemplified how Aboriginal communities' stories can be supported through community arts and cultural development practice to engage in storytelling and the recovery of historical memory. By utilising a critical narrative approach within a framework that brought together the liberation paradigm and critical theoretical scholarship on race, whiteness, and colonisation, the research has

shown the ways in which Aboriginal, Noongar people have made sense of, resisted and survived oppression, and ensured connection with and continuity of Noongar ways of knowing, doing.

These were stories from positions of alterity, which are often silenced within the post-colonising Australian context (Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016). They were stories that functioned as counter-stories, yet they were not only counter-stories, they are also simply stories, told and re-told within families and communities—stories about who they are, where they come from, what they have been through, and of their hopes for the future. Sharing life stories to foster cultural continuity and healing was presented as part of the solution to challenges brought about by cultural removal/disruption and ignorance in dominant cultural settings (Bell, 2010; Dion & Dion, 2004; Smith, 2012). As stories of resistance, these Aboriginal voices demanded recognition and respect, the acknowledgement of history and its continuities in the present, and asserted the need for cultural continuity as a matter of survival.

By partnering CAN in their collaboration with Noongar people in the Wheatbelt, the aims have been to honour the knowledge and struggles of Aboriginal people in post-colonising Australia, recognise the damage caused by oppression whilst at the same time ensuring damage, dysfunction, trauma is not all we see. Such work is considered central for a decolonising praxis for psychology (Segalo et al., 2015), or a transformative psychosocial praxis (Stevens, Duncan, & Sonn, 2013). Community psychology researchers and practitioners can take on the role of accompanying communities, supporting them to tell their stories, and using these stories to examine, critique, and challenge power and foster processes of cultural renewal and healing (Watkins, 2015). These stories are important stories that can be mobilised as part of a public pedagogy (Quayle, Sonn, & Kasat, 2016). Community

psychology researchers and practitioners can also provide support to those agencies delivering such programs, to document the stories shared, and the outcomes of participation. This role can also involve working as critical friends or participant conceptualisers (Elias, 2004; Sonn & Quayle, 2013), providing resources to support the on the ground action. Importantly, the need to engage in the politics of redistribution as well as the politics of recognition and participation is acknowledged (Segalo et al., 2015). Such work necessarily involves engaging in solidarity efforts with Aboriginal people, and thus decolonising solidarity (Land, 2015).

In the process of writing up several Elders in the community have passed away. This reaffirms the importance of documenting these stories and of creating opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and cultural transmission, but also for elevating these stories to disrupt the wilful ignorance and silencing of an ongoing history of dispossession, its psychosocial effects, and the strengths and resources Aboriginal people have for their own empowerment.

References

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation. (2017). *Bringing them home 20 years on: An action plan for healing*. Retrieved from:
<http://healingfoundation.org.au//app/uploads/2017/05/Bringing-Them-Home-20-years-on-FINAL-PRINT.pdf>
- Aborigines Act 1905* (WA), No. 14 (Austl.). Retrieved from:
http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/catalogue_resources/52790.pdf
- Adams, G., Dobles, I., Gómez, L. H., Kurtiş, T., & Molina, L. E. (2015). Decolonizing psychological science: Introduction to the special thematic section. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 213–238.
doi:10.5964/jspp.v3i1.564
- Adams, D., & Goldbard, A. (2002). *Community, culture and globalisation*. New York, NY: The Rockefeller Foundation.
- Adams, G., & Kurtiş, T. (2012). Collective memory practices as tools for reconciliation: Perspectives from liberation and cultural psychology. *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*, 2(2), 5-28. Retrieved from:
https://cprg.drupal.ku.edu/sites/cprg.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/Adams_2012_Collective%20memory.pdf
- Adams, G., & Salter, P. S. (2011). A Critical Race Psychology is not yet born. *Connecticut Law Review*, 43(5), 1355-1377.
- Ahmed, S. (2005). The politics of bad feeling. *Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association Journal*, 1(1), 72-85. Retrieved from:
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58ad660603596eec00ce71a3/t/58becd3de6f2e1086b36a265/1488899390367/The+Politics+of+Bad+Feeling.pdf>

- Alcántara, C., & Gone, J. P. (2007). Reviewing suicide in Native American communities: Situating risk and protective factors within a transactional–ecological framework. *Death Studies*, 31(5), 457-477. doi: [10.1080/07481180701244587](https://doi.org/10.1080/07481180701244587)
- Alcoff, L. (1991). The problem of speaking for others. *Cultural Critique*, 20, 5-32. doi: 10.2307/1354221
- Alcoff, L. M. (2007). Epistemologies of ignorance: Three types. In S. Sullivan & N. Tuana (Eds.), *Race and epistemologies of ignorance* (pp. 39-58). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Altman, J. (2004). Practical reconciliation and the new mainstreaming: Will it make a difference to Indigenous Australians? *Dialogue*, 23(2), 35-46.
- Altman, J., & Hinkson, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Coercive reconciliation: Stabilise, normalise, exit Aboriginal Australia*. North Carlton, Vic: Arena.
- Amnesty International. (2015). *A brighter tomorrow: Keeping Indigenous kids in the community and out of detention*. Broadway, NSW: Amnesty International. Retrieved from: https://static.amnesty.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/A_brighter_future_National_report.pdf
- Andermahr, S. (2015). Decolonizing trauma studies: Trauma and postcolonialism—Introduction. *Humanities*, 4, 500-505. doi: 10.3390/h4040500
- Anderson, I., Baum, F., & Bentley, M. (2007). *Beyond band-aids: Exploring the underlying social determinants of Aboriginal health. Papers from the social determinants of Aboriginal health workshop, Adelaide, July 2004*. Darwin, NT: Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health. Retrieved from: <https://www.lowitja.org.au/sites/default/files/docs/BeyondBandAidsText.pdf>

- Apfelbaum, E. (1999). Relations of domination and movements for liberation: An analysis of power between groups (abridged). *Feminism & Psychology*, 9(3), 267-272. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0959353599009003003>
- Apfelbaum, E. (2000). And now what, after such tribulations? Memory and dislocation in the era of uprooting. *American Psychologist*, 55(9), 1008-1013. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.55.9.1008
- Applebaum, B. (2013). Vigilance as a response to white complicity. *Educational Theory*, 63(1), 17-34. doi: 10.1111/edth.12007
- Applebaum, B. (2016). Critical whiteness studies. In *Oxford research encyclopaedia of education*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.5
- Archibald, L. (2006a). *Final report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation Volume III: Promising healing practices in Aboriginal communities*. Ottawa: ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/final-report-vol-3.pdf>
- Archibald, L. (2006b). *Decolonization and healing: Indigenous experiences in the United States, New Zealand, Australia and Greenland*. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation research series. Ottawa, ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/ibpengweb.pdf>
- Atkinson, J. (2002). *Trauma trails, recreating song lines: The transgenerational effects of trauma in Indigenous Australia*. North Melbourne, Vic: Spinifex
- Atkinson, J. (2008). Keynote address: Finding our relatedness stories: Psychology and Indigenous healing practice. In R. Ranzijn, K. McConnochie, & W. Nolan (Eds.), *Psychology and Indigenous Australians: Effective teaching and*

practice (pp. 103-124). Newcastle Upon Tyne, England: Cambridge scholars Publishing.

Atkinson, J. (2013). *Trauma-informed services and trauma-specific care for Indigenous Australian children*. Canberra, ACT: Closing the Gap Clearinghouse. Retrieved from:
<http://www.aihw.gov.au/uploadedFiles/ClosingTheGap/Content/Publications/2013/ctg-rs21.pdf>

Atkinson, R., Taylor, E., & Walter, M. (2010). Burying Indigeneity: The spatial construction of reality and Aboriginal Australia. *Social & Legal Studies*, 19(3), 311-330. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663909345449>

Attwood, B. & Markus, A. (1999). *The struggle for Aboriginal rights: A documentary history*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2011* (cat no. 3238.0.55.001). Retrieved from:
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3238.0.55.001>

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2015). *Prisoners in Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Prisoner characteristics* (No. 4517.0). Retrieved from:
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4517.0~2015~Main%20Features~Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20prisoner%20characteristics~7>

Australia Council for the Arts. (2017). *Community arts and cultural development*. Retrieved from: <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/artforms/community-arts-and-cultural-development/>

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2008, October 15). *Urgent action and funds needed to stem suicide tragedies* [Media Release]. Sydney, NSW: Australian

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Human Rights Commission. Retrieved from:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/news/media-releases/2008-media-release-urgent-action-and-funds-needed-stem-suicide-tragedies>

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2011). *Social justice report 2011: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner*. Sydney, NSW:

Australian Human Rights Commission. Retrieved from:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/social-justice-report-3>

Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. (2012).

Guidelines for ethical research in Australian Indigenous studies. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

Retrieved from <http://aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethical-research/guidelines-ethical-research-australian-indigenous-studies>

Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. (2016). *Mission and reserve records*. Retrieved from: <https://aiatsis.gov.au/research/finding-your-family/family-history-sources/mission-and-reserve-records>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2012). *Juvenile justice in Australia 2010-11* (No. Juv.10). Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Retrieved from:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=10737422614>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2014a). *Mortality and life expectancy of Indigenous Australians, 2008-2012*. (No. IHW 140). Canberra, ACT:

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Retrieved from:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129548468>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2014b). *Youth detention in Australia*, (Cat no. Juv.53). Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Retrieved from:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129549675>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2015). *The health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2015* (No. IHW 147). Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Retrieved from

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129551281>

Aveling, N. (2013). Don't talk about what you don't know: On (not) conducting research with/in Indigenous contexts. *Critical Studies in Education*, 54(2). 203-214. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2012.724021>

Babidge, S. (2016). *Aboriginal family and the state: The conditions of history*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Bailey, A. (2007). Strategic ignorance. In S. Sullivan & N. Tuana (Eds.), *Race and epistemologies of ignorance* (pp. 77-94). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Baker, D. G. (1983). *Race, ethnicity and power*. London, England: Routledge and Kagan Paul.

Baltrán, R., & Begun, S. (2014). "It is medicine": Narratives of healing from the Aotearoa digital storytelling as Indigenous media project. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 26(2), 155-179. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971333614549137>

Bamberg, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Narrative: State of the art*. Amsterdam, NL: John Benjamins.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Bamberg, M., & Andrews, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Considering counter narratives: Narrating, resisting, making sense*. Philadelphia, PA. John Benjamins Publishing.
- Bar-On, D. (Ed.). (2002). *Bridging the gap: Storytelling as a way to work through political and collective hostilities*. Hamburg, Germany: Korber-Stiftung.
- Barta, T. (2008). Sorry, and not sorry, in Australia: How the apology to the stolen generations buried a history of genocide. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 10(2), 201–14. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14623520802065438>
- Bartky, S. L. (1990). On psychological oppression. *Femininity and domination: Studies in the phenomenology of oppression* (pp. 22-32). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bell, A. (2014). *Relating indigenous and settler identities: Beyond domination*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bell, L. A. (2009). The story of the Storytelling Project: An arts-based race and social justice curriculum. *Storytelling, Self, Society*, 5, 107-118. doi: 10.1080/15505340902837374
- Bell, L. A. (2010). *Storytelling for social justice: Connecting narrative and arts in antiracist teaching*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Bell, L. A., & Roberts, R. A. (2010). The storytelling project model: A theoretical framework for critical examination of racism through the arts. *Teachers College Record*, 112(9), 2295-2319.
- Bell, L. A., & Desai, D. (2011). Imagining otherwise: Connecting the arts and social justice to envision and act for change: Special issue introduction. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 44(3), 287-295. doi: 10.1080/10665684.2011.591672

- Bennett, B., Zubrzycki, J., & Bacon, V. (2011). 'What do we know?' The experience of social workers working alongside Aboriginal people. *Australian Social Work, 64*(1), 20-37. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2010.511677>
- Berryman, M., SooHoo, S., & Nevin, A. (2013). *Culturally responsive methodologies*. Bingley, England: Emerald Group.
- Bessarab, D., & Ng'andu, B. (2010). Yarning about yarning as a legitimate method in indigenous research. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies, 3*(1), 37-50. Retrieved from: http://www.isrn.qut.edu.au/pdf/ijcis/v3n1_2010/Final_Bessarab_Bridget_IJCIS.pdf
- Biko, S. (2004). *I write what I like*. Johannesburg, GT: Picador Africa. (Original work published 1978).
- Bishop, B. J., Sonn, C. C., Drew, N. M., & Contos, N. E. (2002). The evolution of epistemology and concepts in an iterative-generative reflective practice: The importance of small differences. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(4), 493-510. doi: 10.1023/A:1015855801188
- Bishop, B. J., Vicary, D. A., Browne, A. L., & Guard, N. (2009). Public policy, participation and the third position: The implication of engaging communities on their own terms. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 43*(1-2), 111-121. doi: 10.1007/s10464-008-9214-8
- Bishop, B. J., Vicary, D. A., Mitchell, J. R., & Pearson, G. (2014). Aboriginal concepts of place and country and their meaning in mental health. *The Australian Community Psychologist, 24*(2), 26-42.
- Blodgett, A. T., Schinke, R. J., Smith, B., Peltier, D., & Pheasant, C. (2011). In indigenous words: Exploring vignettes as a narrative strategy for presenting

- the research voices of Aboriginal community members. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6), 522-533. doi: 10.1177/1077800411409885
- Boase, K. (2008, November 5). Cry for help. *The Koori Mail*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cpa.org.au/z-archive/g2008/1389cry.html>
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2006). The central frames of color-blind racism. In E. Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States* (pp. 25-52). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Bourdieu, P. (1999). *The weight of the world: Social suffering in contemporary society*. Cambridge, England: Polity.
- Bourdieu, P. (2000). *Pascalian meditations* (R. Nice, trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Boy declared neglected (1967, May 9). *The Canberra Times*, p. 12. Retrieved from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/131653677>
- Brave Heart, M. Y. H. (2003). The historical trauma response among natives and its relationship with substance abuse: A Lakota illustration. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 35(1), 7-13. doi: 10.1080/02791072.2003.10399988
- Brave Heart, M. Y. H., & DeBruyn, L. M. (1998). The American Indian holocaust: Healing historical unresolved grief. *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research*, 8(2), 60-82.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. London, England: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1991). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry*, 18(1), 1-21. doi: 10.1086/448619
- Buck, V. (2008, August 22). The Wheatbelt town in mourning. *Stateline*. Retrieved from: <http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/wa/content/2006/s2345736.htm>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Bulhan, H. A. (1985). *Frantz Fanon and the psychology of oppression*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Burr, V. (2015). *Social constructionism* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Burton, M., & Kagan, C. (2005). Liberation social psychology: Learning from Latin America. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 15(1), 63-78. doi: 10.1002/casp.786
- Burton, M., & Kagan, C. (2009). Towards a really social psychology: Liberation psychology beyond Latin America. In M. Montero & C. C. Sonn (Eds), *Psychology of liberation: Theory and applications* (pp. 51-72). New York, NY: Springer.
- Butler, S. (2013, May 27). Tigers changed face of footy. *The West Australian*. Retrieved from: <https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/wa/a/17346856/tigers-changed-face-of-footy/>
- Butler, S. (2014, May 30). Sheedy salute to Noongar history. *The West Australian*. Retrieved from: <https://thewest.com.au/sport/afl/sheedy-salute-to-noongar-history-ng-ya-371776>
- Campbell, C., Cornish, F., Gibbs, A., & Scott, K. (2010). Heeding the push from below: How do social movements persuade the rich to listen to the poor? *Journal of Health Psychology*, 15(7), 962-971. doi: 10.1177/1359105310372815
- Candib, M.M. (2002). Working with suffering. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 48, 43-50.
- Carson, B., Dunbar, T., Chenhall, R. D., & Bailie, R. (Eds.). (2007). *Social determinants of Indigenous health*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Case, A. D., & Hunter, C. D. (2012). Counterspaces: A unit of analysis for understanding the role of settings in marginalized individuals' adaptive responses to oppression. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 50(1-2), 257-270. doi:10.1007/s10464-012-9497-7
- Castellano, M. B. (2006). *Final report for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation Volume I: A healing journey: Reclaiming wellness*. Ottawa, ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/final-report-vol-1.pdf>
- Chandler, M. J., & Lalonde, C. (1998). Cultural continuity as a hedge against suicide in Canada's First Nations. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 35(2), 191-219.
- Chase, S. (1995). Taking narratives seriously: Consequences for method and theory. In R. Josselson & A. Lieblich (Eds.), *Interpreting experience: The narrative study of lives* (pp. 1-26). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Chase, S. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research methods* (3rd ed.) (pp. 651-680). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cherry, F. (2001). Countering psychology's story in First Nation's communities. In A. Harris, S. Carney & M. Fine (Eds.), *Under the covers: Theorising the politics of counter stories* (pp. 77-90) (Critical Psychology Series). London, England: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Child Welfare Act 1947* (WA). No. 68 (Austl.). Retrieved from: <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/wa/objects/pdfs/Child%20Welfare%20Act%201947%20part%201.pdf>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Christens, B. D., Hanlin, C. E., & Speer, P. W. (2007). Getting the social organism thinking: Strategy for systems change. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 39(3-4), 229-238. doi: 10.1007/s10464-007-9119-y
- Churchill, W. (2004). *Kill the Indian, save the man: The genocidal impact of American Indian residential schools*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights.
- Cisneros-Puebla, C. A., & Faux, R. B. (2008). The deconstructive and reconstructive faces of social construction. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 9(1). Retrieved from: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/352/769>
- Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland places and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 35-75). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Clark, A. (2014). Inheriting the past: Exploring historical consciousness across generations. *Historical Encounters*, 1(1), 88-102.
- Clark, A. (2016). Private lives, public history: Navigating historical consciousness in Australia. *History Compass*, 14(1), 1-8.
- Clark, N. (2016). Shock and awe: Trauma as the new colonial frontier. *Humanities*, 5(14), 1-16. doi: 10.3390/h5010014
- Clark, Y. (2000). The construction of Aboriginal identity in people separated from their families, community, and culture: Pieces of a jigsaw. *Australian Psychologist*, 35(2), 150-157.
- Clark, Y., & Augoustinos, M. (2015). What's in a name? Lateral violence within the Aboriginal community in Adelaide, South Australia. *The Australian Community Psychologist*, 27(2), 19-34. Retrieved from:

<https://groups.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/ACP-27-2-2015-ClarkandAugoustinos.pdf>

- Collard, L. (2007). Wangkiny Ngulluck Nyungar Nyittiny, Boodjar, Moort and Katitjin: Talking about creation, country, family and knowledge of the Nyungar of south-western Australia. In S. Morgan, T. Mia & B. Kwaylullina (Eds.), *Speaking from the heart: Stories of life, family and country* (pp. 279-297). Fremantle, WA: Fremantle Arts Centre Press.
- Collard, L. (2008). Kura, yeye, boorda: From the past, today, and the future. In S. Morgan, M. Tjalaminu, & B. Kwaymullina (Eds.), *Heartsick for country: Stories of love spirit and creation* (pp. 60-80). Fremantle, WA: Fremantle Press.
- Collard, L., Harben, S., & van den Berg, S. (2004). *Nidja Beeliar Boodjar Noonookurt Nyininy: A Nyunger interpretive history of the use of Boodjar (country) in the vicinity of Murdoch University*. Perth, WA: Murdoch University. Retrieved from:
http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/21353/1/Nidja_Beeliar_Boodjar_Noonookurt_Nyininy.pdf
- Collard, K. S., D'Antoine, H. A., Henry, B. R., Mooney, G. H., Eggington, D. G., & Martin, C. A. (2005). 'Mutual obligation' in Indigenous health: Can shared responsibility agreements be truly mutual? *Medical Journal Australia*, 182(10), 502-504. doi: 10.1186/1743-8462-3-10
- Collins, P. H. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Commonwealth of Australia. Senate. (2009). *Select committee on regional and remote Indigenous communities: Narrogin* (Official Hansard). Retrieved

from:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Former_Committees/indig/hearings/index

Commonwealth of Australia. (2017). *Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory: Interim report, March 31 2017*. Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: <https://childdetentionnt.royalcommission.gov.au/about-us/Documents/RCNT-Interim-report.pdf>

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2011). *Yarns of the heart: Noongar dolls from the Southern Wheatbelt*. Perth, WA: Community Arts Network Western Australia.

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2012). *Gnaala boorong wangkiny wongi nidja nyini: Our spirit stories are still there*. Perth, WA: Community Arts Network Western Australia.

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2013, April). *Rekindling Stories on Country, strategic plan 2014-2019*. Unpublished internal document. Perth, WA: Community Arts Network Western Australia.

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2014a). *Annual Report*. Perth, WA: Community Arts Network Western Australia. Retrieved from: <http://www.canwa.com.au/about/annual-reports/>

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2014b). *The Bush Babies Elders Portrait exhibition: Honouring our Elders born in the bush*. Perth: Community Arts Network Western Australia.

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2014c). *Karla Kurliny: Coming back home*. Perth, WA: Community Arts Network Western Australia.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2017a). *Bush Babies: Narrogin*.

Retrieved from: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/bush-babies/>

Community Arts Network Western Australia. (2017b). *Bush Babies: Bunbury*.

Retrieved from: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/bush-babies/>

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinen, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 375–385). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Contos, N. E. (2002). *A quest for justice: The Bindjareb Nyungar story*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation): Curtin University of Technology. Perth, Australia.

Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act 1993, No. 127 (Austl.). Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2004C03090>

Cowlishaw, G. (1988). *Black, white or brindle: Race in rural Australia*. Melbourne, Vic: Cambridge University Press.

Cripps, K., & Adams, M. (2010). Family violence: Pathways forward. In P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy & R. Walker (Eds.), *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing: Principles and practice* (pp. 399-416). Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.

Crossley, M. (2000). *Introducing narrative psychology: Self, trauma, and the construction of meaning*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.

Crossley, M. (2007). Narrative analysis. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data in psychology* (pp. 139-151). London, England: Sage. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446207536>

Cunningham, J., & Baeza, J. I. (2005). An ‘experiment’ in Indigenous social policy: The rise and fall of Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Commission (ATSIC). *The Policy Press*, 33(3), 462- 473. doi:

10.1332/0305573054325684

Czarniawska, B. (1997). *Narrating the organization: Dramas of institutional identity*.

Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Czyzewski, K. (2011). Colonialism as a broader social determinant of health.

International Indigenous Policy Journal, 2(1), 1-14. doi:

10.18584/iipj.2011.2.1.5

David, E. J. R. (2011). *Filipino-/American postcolonial psychology: Oppression, colonial mentality, and decolonization*. Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse.

David, E. J. R. (Ed.). (2014). *Internalized oppression: The psychology of marginalized groups*. New York, NY: Springer.

David, E. J. R., & Derthick, A.O. (2014). What is internalized oppression and so what? In E. J. R. David (Ed.), *Internalized oppression: The psychology of marginalized groups* (pp. 1-30). New York, NY: Springer.

David, E. J. R., & Okazaki, S. (2006). Colonial mentality: A review and recommendations for Filipino American psychology. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 12(1), 1-16. doi: 10.1037/1099-9809.12.1.1

Davies, K. (2010). A journalistic study of Narrogin's feuding families. *Research Journalism*, 1(1), Retrieved from:
http://ro.ecu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=research_journalism

De Garis, C. (2009, November 20). Family feud shooting victim brought 'back from death'. *The Age*. Retrieved from: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/family-feud-shooting-victim-brought-back-from-death-20091120-iq3s.html#ixzz47TQJZzZY>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Delgado, R. (1989). Storytelling for oppositionists and others: A plea for narrative. *Michigan Law Review*, 87(8), 2411-2441. doi: 10.2307/1289308
- Denham, A. R. (2008). Rethinking historical trauma: Narratives of resilience. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 45(3), 391- 414. doi: 10.1177/1363461508094673
- Denzin, N. K. (2009). Strategies of multiple triangulation. In *The research act in sociology: A theoretical introduction to sociological method* (pp. 297, 313). London, England: Aldine Transactions. (Original work published in 1970).
- Department of Health and Ageing. (2013, May). *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention strategy*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government. Retrieved from:
[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/1CE7187EC4965005CA25802800127B49/\\$File/Indigenous%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/1CE7187EC4965005CA25802800127B49/$File/Indigenous%20Strategy.pdf)
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2017). *Closing the Gap: Prime Minister's report 2017*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government. Retrieved from: <http://closingthegap.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/ctg-report-2017.pdf>
- Department of Regional Development. (2014). *Wheatbelt: A region in profile*. Perth, WA: Government of Western Australia. Retrieved from:
http://www.drd.wa.gov.au/Publications/Documents/A_region_in_profile_2014_Wheatbelt.pdf
- Deutsch, M. (2006). A framework for thinking about oppression and its change. *Social Justice Research*, 19(1), 7- 41. doi: 10.1007/s11211-006-9998-3
- Dhamoon, R. (2009). Critical race theory: Toward a post-essentialist form of social critique. In B. S. Bolaria., S. P. Hier, & D. Lett (Eds.), *Racism and justice:*

- Critical dialogue on the politics of identity, inequality, and change* (pp. 25-41). Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Publishing.
- Dion, S. D. (2009). *Braiding histories: Learning from Aboriginal peoples' experiences and perspectives*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Dion, S. D. & Dion, M. (2004). The Braiding Histories stories. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies* 2(1), 77-100.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (2012). *The souls of black folks*. Start Publishing LLC. IBSN: 978-1-62558-680-3. (Original work published in 1903).
- Dudgeon, P., Mallard, J., Oxenham, D., & Fielder, J. (2002). Contemporary Aboriginal perceptions of community. In T. A. Fisher, C. C. Sonn & B. J. Bishop (Eds.), *Psychological sense of community: Research, applications, and implications* (pp. 247-270). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Dudgeon, P., & Oxenham, D. (1989). The complexity of Aboriginal diversity: Identity and kindredness. *Black Voices*, 5(1), 22-38.
- Dudgeon, P. Milroy, H., & Walker, R. (Eds.). (2014). *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice* (2nd ed.). Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: <http://aboriginal.telethonkids.org.au/media/699863/Working-Together-Book.pdf>
- Dudgeon, P., & Walker, R. (2015). Decolonising Australian psychology: Discourses, strategies, and practice. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 276–297. doi:10.5964/jspp.v3i1.126
- Dudgeon, P., Wright, M., Paradies, Y., Garvey, D., & Walker, R. (2014). Aboriginal social, cultural, and historical contexts. In P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy & R.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Walker (Eds.), *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice* (2nd ed.) (pp. 3-24). Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Duncan, P. (2014). *The role of Aboriginal humour in cultural survival and resistance*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia). Retrieved from: <https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:345997>
- Duran, E. (2006). *Healing the soul wound: Counseling with American Indians and other Native people*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Duran, E., & Duran, B. (1995). *Native American postcolonial psychology*. New York, NY: SUNY Press.
- Duran, E., Duran, B., Brave Heart, M. Y. H, & Yellow Horse-Davis, S. (1998). Healing the American Indian soul wound. In Y. Danieli (Ed.), *International handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp. 341-354). New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Duran, E., Firehammer, J., & Gonzalez, J. (2008). Liberation psychology as the path toward healing cultural soul wounds. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 86, 288-295. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2008.tb00511.x
- Durie, M., Milroy, H., & Hunter, E. (2009). Mental health and the Indigenous peoples of Australia and New Zealand. In L. J. Kirmayer & G. G. Valaskakis (Eds.), *Healing traditions: The mental health of Aboriginal peoples in Canada* (pp. 36-55). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Dutta, U., Sonn, C. C., & Lykes, M. B. (2016). Situating and contesting structural violence in community-based research and action. *Community Psychology in Global Perspective*, 2(2), 1-20.
- Edwards, D. & Potter, J. (1992). *Discursive psychology*. London, England: Sage.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Elias, M. J. (2004). Capturing excellence in applied settings: A participant conceptualiser and praxis explicator role for community psychologists. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 22(3), 293-318.
- Ellinghaus, K. (2003). Absorbing the 'Aboriginal problem': Controlling interracial marriage in Australia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *Aboriginal History*, 27, 183-207. doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24054267>
- Emerson, P., & Frosh, S. (2004). *Critical narrative analysis in psychology: A guide to practice*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Enriquez, V. G. (1992). *From colonial to liberation psychology: The Phillipine experience*. Quezon City: University of the Phillipines Press.
- Erikson, K. T. (1976). *Everything in its path*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Esin, G., Fati, M., & Squire, C. (2014). Narrative analysis: The constructionist approach. In U. Flick (Ed), *The Sage handbook of qualitative data analysis* (pp. 203-216). London, England: Sage.
- Evans-Campbell, T. (2008). Historical trauma in American Indian/Native Alaska communities: A multilevel framework for exploring impacts on individuals, families, and communities. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23(3), 316-338. doi: 10.1177/0886260507312290
- Evans, M., Hole, R., Berg, L. D., Hutchinson, P., & Sookraj, D. (2009). Common insights, differing methodologies: Toward a fusion of Indigenous methodologies, participatory action research, and white studies in an urban Aboriginal research agenda. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15(5), 893-910. doi:10.1177/1077800409333392
- Fanon, F. (2004). *The wretched of the earth* (R. Philcox trans.). New York, NY: Grove Press. (Original work published 1963).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Fanon, F. (2008). *Black skins, white masks* (R. Philcox trans.). New York, NY: Grove Press. (Original work published 1952).
- Farmer, P. (2004). An anthropology of structural violence. *Current Anthropology*, 45(3), 305-325. doi: 10.1086/382250
- Farmer, P. (2009). On suffering and structural violence: A view from below. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*, 3(1), 11-28. doi: 10.1353/rac.0.0025
- Feeney, M. (2009). *Reclaiming the spirit of well being: Promising healing practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*. Canberra, ACT: The Stolen Generation Alliance. Retrieved from: http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/Feeney_HealingDiscussionPaper_2009-1.pdf
- Ferguson, S. (Presenter), Meldrum-Hanna, C. Fallon, M., & Worthington, E. (Writers) (2016, July 26). *Australia's shame* [Television series episode]. In S. Neighbour (Executive Producer), Four Corners. Sydney, NSW: Australian Broadcasting Commission.
- Find and Connect. (2011a). *Native (Citizenship Rights) Act 1944 (1944-1971)*. Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/wa/WE00416>
- Find and Connect. (2011b). *Child Endowment Act 1941 (1941-1976)*. Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/australia/FE00090>
- Find and Connect. (2011c). *United Aborigines Mission, Gnowangerup (1935-1954)*. Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/wa/WE00222>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Fine, M. (1987). Silencing in public schools. *Language Arts*, 64(2), 157-174. doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41961589>
- Fine, M. (2006). Bearing witness: Methods for researching oppression and resistance: A textbook for critical research. *Social Justice Research*, 19(1), 83-108. doi: 10.1007/s11211-006-0001-0
- Fine, M. (2014). Circuits of dispossession and privilege. In T. Teo (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Critical Psychology* (pp. 227-234). New York, NY: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7_41
- Fine, M., & Ruglis, J. (2009). Circuits and consequences of dispossession: The racialized realignment of the public sphere for U.S. youth. *Transforming Anthropology*, 17(1), 20-33. doi: 10.1111/j.1548-7466.2009.01037.x
- Fine, M., & Weis, L. (2003). *Silenced voices and extraordinary conversations: Reimagining schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (A. Sheridan trans.). New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Fredericks, B. L. (2009). There is nothing that 'identifies me to that place': Aboriginal Women's perceptions of health spaces and places. *Cultural Studies Review*, 15(2), 46-61.
- Fredericks, B. L., Adams, K., Finlay, S. M., Fletcher, G., Andy, S., Briggs, L., ... & Hall, R. (2011). Engaging the practice of yarning in action research. *Action Learning and Action Research Journal*, 17(2), 7-19.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Bergman Ramos trans.). New York, NY: Continuum.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Frosh, S. (2003). Psychosocial studies and psychology: Is a Critical Approach Emerging? *Human Relations*, 56 (12), 1547-1567. doi: 10.1177/00187267035612005
- Frost, L., & Hoggett, P. (2008). Human agency and social suffering. *Critical Social Policy*, 28(4), 438-460. doi: 10.1177/0261018308095279
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace, and peace research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 167-191. doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/422690>
- Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27(3), 291-305. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343390027003005>
- Gemignani, M., & Peña, E. (2007). Postmodern conceptualizations of culture in social constructionism and cultural studies. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, 27 (2-1), 276-300. doi: 10.1037/h0091297
- Gergen, K. J. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40, 266-275. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.40.3.266
- Gergen, K. J. (1997). The place of the psyche in a constructed world. *Theory & Psychology*, 7(6), 723-746. doi: 10.1177/0959354397076001
- Gergen, K. J. (2009). *Relational being: Beyond self and community*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Gergen, K. J. (2011a). The self as a social construction. *Psychological Studies*, 56(1), 108-116. doi. 10.1007/s12646-011-0066-1
- Gergen, K. J. (2011b). The mythic reality of the autonomous individual. *Zygon*, 46(1), 204-223.
- Gergen, K. J. (2012). From reflecting to making: Psychology in a world of change. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 8(4), 511–514. doi:10.5964/ejop.v8i4.545

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Gergen, K. J. (2016). Toward a visionary psychology. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 44(1), 3-17. doi: 10.1037/hum0000013
- Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. M. (1984). The social construction of narrative accounts. *Historical Social Psychology*, 173-190.
- Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. M. (2010). Scanning the landscape of narrative inquiry. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(9), 728-735. doi: 10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00294.x
- Gergen, M. M., & Gergen, K. J. (2011). Performative social science and psychology. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1). Retrieved from: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1595>
- Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. M. (2013). Social constructionism and psychological inquiry. In J. A. Holstein, & J. F. Gubrium. (Ed.), *Handbook of constructionist research* (pp. 171-188). London, England: The Guildford Press.
- Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. M. (2014). Mischief, mystery, and moments that matter: Vistas of performative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(2), 213-221. doi: 10.1177/1077800413519074
- Gergen, K. J., Josselson, R., & Freeman, M. (2015). The promises of qualitative inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 70(1), 1-9. doi: 10.1037/a0038597
- Giroux, H. A. (2004). Cultural studies, public pedagogy, and the responsibility of intellectuals. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 1(1), 59-79. doi: 10.1080/1479142042000180926
- Glover, M., Dudgeon, P. & Huygens, I. (2010). Colonization and racism. In G. Nelson & I. Prilleltensky (Eds.), *Community psychology: In pursuit of*

liberation and well-being (2nd ed.) (pp. 353-370). London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Godreau, I. P., Reyes Cruz, M., Franco Ortiz, M., & Cuadrado, S. (2008). The lessons of slavery: Discourses of slavery, mestizaje, and blanqueamiento in an elementary school in Puerto Rico. *American Ethnologist*, 35(1), 115-135. doi: 10.1111/j.1548-1425.2008.00009.x

Goldbard, A. (2006). *New creative community: The arts of cultural development*. Oakland, CA: New Village Press.

Goldbard, A. (2013). *The culture of possibility: Art, artists & the future*. Oakland, CA: Waterlight Press.

Gone, J. P. (2007). "We never was happy living like a Whiteman": Mental health disparities and the postcolonial predicament in American Indian communities. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 40(3-4), 290-300. doi: 10.1007/s10464-007-9136-x

Gone, J. P. (2008). Dialogue 2008 introduction: Mental health discourse as Western cultural proselytization. *Ethos*, 36(3), 310-315. doi: 10.1111/j.1548-1352.2008.00016.x.

Gone, J. P. (2009). A community-based treatment for Native American historical trauma: Prospects for evidence-based practice. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 77(4), 751-762. doi: 10.1037/a0015390

Gone, J. P. (2011). The red road to wellness: Cultural reclamation in a native First Nations community treatment centre. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 47, 187-202. doi: 10.1007/s10464-010-9373-2

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Gone, J. P. (2013). Redressing First Nations historical trauma: Theorizing mechanisms for indigenous culture as mental health treatment. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 50(5), 683-706. doi: 10.1177/1363461513487669
- Gone, J. P. (2016). Alternative knowledges and the future of community psychology: Provocations from an American Indian healing tradition. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 58(3-4), 314-321. doi: 10.1002/ajcp.12046
- Gonzalez, J., Simard, E., Baker-Demaray, T., & Eyes, C. I. (2014). The internalized oppression of North American indigenous peoples. In E. J. R. David (Ed.), *Internalized oppression: The psychology of marginalized groups* (pp. 31-56). New York, NY: Springer.
- Goodley, D. (2012). Narrative inquiry. In P. Bannister, G. Bunn & E. Burman (Eds.), *Qualitative methods in psychology: A research guide* (pp. 129-142). Maidenhill, England: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Gorman, S. (2012). Voices from the boundary line: the Australian Football League's Indigenous team of the century. *Sport in Society*, 15(7), 1014-1025. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2012.723371>
- Gorman, S., Judd, B., Reeves, K., Osmond, G., Klugman, M., & McCarthy, G. (2015). Aboriginal Rules: The black history of Australian football. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32(16), 1947-1962. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2015.1124861>
- Government of Western Australia. (2017). *South West Native Title Settlement*. Retrieved from: <https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/lantu/south-west-native-title-settlement/Pages/default.aspx>
- Grabosky, P. N. (1989). An Aboriginal death in custody: The case of John Pat. In *Wayward governance: Illegality and its control in the public sector* (pp. 79-

- 92). Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology. Retrieved from:
<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/previous%20series/lcj/1-20/wayward/ch5t.html>
- Grant, S. (Presenter). (2015, May 28). *The tipping point: Racism, diversity and the AFL* [Television series episode]. Sydney, NSW: National Indigenous Television.
- Grant, S. (2016, August). *From reconciliation to rights: Shaping a bigger Australia*. Paper presented at the Wallace Wurth Lecture. Sydney, NSW: UNSW. Retrieved from: <https://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/stan-grant-wallace-wurth-lecture-reconciliation-rights>
- Green, M. J. & C. C. Sonn (2008). *Drawing out community empowerment through arts and cultural practice*. Perth, WA, Community Arts Network, Western Australia.
- Green, M. J., Sonn, C. C., & Matsebula, J. (2007). Reviewing whiteness: Theory, research, and possibilities. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 37(3), 389. doi: 10.1177/008124630703700301 .
- Griffin, C. (2000). More than simply talk and text: Psychologist as cultural ethnographers. In C. Squire (Ed.), *Culture in psychology* (pp. 17–30). London, England: Routledge.
- Grosfoguel, R. (2007). The epistemic decolonial turn: Beyond political-economy paradigms. *Cultural studies*, 21(2-3), 211-223. doi: 10.1080/09502380601162514
- Guest, D. (2008, October 16). Grief unites wheatbelt town where young indigenous men die. *The Australian*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/grief-unites-town-where-young-men-die/story-e6frg6pf-111117763669>

Guest, D. (2009, May, 30). West Australian coroner to investigate wheat-belt suicides. *The Australian*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/west-australian-coroner-to-investigate-wheatbelt-suicides/story-e6frg12c-1225718404413>

Guest, D. & Barrass, T. (2009, June 20). Rural centre Narrogin split on race claims. *The Australian*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/rural-centre-narrogin-split-on-race-claims/story-e6frg6n6-1225737992693>

Haebich, A. (1988). *For their own good*. Perth, WA: University of WA Press.

Haebich, A. (2000). *Broken circles: Fragmenting Indigenous families: 1800-2000*. Fremantle, WA: Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

Hagan, T., & Smail, D. (1997). Power-mapping—I. Background and basic methodology. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 7(4), 257-267. doi: 10.1002/(SICI)1099-1298(199709)7:4<257::AID-CASP428>3.0.CO;2-P

Hall, S. (1996). Introduction: Who needs identity? In S. Hall & P. Du gay (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (pp. 1-17). London, England: Sage.

Hammack, P. L. (2008). Narrative and the cultural psychology of identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 12(3), 222-247. doi: 10.1177/1088868308316892

Hammack, P. L. (2011). *Narrative and the politics of identity: The cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian youth*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Harrell, S.P., & Bond, M.A. (2006). Listening to diversity stories: Principles for practice in community research and action. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 37, 365-376. doi:10.1007/s10464-0060904207
- Harris, M., Carlson, B., & Poata-Smith, E. S. (2013). Indigenous identities and the politics of authenticity. In M. Harris, M. Nakata & B. Carlson (Eds.), *The politics of identity: Emerging Indigeneity* (pp. 1-9). Sydney, NSW: University of Technology Sydney Press.
- Harris, A., Carney, S., & Fine, M. (Eds.). (2001). Counterwork: Introduction to 'Under the covers: Theorising the politics of counter stories' (pp. 6-18). (Critical Psychology Series). London, England: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Hartmann, W.E., & Gone, J.P. (2014). American Indian historical trauma: Community perspectives from two Great Plains medical men. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 54, 274-288. doi: 10.1007/s10464-014-9671-1
- Harvey, J. (1999). *Civilized oppression*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hattam, R., & Atkinson, S. (2006). Reconciliation as a frame for rethinking racism in Australia. *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, 12(6), 683-700. doi: 10.1080/13504630601030883
- Hayward, A. (2008a, July 25). Probe Narrogin deaths: Health group. *The West Australian*. Retrieved from: <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/probe-narrogin-deaths-health-group-20080725-3ksb.html>
- Hayward, A. (2008b, October 15). Aboriginal community discussed suicides. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved from: <http://news.smh.com.au/national/aboriginal-community-discusses-suicides-20081015-51gu.html>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Henderson, P. (2007). Introduction. In H. Butcher, S. Banks, P. Henderson & J. Roberston (Eds.), *Critical community practice* (pp. 1-16). Bristol, England: The Policy Press.
- Hoagland, S.L. (2007). Denying relationality: Epistemology and ethics and ignorance. In S. Sullivan & N. Tuana (Eds.), *Race and epistemologies of ignorance* (pp. 95-118). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Hook, D. (2004). Fanon and the psychoanalysis of racism. In D. Hook (Ed.), *Critical psychology* (pp. 113-132). Cape Town, WC: University of Cape Town Press.
- Hook, D. (2005). A critical psychology of the postcolonial. *Theory & Psychology*, 15(4): 475–503. doi: 10.1177/0959354305054748
- Hosking, D. M. (2008). Can constructionism be critical? In J. A. Holstein & J. F. Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of constructionist research* (pp. 669-686). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.
- Host, J., & Owen, C. (2009). *'It's still in my heart, this is still my country': The single Noongar claim history*. Crawley, WA: University of Western Australia.
- Houses officially opened. (1966, October 7). *The Beverley Times*, p. 7. Retrieved from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/201773907>
- Huggins, J. (1987). "Firing on in the mind": Aboriginal women domestic servants in the inter-war years. *Hecate*, 13(2), 5.
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (1997). *Bringing Them Home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families*. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Retrieved from: https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (2002). *Social justice report 2001: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner*. Sydney, NSW: HREOC. Retrieved from: https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/social_justice/sj_report/sjreport01/sjreport.pdf
- Hunter, E., & Milroy, H. (2006). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide in context. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 10(2), 141-157. doi:10.1080/13811110600556889
- Huygens, I. (2011). Developing a decolonisation practice for settler colonisers: A case study from Aotearoa New Zealand. *Settler Colonial Studies*, 1(2), 53-81. doi: 10.1080/2201473X.2011.10648812
- Huygens, I. (2016). Pākehā and Tauīwi Treaty education: An unrecognised decolonisation movement? *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 11(2), 146-158. doi: 10.1080/1177083X.2016.1148057
- Jacobs, A. (1951, February 19). Sick natives (Letters to the Editor). *The West Australian*, p. 16. Retrieved from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/48184464>
- Jones, J. M. (2014). The middle way: Internalizing, externalizing, and balance in life. In E. J. R. David (Ed.), *Internalized oppression: The psychology of marginalized groups* (pp. 281-290). New York, NY: Springer.
- Josselson, R. E., Lieblich, A. E., & McAdams, D. P. (2007). *The meaning of others: Narrative studies of relationships*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- JP seeks to right to cane Aborigines. (1967, May 8). *The Canberra Times*, p. 1. Retrieved from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/131653502>

- Kasat, P. (2013). *Community arts and cultural development: A powerful tool for social transformation*. (Masters dissertation, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia). Retrieved from:
<http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/20482/2/02Whole.pdf>
- Kessarlis, T. N. (2006). About being mununga (Whitefulla): Making covert group racism visible. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 16(5), 347-362. doi: 10.1002/casp.880
- Kickett-Tucker, C., Bessarib, D., Coffin, J., & Wright, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Aboriginal community development: Fostering cultural security*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Kingry-Westergaard, C., & Kelly, J.G. (1990). A contextualist epistemology for ecological research. In P. Tolan, C. Keys, F. Chertok & L. Jason (Eds.), *Researching community psychology: Issues in theory and methods* (pp. 23-31). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Kirmayer, L. J., Dandeneau, S., Marshall, E., Phillips, M. K., & Williamson, K. J. (2011). Rethinking resilience from indigenous perspectives. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 56(2), 84-91. doi: 10.1177/070674371105600203
- Kirmayer, L. J., Gone, J. P., & Moses, J. (2014). Rethinking historical trauma. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 51(3), 299-319. doi: 10.1177/1363461514536358
- Kirmayer, L., Simpson, C., & Cargo, M. (2003). Healing traditions: Culture, community and mental health promotion with Canadian Aboriginal peoples. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 11(1), 15-23. doi: 10.1046/j.1038-5282.2003.02010.x
- Kishk Anaquot Health Research. (2006). *Final report for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Volume II: Measuring progress: Program evaluation*. Ottawa,

ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Retrieved from:

<http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/final-report-vol-2.pdf>

Kleinman, A. (1997). "Everything that really matters": Social suffering, subjectivity, and the remaking of human experience in a disordering world. *The Harvard Theological Review*, 90(3), 315-336. doi: 10.1017/S0017816000006374

Kleinman, A., Das, V., & Lock, M. M. (1997). *Social suffering*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Koerner, C. (2013). Learning the past to participate in the future: Regional discourses of Australian colonial history. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies*, 6(2), 29-40. Retrieved from:
http://www.isrn.qut.edu.au/publications/internationaljournal/documents/volume6_number2_13-Koerner.pdf

Koerner, C. (2015). White Australian identities and Indigenous land rights. *Social Identities*, 21(2), 87-101. doi: [10.1080/13504630.2014.1002391](https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2014.1002391)

Korreen Enterprises (n.d). *Lateral violence*. Retrieved from:
<http://koorreen.com.au/lateral-violence/>

Kowal, E. (2011). The stigma of white privilege: Australian anti-racists and Indigenous improvement. *Cultural Studies*, 25(3), 313-333. doi: 10.1080/09502386.2010.491159

Kral, M. J. (2012). Postcolonial suicide among Inuit in arctic Canada. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 36(2), 306-325. doi: 10.1007/s11013-012-9253-3

Kral, M. J. (2014). The relational motif in participatory qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(2), 144-150. doi: 10.1177/1077800413510871

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Kral, M. J., & Idlout, L. (2015). Community-based suicide prevention in Nunavut, Canada. In J. White, I. Marsh & M. J. Kral (Eds.), *Critical suicidology: Transforming suicide research and prevention for the 21st century* (pp. 181-193). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Kral, M. J. Ramírez García, J. I., Aber, M. S., Masood, N., Dutta, U., & Todd, N. R. (2011). Culture and community psychology: Toward a renewed and reimagined vision. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 47(1), 46-57. doi: 10.1007/s10464-010-9367-0
- Krieg, A. (2009). The experience of collective trauma in Australian Indigenous communities. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 17, 28-32. doi: 10.1080/10398560902948621
- Kruse, K. M. (2005). *White flight: Atlanta and the making of modern conservatism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kuppers, P. (2007). *Community performance: An introduction*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 7-24. doi: 10.1080/095183998236863
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2003). It's your world, I'm just trying to explain it: Understanding our epistemological and methodological challenges. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(1), 5-12. doi: 10.1177/1077800402239333
- Lampathakis, P. (2009a, May 30). Aboriginal family claims children victims of racism in schools. *Perth Now*. Retrieved from: <http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/aboriginal-family-claims-children-victims-of-racism-in-schools/story-e6frg12c-1225718575433>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Lampathakis, P. (2009b, June 6). Narrogin racism issues prompt Wagin MP to act.

Perth Now. Retrieved from: <http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/narrogin-racism-issues-prompt-wagin-mp-to-act/story-e6frg12c-1225728674757>

Land, C. (2015). *Decolonizing solidarity: Dilemmas and directions for supporters of indigenous struggles*. London, England: Zed Books.

Laubscher, L. (2006). Color in the interstice, or, what color, this faculty of color. In C.A. Stanley (Ed.), *Faculty of color: Teaching in predominantly white colleges and universities*, (pp. 196-213). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Lateral Love Australia. (n.d). *About us*. Retrieved from:

<http://laterallove.com.au/about/>

Laurie, V. (2017, May 13). Cries and whispers from Wandering Mission finally heard a half-century on. *The Australian*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/cries-and-whispers-from-wandering-mission-finally-heard-a-halfcentury-on/news-story/afaf2d64700c1fd30f33718ba6095cff>

Lavallee, B., & Clearsky, L. (2006). 'From woundedness to resilience': A critical review from an Aboriginal perspective. *International Journal of Indigenous Health*, 3(1), 4-6. doi: [10.18357/ijih31200612303](https://doi.org/10.18357/ijih31200612303)

Lawson-Te Aho, K. (2014). The healing is in the pain: Revisiting and re-narrating trauma histories as a starting point for healing. *Psychology & Developing Societies*, 26(2), 181-212. doi: 10.1177/0971333614549139

Levine-Rasky, C. (2016). *Whiteness fractured*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Lui, J.H., Lawson-Te Aho, K., & Rata, A. (2014). Constructing identity spaces for First Nations People: Towards an Indigenous psychology of self-

- determination and cultural healing. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 26(2), 143-153. doi: 10.1177/0971333614549136
- Lykes, M. B. (1997). Activist participatory research among the Maya of Guatemala: Constructing meanings from situated knowledge. *Journal of Social Issues*, 53(4), 725-746. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.1997.tb02458.x
- Lykes, M. B., Blanche, M.T., & Hamber, B. (2003). Narrating survival and change in Guatemala and South Africa: The politics of representation and a liberatory community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 31(1), 79-90. doi: 10.1023/A:1023074620506
- Lyons, E. (2007). *Analysing qualitative data: Comparative reflections*. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data in psychology* (pp. 164-177). London, England: Sage. doi: 10.4135/9781446207536
- Macintyre, S. & Clark, A. (2004). *The history wars*. Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Publishing.
- Maddil, A., Jordan, A., & Shirley, C. (2000). Objectivity and reliability in qualitative analysis: Realist, contextualist and radical constructionist epistemologies. *British Journal of Psychology*, 91, 1-20. doi: 10.1348/000712600161646
- Maddison, S. (2009). Australia: Indigenous autonomy matters. *Development*, 52(4), 483-489. doi: 10.1057/dev.2009.62
- Maddison, S. (2011). *Beyond white guilt: The real challenge for black-white relations in Australia*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Maddison, S. (2013). Indigenous identity, 'authenticity' and the structural violence of settler colonialism. *Identities*, 20(3), 288-303. doi: 10.1080/1070289X.2013.806267

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Maddison, S., & Brigg, M. (Eds.). (2011). *Unsettling the settler state: Creativity and resistance in Indigenous settler-state governance*. Annandale, NSW: Federation Press.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the colonality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept, *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3), 240-270. doi: 10.1080/09502380601162548
- Marshall, K. (2016). The Noongar warriors. *The Age*. Retrieved from: <http://www.smh.com.au/interactive/2016/the-noongar-warriors/>
- Martin, K. (2001). *Aboriginal people, Aboriginal lands and Indiginist research: A discussion or re-search pasts and neo-colonial research futures*. (Unpublished Masters dissertation). James Cook University, Cairns, Queensland, Australia.
- Martin, K., & Miraboopa, B. (2003). Ways of knowing, being and doing: A theoretical framweork and methods for Indigenous and Indigenist re-search. *Journal of Australian Studies*, 27(76), 203-214. doi: 10.1080/14443050309387838
- Martín-Baró, I. (1994). Toward a liberation psychology. In A. Aron & S. Corne (Eds.). (A. Aron trans.). *Writings for a liberation psychology* (pp. 17-32). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York: NY: Guilford Press.
- McAdams, D. P. (1996). Personality, modernity, and the storied self: A contemporary framework for studying persons. *Psychological Inquiry*, 7(4), 295-321. doi: 10.1207/s15327965pli0704_1

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- McAdams, D. P. (2003). Identity and the life story. In R. Fivish & C.A. Haden. (Eds.), *Autobiographical memory and the construction of a narrative self: Developmental and cultural perspectives* (pp. 187-207). London, England: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- McCarthy, C., Rodriguez, A., Meecham, S., David, S., Wilson-Brown, C., Godina, H., ... & Buendia, E. (2004). Race, suburban resentment, and the representation of the inner city in contemporary film and television. In M. Fine, L. Weis, L. Powell Pruitt & A. Burns (Eds.), *Off white: Readings on power, privilege and resistance* (pp. 163-174). New York, NY: Routledge.
- McCoy, D. L., & Rodricks, D. J. (2015). Critical race theory in higher education: 20 years of theoretical and research innovations. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 41(3), 1-117.
- McGuire, V., Boladeras, J., Collard, L., Bracknell, C., Butorac, A., Cox, A... & Swift, S. (2013). *The National Empowerment Project: Narrogin*. Retrieved from: http://media.wix.com/ugd/396df4_afac6e1f5e174b73bf5f972ff4635c11.pdf
- Mellor, D. (2004). Responses to racism: A taxonomy of coping styles used by Aboriginal Australians. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 74(1), 56. doi: 10.1037/0002-9432.74.1.56
- Memmi, A. (2003). *The colonizer and colonized* (H. Greenfield, trans.). New York, NY: Earthscan. (Original work published 1974).
- Miles, M. B., & Huberan, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miller, J. B. (1986). *Toward a new psychology of women* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Mills, C. W. (2007). White ignorance. In S. Sullivan & N. Tuana (Eds.), *Race and epistemologies of ignorance* (pp. 11-38). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Mills, D., & Brown, P. (2004). *Art and wellbeing: A guide to the connections between community cultural development and health, ecologically sustainable development, public housing and place, rural revitalisation, community strengthening, active citizenship, social inclusion and cultural diversity*. Sydney, NSW: Australia Council for the Arts.
- Milroy, H. (2005). Preface. In S. R. Zubrick., S. R., Silburn, D.M., Lawrence., F. G. Mitrou., R. B. Dalby., E. M. Blair,...J. Li. *The West Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey: Forced separation from natural family, forced relocation from traditional country or homeland, and social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people: Additional notes* (pp. xiii-xxiii). Perth, WA: Curtin University of Technology and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.
- Moane, G. (2009). Reflections on liberation psychology in action in an Irish context. In M. Montero & Sonn, C.C. (Eds.), *Psychology of liberation: Theory and applications* (pp. 135-153). New York, NY: Sage.
- Moane, G. (2011). Gender and colonialism: A psychological analysis of oppression and liberation (2nd ed.). London, England: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Moane, G. (2014). Liberation psychology, feminism and social justice psychology. In C. Johnson & H. Friedman (Eds.), *Praeger handbook of social justice and psychology* (Vol 1) (pp. 115-132). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Mohatt, N. V., Thompson, A. B., Thai, N. D., & Kreamer Tebes, J. (2014). Historical trauma as public narrative: A conceptual review of how history impacts

present-day health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 12-136. doi:

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.01.043>

Montenegro, M. (2002). Ideology and community social psychology: Theoretical considerations and practical implications. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30(4), 511-527. doi: 10.1023/A:1015807918026

Montero, M. (2007). The political psychology of liberation: From politics to ethics and back. *Political Psychology*, 28(5), 517-533. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2007.00588.x

Montero, M. (2009). Methods for liberation: Critical consciousness in action. In M. Montero & C.C. Sonn (Eds.). *Psychology of liberation: Theory and applications* (pp.73-92). New York, NY: Springer.

Montero, M., & Sonn, C.C. (Eds.). (2009). *Psychology and liberation: Theory and applications*. New York, NY: Springer.

Montero, M., Sonn, C. C., & Burton, M. (2017). Community psychology and liberation psychology: A creative synergy for an ethical and transformative praxis. In M. A. Bond, I. Serrano-Garcia & C. B. Key. (Eds.), *APA handbook of community psychology* (Vol. 1) (pp. 149-167). Washington, DC: American Psychological Society.

Monument Australia. (2017). *Pinjarra massacre site*. Retrieved from:

<http://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/indigenous/display/61063-pinjarra-massacre-site>

Moorhead, V., & LaFromboise, T.D. (2014). Healing one story at a time: American Indian/Alaska Native social justice. In C. Johnson & H. Friedman (Eds.), *The Praeger handbook of social justice* (Vol. 1) (pp. 135-154). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2000). *Talkin' up to the white woman*. St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2003). I still call Australia home: Indigenous belonging in a white society. In S. Ahmed, C. Castaneda, A. Fortier & M. Sheller. (Eds.), *Uprootings/regroundings: Questions of home and migration* (pp. 23-40). Oxford, England: Berg.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2004). Whiteness, epistemology and Indigenous representation. In A. Moreton-Robinson (Ed.), *Whitening race: Essays in social and cultural criticism* (pp. 75-88). Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2009). Imagining the good indigenous citizen: Race war and the pathology of patriarchal white sovereignty. *Cultural Studies Review*, 15(2), 61. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/csr.v15i2.2038>
- Moses, A. D. (Ed.). (2004). *Genocide and settler society: Frontier violence and stolen indigenous children in Australian history*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.
- Mutua, K., & Swadener, B. B. (Eds.). (2004). *Decolonizing research in cross-cultural contexts: Critical personal narratives*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Narrogin racism row leads to school boycott. (2009, June 17). *Perth Now*. Retrieved from: <http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/narrogin-racism-row-leads-to-school-boycott/story-e6frg12c-1225736664477>
- National Empowerment Project. (2014). *About us*. Accessed, May 4 2016 <http://www.nationalempowermentproject.org.au/#!/about-us/cw86>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2003). *Values and ethics: Guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research*.

Retrieved from: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/e52>

Native (Citizenship Rights) Act (1944). (Western Australia), No. 23 (Austl.).

Retrieved from:

[https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/pco/prod/FileStore.nsf/Documents/MRDocument:12046P/\\$FILE/NativesCitizenshipRightsAct1944_00-00-00.pdf?OpenElement](https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/pco/prod/FileStore.nsf/Documents/MRDocument:12046P/$FILE/NativesCitizenshipRightsAct1944_00-00-00.pdf?OpenElement)

Native Housing. (1953, April 10). *Great Southern Herald*. p. 7. Retrieved from:

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/147594060>

Native Title Act 1993. No. 110 (Austl.). Retrieved from:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00138>

Nicoll, F. (2008). Consuming pathologies: The Australian against indigenous sovereignties. In A. Moreton-Robinson, M. Casey. & F. J. Nicoll. (Eds.), *Transnational whiteness matters: Mythunderstanding* (pp. 57-79). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Nikora, L. W. (2007). Maori and psychology: Indigenous psychology in New Zealand. In A. Weatherall, M. Wilson, D. Harper & J. McDowell (Eds.), *Psychology in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (pp. 80-85). North Shore, New Zealand: Pearson Education New Zealand.

Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act 2007. (NT), No. 129 (Austl.).

Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2011C00053>

O'Connor, S., Tilyard, B. A., & Milfont, T. L. (2011). Liberation Psychology: From Latin America to Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Journal of New Zealand Studies*, 11, 151-170.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

O'Donoghue, L. (2003, December 11). 'Practical reconciliation': A dismal failure.

The Age. Retrieved from:

<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/12/10/1070732279557.html>

O'Loughlin, M., & Charles, M. (Eds.). (2015). *Fragments of trauma and the social production of suffering: Trauma, history and memory*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

O'Neill, T. D. (1994). Telling about whites, talking about Indians: Oppression, resistance and contemporary Indian identity. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (1), 94-126.

O'Shane, P. (1995). The psychological impact of white settlement on Aboriginal people. *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal*, 19(3), 24-29.

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Orford, J. (2008). *Community psychology: Challenges, controversies and emerging consensus*. West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons.

Palmer, D. (2013). Spinning a yarn for community: Noongar women and CAN WA's doll making project. In CAN WA, *Yarns of the heart: Noongar dolls* (pp. 42-65). Perth, WA: CAN WA.

Paradies, Y. C. (2006). Beyond black and white: Essentialism, hybridity, and Indigeneity. *Journal of Sociology*, 42(4), 355-367. doi: 10.1177/1440783306069993

Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse dynamics: Critical analysis for social and individual psychology*. London, England: Routledge.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

People, Culture, Environment. (2014). *Elders report into Preventing Indigenous Self-harm and Youth Suicide*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cultureislife.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Elders-Report.pdf>

Police called to high school amid racism claims. (2009, June 17). *The West Australian*. Retrieved from: <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/police-called-to-high-school-amid-racism-claims-20090617-chdp.html>

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. New York, NY: State of University Press.

Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour*. London, England: Sage.

Pratt, M. L. (1991). Arts of the contact zone. *Profession*, 91, 33-40.

Prilleltensky, I. (2003). Understanding, resisting, and overcoming oppression: Toward psychopolitical validity. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 31(1-2), 195-201. doi: 10.1023/A:1023043108210

Prilleltensky, I. (2012). Wellness as fairness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 49(1), 1-21. doi: 10.1007/s10464-011-9448-8

Prilleltensky, I., & Gonick, L. (1996). Politics change, oppression remains: On the psychology and politics of oppression. *Political Psychology*, 17(1), 127-148. doi: 10.2307/3791946

Probyn, F. (2004). Playing chicken at the intersection: The White critic in/of critical whiteness studies. *Borderlands e-journal*, 3(2). Retrieved from: http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no2_2004/probyn_playing.htm

Pyke, K. (2010). What is internalized racial oppression and why don't we study it? Acknowledging racism's hidden injuries. *Sociological Perspectives*, 53(4), 551-572. doi: 10.1525/sop.2010.53.4.551

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Quayle, A., & Sonn, C. (2013). Explicating race privilege: Examining symbolic barriers to Aboriginal and non-indigenous partnership. *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture* 19(5), 552-570. doi: 10.1080/13504630.2013.796881
- Quayle, A., Sonn, C., & Kasat, P. (2016). Community arts as public pedagogy: Disruptions into public memory through Aboriginal counter-storytelling. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20(3), 261-277. doi: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1047662
- Quayle, A., Sonn, C.C., & van den Eynde, J. (2016). Narrating the accumulation of dispossession: Stories of Aboriginal Elders. *Community Psychology in Global Perspective*, 2(2), 79-96.
- Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power, eurocentrism, and Latin America. *International Sociology*, 15(2), 215-232.
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975*. No. 52 (Austl.). Retrieved from: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/rda1975202/
- Ramirez, L. C., & Hammack, P. L. (2014). Surviving colonization and the quest for healing: Narrative and resilience among California Indian tribal leaders. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 51(1), 112-133. doi: 10.1177/1363461513520096
- Rappaport, J. (1995). Empowerment meets narrative: Listening to stories and creating settings. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(5), 795-807. doi: 10.1007/BF02506992
- Rappaport, J. (2000). Community narratives: Tales of terror and joy. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 28 (1), 1-24. doi: 10.1023/A:1005161528817

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Ratnavale, D. (2007). *An understanding of Aboriginal experience in the context of collective trauma: A challenge for healing*. Adelaide, SA: Central Northern Area Health Services.
- Recognise. (2017). *The constitution: Why recognition?* Retrieved from: <http://www.recognise.org.au/the-facts/the-constitution/>
- Referendum Council. (2017, May 26). *Uluru Statement from the heart*. Retrieved from: https://www.referendumcouncil.org.au/sites/default/files/2017-05/Uluru_Statement_From_The_Heart_0.PDF
- Reissman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Reyes Cruz, M., & Sonn, C. C. (2011). (De)colonizing culture in community psychology: Reflections from critical social science. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 47 (1-2), 203–214. doi: 10.1007/s10464-010-9378-x
- Reyes Cruz, M., & Sonn, C. C. (2015). (De)colonizing culture in community psychology: Reflections from critical social science. In R. D. Goodman., P & C. Gorski (Eds.) *Decolonizing “multicultural” counselling through social justice* (pp. 127-146). New York, NY: Springer.
- Reynolds, H. (1987). *Frontier: Aborigines, settlers, and land*. Sydney, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Reynolds, H. (2013). *Forgotten war*. Kensington, NSW: New South Publishing.
- Rickard, J., Spencer, B., & Hobbs, A. (2009, November 16). Town on knife edge after riot. *The West Australian*. Retrieved from: <https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/wa/a/6475858/town-on-knife-edge-after-riot/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Rigney, L. I. (2006). Indigenist research and Aboriginal Australia. In J. Kunnie & N. I. Goduka (Eds.), *Indigenous peoples' wisdom and power: Affirming our knowledge through narratives* (pp. 32-50). Aldershot, England: Ashgate.
- Roberts, S. J. (1983). Oppressed group behavior: Implications for nursing. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 5(4), 21-30.
- Rosnow, R., & Georgoudi, M. (Eds.). (1986). *Contextualism and understanding in behavioural science: Implications for research and theory*. New York, NY: Praeger.
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Volume 3, Gathering Strength*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Retrieved from:
<http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/RCAP-vol-3-Gathering-Strength-Education2.pdf>
- Salter, P., & Adams, G. (2013). Toward a critical race psychology. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 7(11), 781-793. doi: 10.1111/spc3.12068
- Santos, B.D.S. (2014). *Epistemologies of the south: Justice against epistemicide*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sarbin, T. R. (Ed.). (1986). *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing/Greenwood Publishing group.
- Scott, J. C. (1985). *Weapons of the weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*. New Haven, NY: Yale University Press.
- Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. New Haven, NY: Yale university press.
- Seedat, M. (2015). Oral history as an enactment of community psychology. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 43(1), 22-35. doi: 10.1002/jcop.21690

- Segalo, P. J. (2013). *In our own voices: Black women's narratives of conflict and post-conflict experiences*. (Doctoral dissertation, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York). Retrieved from:
<http://gradworks.proquest.com/35/49/3549073.html>
- Segalo, P., Manoff, E., & Fine, M. (2015). Working with embroideries and counter-maps: Engaging memory and imagination within decolonizing frameworks. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 342-364. doi:
10.5964/jspp.v3i1.145
- Sentence quashed: Term for youth 'excessive'. (1967, August 18). *The Canberra Times*, p. 8. Retrieved from:
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/106972431>
- Shaw, G. (2012). *Vulnerability-An affliction of the powerless: A Nyoongar story*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia). Retrieved from:
<http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/12387/1/01Front.pdf> .
- Short, D. (2012). When sorry isn't good enough: Official remembrances and reconciliation in Australia. *Memory Studies*, 5(3), 293-304. doi:
10.1177/1750698012443886
- Shulman, H.L., & Watkins, M. (2001). Silenced knowings, forgotten springs: Paths to healing in the wake of colonialism. *Radical Psychology*, 2(2), 1-19.
- Silburn, S., Robinson, G., Leckning, B., Henry, D., Cox, A., & Kickett, D. (2014). Preventing suicide among Aboriginal Australians. In P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy & R. Walker (Eds.), *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice* (2nd ed.) (pp. 147-164). Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Smail, D. (1995). Power and the origins of unhappiness: Working with individuals. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 5(5), 347-356. doi: 10.1002/casp.2450050506
- Smail, D. (2001). De-psychologizing community psychology. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 11, 159-165. doi: 10.1002/casp.621
- Smith, D. (1967, May 13). The Aborigines' dilemma- 1: Pingelly: Is drink the cause. *The Canberra Times*, p. 2. Retrieved from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/131654724>
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London, England: Zed Books.
- Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). London, England: Zed Books.
- Smith, B., & Sparkes, A. C. (2008). Contrasting perspectives on narrating selves and identities: An invitation to dialogue. *Qualitative Research*, 8(1), 5-35. doi: 10.1177/1468794107085221
- Solórzano, D. G. & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 23-44. doi: 10.1177/107780040200800103
- Somers, M. R. (1994). The narrative constitution of identity: A relational and network approach. *Theory and Society*, 23(5), 605-649.
- Sonn, C. (2011). Research and practice in the contact zone: Crafting resources for challenging racialised exclusion. In F. H. Eduardo Almeida Acosta (Ed.), *International Community Psychology: Community approaches to contemporary social problems* (Volume 1) (pp. 271-291). Puebla, Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana Puebla.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Sonn, C. C. (2012). Speaking unspoken memories: Remembering apartheid racism in Australia. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 18(3), 240. doi: 10.1037/a0029457
- Sonn, C. C. (2016). Swampscott in international context: Expanding our ecology of knowledge. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 58(3-4), 309-313. doi: 10.1002/ajcp.12038
- Sonn, C. C., & Baker, A. M. (2016). Creating inclusive knowledges: Exploring the transformative potential of arts and cultural practice. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20(3), 215-228. doi: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1047663
- Sonn, C., Drew, N., & Kasat, P. (2002). *Conceptualising community cultural development*. Perth, WA: Community Arts Network WA.
- Sonn, C. C., & Fisher, A. T. (1998). Sense of community: Community resilient responses to oppression and change. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 26(5), 457-471. doi: 10.1002/(SICI)1520-6629(199809)26:5<457::AID-JCOP5>3.0.CO;2-O
- Sonn, C. C., & Green, M. J. (2006). Disrupting the dynamics of oppression in intercultural research and practice. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 16(5), 337-346. doi: 10.1002/casp.877
- Sonn, C. C., & Lewis, R. (2009). Immigration and identity: The ongoing struggles for liberation. In M. Montero & C.C. Sonn (Eds.), *Psychology of liberation: Theory and applications* (pp. 115-134). New York, NY: Springer.
- Sonn, C., & Quayle, A. (2012). Community psychology, critical theory and community development in Indigenous empowerment. In D. Bretherton & N. Balvin (Eds.), *Peace Psychology in Australia* (pp. 261-282). New York, NY: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-1-4614-1403-2_15

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Sonn, C. C., & A. F. Quayle. (2013). Developing praxis: Mobilising critical race theory in community cultural development. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 23(5), 435-448. doi: 10.1002/casp.2145
- Sonn, C. C., & Quayle, A.F. (2014). Community cultural development for social change: Developing critical praxis. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology* 6(1), 16-35. Retrieved from http://psysr.org/jsacp/Sonn-v6n1-14_16-35.pdf
- Sonn, C., Quayle, A.F., & Kasat, P. (2015). Picturing the Wheatbelt: Exploring and expressing place identity through photography. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 55(1-2), 89-101. doi: 10.1007/s10464-014-9686-7
- Sonn, C.C., Stevens, G., & Duncan, N. (2013). Decolonisation, critical methodologies and why stories matter. In G. Stevens, N. Duncan & D. Hook (Eds.), *Race, memory and the Apartheid Archive: Towards a transformative psychosocial praxis* (pp. 295-314). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sonti, C. (2009, February 3). Narrogin suicide funds run out. *WA today*. Retrieved from: <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/narrogin-suicide-fund-runs-out-20090202-7vmd.html>
- SooHoo, S. (2013). Humility within culturally responsive methodologies. In M. Berryman, S. Soohoo & A. Nevin (Eds.), *Culturally responsive methodologies* (pp. 199-220). Bingley, England: Emerald Group Publishing.
- South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017a). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Noongar*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/noongar/>
- South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017b). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Connection to country*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/connection-to-country/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017c). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Regions and towns*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/regions-and-towns/>

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017d). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Identity*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/identity/>

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017e). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Impacts of law post 1905*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/impacts-of-law-post-1905/>

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017f). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Missions*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/missions/>

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017g). *Kaartdijin Noongar: War service*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/war-service/>

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. (2017h). *Kaartdijin Noongar: Prohibited areas map*. Retrieved from: <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/prohibited-area-map/>

Souto-Manning, M. (2014). Critical narrative analysis: The interplay of critical discourse and narrative analyses. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27(2), 159-180. doi: 10.1080/09518398.2012.737046

Sparkes, A. C., & Smith, B. (2013). Narrative constructionist inquiry. In J. A. Holstein & J. F. Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of constructionist research* (pp. 295-314). London, England: The Guildford Press.

Spencer, B. (2009, November 17). Town at a loss how feud flared into riot. *The West Australian*. Retrieved from: <https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/6480797/town-at-a-loss-how-family-feud-flared-into-riot/>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 271-313). London, England: Macmillan Education. doi: 10.1007/978-1-349-19059-1_20
- Squire, C. (2000). Reconfiguring psychology and culture. In C. Squire (Ed.), *Culture in psychology* (pp. 1-16). London, England: Routledge.
- Stanner, W. E. H. (2011). *The dreaming and other essays*. Collingwood, Vic: Black Inc. Agenda.
- State Library of Western Australia. (2016). *Storylines*. Retrieved from: http://slwa.wa.gov.au/for/indigenous_australians/storylines
- Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services Provision. (2014). *Overcoming Indigenous disadvantage: Key indicators*. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: <http://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage/key-indicators-2014/key-indicators-2014-report.pdf>
- Stein, C. H., & Faigin, D. A. (2015). Community-based arts initiatives: Exploring science of the arts. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 55 (1-2), 70–73. doi:10.1007/s10464-014-9698-3
- Stein, C. H., & Mankowski, E. S. (2004). Asking, witnessing, interpreting, knowing: Conducting qualitative research in community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 33(1/2), 21-35. doi: 10.1023/B:AJCP.0000014316.27091.e8
- Stevens, G., Duncan, N., & Hook, D. (Eds.). (2013). *Race, memory, and the Apartheid Archive: Towards a transformative psychosocial praxis*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Stevens, G., Duncan, N., & Sonn, C. (2010). The Apartheid Archive: Memory, voice and narrative as liberatory praxis. *Psychology in Society*, 40, 8-28. Retrieved from: <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/pins/n40/n40a02.pdf>
- Stevens, G., Duncan, N., & Sonn, C. (2013). Memory, narrative and voice as liberatory praxis in the Apartheid Archive. In G. Stevens, N. Duncan & D. Hook (Eds.), *Race, memory and the Apartheid Archive: Towards a transformative psychosocial praxis* (pp. 25-44). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Stewart, E. (2011). On voice: Difference, power, change. In M. S. Aber, K. I. Maton, & E. Seidman (Eds.), *Empowering settings and voices for social change* (pp. 193-206). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195380576.003.0010
- Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012* (NT), No. 100 (Austl.). Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2012A00100>
- Sullivan, S. (2006). Race, space, and place. In *Revealing whiteness: The unconscious habits of white privilege* (pp. 143-166). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Sullivan, S. (2007). White Ignorance and colonial oppression. In S. Sullivan & N. Tuana (Eds.), *Race and epistemologies of ignorance* (pp. 153-172). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Sullivan, S., & Tuana, N. (2007). *Race and epistemologies of ignorance*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Tappan, M. B. (2006). Reframing internalized oppression and internalized domination: From the psychological to the sociocultural. *Teachers College Record*, 108(10), 2115- 2144. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9620.2006.00776.x

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Tatz, C. (1987). *Aborigines in Sports*. Bedford Park, SA: Flinders University.
- Tatz, C. (1995). Racism and sport in Australia. *Race & Class*, 36(4), 43-54.
- Tatz, C. (1999). Genocide in Australia. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 1(3), 315-352.
doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14623529908413964>
- Tatz, C. (2005). *Aboriginal suicide is different: A portrait of life and self-destruction* (2nd ed.). Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Tatz, C. M., & Tatz, P. (2000). *Black gold: The Aboriginal and Islander sports hall of fame*. Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Teo, T. (1999). Methodologies of critical psychology: Illustrations from the field of racism. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology*, 1, 119-134.
- Teo, T. (2005). *The critique of psychology: From Kant to postcolonial theory*. New York, NY: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Teo, T. (2010). What is epistemological violence in the empirical social sciences? *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(5), 295-303. doi: 10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00265.x
- Teo, T. (2015). Critical psychology: A geography of intellectual engagement and resistance. *American Psychologist*, 70(3), 243. doi: 10.1037/a0038727
- Thomas, R. E., & Rappaport, J. (1996). Art as community narrative: A resource for social change. In M.B. Lykes, R. Liem, A. Banuazizi & M. Morris (Eds.), *Unmasking social inequalities: Victims, voice and resistance* (pp. 317-336). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Trickett, E. J. (1996). A future for Community Psychology: The contexts of diversity and the diversity of contexts. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 24(2), 209-234. doi: 10.1007/BF02510399

- Trickett, E. J., Trimble, J. E., & Allen, J. (2014). Most of the story is missing: Advocating for a more complete intervention story. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 54, 180-186. doi: 10.1007/s10464-014-9645-3
- Trimble, J. E., & Mohatt, G. V. (2006). The virtuous and responsible researcher in another culture. In J. E. Trimble & C. B. Fisher (Eds.), *The handbook of ethical research with ethnocultural populations and communities* (pp. 325–334). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409-428.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2000). Ideologies, racism, discourse: Debates on immigration and ethnic issues. In J. Ter Wal & M. Verkuyten (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on racism* (pp. 91-116). London, England: Ashgate.
- van Krieken, R. (2012). Between assimilation and multiculturalism: Models of integration in Australia. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 46(5), 500-517. doi: 10.1080/0031322X.2012.718167
- Vizenor, G. R. (1999). *Manifest manners: Narratives on postindian survivance*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Vizenor, G. (Ed.). (2008). *Survivance: Narratives of native presence*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Walker, R., Schultz, C., & Sonn, C. (2014). Cultural competence: Transforming policy, services, programs and practice. In P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy & R. Walker (Eds.), *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander*

mental health and wellbeing principles and practice (2nd ed) (pp. 195-220).

Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.

Walkerdine, V. (2000). Conclusion. In C. Squire (Ed.), *Culture in psychology* (pp. 173-177). London, England: Routledge.

Walter, M. (2009). An economy of poverty: Power and the domain of Aboriginality.

Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies, 2(1), 2-14. Retrieved from:

http://www.isrn.qut.edu.au/pdf/ijcis/v2n1_2009/Final_Walter.pdf

Walter, M. (2010a). Market forces and Indigenous resistance paradigms. *Social*

Movement Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Protest, 9(2),

121-137. doi: 10.1080/14742831003603273

Walter, M. (2010b). The globalizing era and citizenship rights for Indigenous

Australian women. In M. Abraham, E.N. Chow, L. Maratou-Alipranti. & E.

Tastsoglou (Eds.), *Contours of citizenship: Women, diversity and practices of citizenship* (pp. 95-109). Surrey, England: Ashgate.

Walter, M., & Saggars, S. (2007). Poverty and social class. In B. Carson, T. Dunbar,

R.D., Chenhall & R. Bailie (Eds.), *Social determinants of Indigenous health* (pp. 87-108). Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Walter, M., Taylor, S., & Habibis, D. (2011). How white is social work in Australia?

Australian Social Work, 64(1), 6-19. doi:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2010.510892>

Washborne, M., & Bolton, H. (2009, November 15). Three injured in Narrogin

shooting. *Perth Now*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/three-injured-in-narrogin-shooting/story-e6frea6u-1225797779458>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Watkins, M. (2015). Psychosocial accompaniment. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 324-341. doi:10.5964/jspp.v3i1.103
- Watkins, M., & Shulman, H. (2008). *Toward psychologies of liberation*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave MacMillan. doi: 10.1057/9780230227736
- Watson, I. (2009). Aboriginality and the violence of colonialism. *Borderlands e-journal*, 8(1), 1-8. Retrieved from:
http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol8no1_2009/iwatson_aboriginality.pdf
- Watts, R. J., & Serrano-García, I. (2003). The quest for a liberating community psychology: An overview. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 31(1), 73-78. doi: 10.1023/A:1023022603667
- Weatherburn, D. (2014). *Arresting incarceration: Pathways out of Indigenous imprisonment*. Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Weis, L., & Fine, M. (2012). Critical bifocality and circuits of privilege: Expanding critical ethnographic theory and design. *Harvard Educational Review*, 82(2), 173-201. doi: 10.17763/haer.82.2.v1jx34n441532242
- Wendt, D. C., & Gone, J. P. (2012). Decolonizing psychological inquiry in American Indian Communities: The promise of qualitative methods. In D.K. Nagata, L.E., Kohn-Wood & L.A. Suzuki (Eds.), *Qualitative strategies for ethnocultural research* (pp. 161-178). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1994). The primacy of mediated action in sociocultural studies. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 1(4), 202-208. doi:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10749039409524672>

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Wesley-Esquimaux, C., & Smolewski, M. (2004). *Historic trauma and Aboriginal healing*. Ottawa, ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/historic-trauma.pdf>
- Wexler, L. (2006). Inupiat youth suicide and culture loss: Changing community conversations for prevention. *Social Science & Medicine*, 63(11), 2938-2948. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2006.07.022
- Wexler, L. (2011). Behavioral health services “Don't work for us”: Cultural incongruities in human service systems for Alaska Native communities. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 47(1-2), 157-169. doi: 10.1007/s10464-010-9380-3
- Wexler, L. (2014). Looking across three generations of Alaska Natives to explore how culture fosters Indigenous resilience. *Transcultural Psychiatry* 51(1), 73-92. doi: 10.1177/1363461513497417
- Wexler, L., Eglington, K., & Gubrium, A. (2014). Using digital stories to understand the lives of Alaska Native young people. *Youth & Society*, 46(4), 478-504. doi: 10.1177/0044118X12441613
- Wexler, L., & Gone, J. P. (2012). Culturally responsive suicide prevention in Indigenous communities: Unexamined assumptions and new possibilities. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102(5), 800-806. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2011.300432
- Wexler, L., & Gone, J.P. (2015). Exploring possibilities for Indigenous suicide prevention: Responding to cultural understandings and practices. In J. White, I. Marsh, M. J. Kral. & J. Morris. (Eds.) *Critical suicidology: Transforming suicide research and prevention for the 21st century* (pp. 50-61). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- Wexler, L., White, J., & Trainor, B. (2015). Why an alternative to suicide prevention gatekeeper training is needed for rural Indigenous communities: Presenting an empowering community storytelling approach. *Critical Public Health*, 25(2), 205-217. doi: 10.1080/09581596.2014.904039
- White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York, NY: WW Norton & Company.
- Williams, G. (2012). Does constitutional recognition negate Indigenous sovereignty? *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, 8(3), 10-11. Retrieved from:
https://antar.org.au/sites/default/files/does_constitutional_recognition_negate_aboriginal_sovereignty.pdf
- Wilson, W.A. (2004). Indigenous knowledge recovery is Indigenous empowerment. *The American Indian Quarterly*, 28(3/4), 359-372. doi:
<https://doi.org/10.1353/aiq.2004.0111>
- Young, I. M. (1990). *Justice and the politics of difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Zubrick, S. R., Shepherd, C. J., Dudgeon, P., Gee, G., Paradies, Y., Scrine, & Walker, R. (2014). Social determinants of social and emotional wellbeing. In P. Dudgeon, H. Milroy & R. Walker (Eds.), *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice* (2nd ed.) (pp. 93-112). Barton, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.

Appendix A: The Bush Babies Project in Other Towns

Bush Babies in Narrogin: Links

Honouring our Elders portrait exhibition was featured on Noongar Dandjoo- a television series produced by students at Curtin University, see:

<https://vimeo.com/155482549>

A story on the Elders portrait project and exhibition was also aired on the WA 7.30 Report, see: <https://vimeo.com/98909035>

For more on Rekindling stories on country, see: <https://vimeo.com/145349316>

Badjaling/Quairading, 2010

The Bush Babies project began with Noongar Elder Winnie McHenry from Badjaling, a Noongar reserve outside of Quairading, who wanted to honour Noongar people born in the bush and the Noongar midwives who delivered them. In the first iteration of the project in Quairading/Badjaling, CAN facilitated research visits to the State Library and scrapbooking and photography workshops that explored the history of the Bush Babies and their descendants. In 2010, a community reunion was held at the Badjaling Reserve where Elders who were born at Badjaling and the Noongar midwives who delivered them shared photographs, stories and memories of the reserve. A film crew from Film and Television Institute's Indigenous Community Stories with oral historian Mary Anne Jebb, were also there to record the day. Photographic workshops were held, and Elders had their photographs taken. Following the reunion, photo album workshops were run in Kellerberrin and Quairading to provide local community members the opportunity to artistically collate their photographs and continue to exchange images and stories.

The Bush Babies project has been delivered in Kellerberrin, Narrogin, Moora, Bunbury and Goomalling. In each of the towns, CAN staff, including local Noongar staff members based at the regional offices in Kellerberrin and Narrogin, meet with the local Noongar community, show them examples of what they have done in other towns and from there the community can decide what they want to do in their town. Coordinator Michelle White, commented that she has: "tried to let the community cherry pick what it is that works for them, and try and build the project around what will get traction in that community so it has been slightly different in each location" (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014).

Kellerberrin: Intergenerational Photography

In 2012, the Bush Babies project was delivered in Kellerberrin, where more than 80 community members participated in a series of photographic workshops, photo-documentation, digital recordings, research trips and community storytelling events. On research trips to the State Library "Elders in Kellerberrin were able to access the archives of the State Library and find photos of themselves as babies and also family members that they didn't know existed..." (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014). Reflecting on the development of Bush Babies in Kellerberrin, Michelle commented that a focus on intergenerational photography came about when:

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

We took a whole heap of cameras and we got the kids to do a photography workshop but instead of all the kids going to the cameras all the mums ran over to the cameras straight away and wanted to take photos of their kids, and I had a light-bulb moment, I was just like okay you know what we need to do in Kellerberrin. M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014)

In this instance, it was not so much about “unearthing the archives” (as it was with the Badjaling collection); it was about:

Creating a contemporary collection of photographs and the next lot of stuff that goes into the library that are archived for a hundred years is actually these parents being empowered to photograph their own kids and their own families- it’s like they create their own collection, it’s not from an anthropological point of view... its personal you know it’s their family from their point of view on how they want to be presented. (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014)

Michelle recalls that there was “a really strong theme of wanting to do intergenerational photos like getting all the different generations down to five and six generations” M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014). She explained that she was really supportive of this idea because she knew from her own experience (as an Aboriginal woman)

The only time you ever generally get those photos like from the great great grandmas down to the newborns is at a funeral, so everyone wants those photos and treasures them but there is always a sadness behind them....We wanted to create an opportunity to gather those amazing photos that people can treasure but have them taken at a joyous event, not surrounded in sadness. (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014)

Summing up Bush Babies in Kellerberrin, Michelle White commented:

This project gave them the opportunity to learn how to use a digital camera upload them do some basic cropping and enhancing but also scrapbooking and they all had a real talent and so much pride, they created like family heirlooms out of the photos, and it was a mix of archival photos people swapping photos and the photos that they had taken themselves of their kids.... so that was really what worked for us in Kellerberrin, a little bit of catching the oral histories, some really good in situ storytelling and cultural exchanges. (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014)

As part of Bush Babies in Kellerberrin, participants visited culturally significant sites in the area, including Kokerbin rock, a really important spiritual place for Noongar people, with a strong history of camping as it is near an old ‘Native’ reserve. Noongar children, young people and adults attended the trip to Kokerbin rock, and being on country, provided the opportunity for storytelling on place. Michelle described the added significance of being on country in the sharing of stories:

Elders...have talked to the kids before about it, like you don’t go down that well it’s a bottomless well and all these anecdotes and stuff, but it didn’t really

connect with the kids until we were there and the Elders walked around with them and explained that's what we call this place and that's why you don't go there and ... I think they had the context cos it was real and because we weren't sitting them in the group and saying lets tell dreamtime stories... you know catch and preserve your culture it all happened really organically and naturally because we were in, in in situ, yeah I don't know it just enabled them to then speak very very naturally about the seven sisters stories, about the special sites around that but also then to talk about their history and to open up a conversation about living at the reserve and cooking kangaroo on the fire and coming out here when they had to hide from White, you know lots of really natural conversations. (M. White, personal communication, July 20, 2014)

The project culminated in a photographic exhibition that captured and celebrated the strength and resilience of Noongar families in the Eastern Wheatbelt. A community calendar was produced by CAN that included the photographs taken as part of the project.

Bunbury: Honouring the journey of Noongar families

Bush Babies has also been delivered in Bunbury, where CAN worked with the descendants of prominent Noongar families to “honour their relatives’ journey from the farming town of Pingelly to their traditional home country around Burekup and Bunbury” (CAN WA, 2017b, para. 1). Bush Babies in Bunbury involved eco-dyeing, blanket-making, textile and photo-sharing workshops with families. These workshops resulted in the production of handmade baby blankets, which were decorated with fabric photo prints featuring members of their family, both past and present. In order to capture the overarching family story, participants identified 12 significant locations that held many personal memories and a lot of meaning for them: “These locations tell the story of their families’ journey away from racism, oppression and government policies related to the Stolen Generation” (CAN WA, 2017b, para. 4). The next aspect of the project was a two-day family reunion, where the families and CAN visited each location, with a professional photographer who documented the journey: “On this reunion, the family spoke of children who were taken from their families and placed in missions and reserves near Pingelly, their travels to find a better life in Burekup, and the final journey to Bunbury where they established a home” (CAN WA, 2017b, para. 6). A publication that includes the stories captured as part of this journey and the images of the descendants is being produced by CAN.

Moora: Making Bush Babies and sharing stories

The Bush Babies project has also been delivered in Moora, where like Narrogin, the community has been divided because of family feuding and suffering grief after many deaths in the community. In Moora, inspired by CAN's previous project Yarns of the Heart: Noongar Dolls, Bush Babies involved the creation of textile ‘Bush Babies’, using a variety of natural materials and ancestral techniques including eco-dyeing and weaving. A series of workshops were delivered in New Norcia and Moora with local Noongar artist Gloria Egan. During these workshops, participants created their own ‘Bush Baby’, and shared their family story. Another aspect of Bush Babies in Moora

was Elders visiting birthing sites around the area; Elders were photographed honouring their Bush Baby stories and ancestors.

Goomalling Yarns

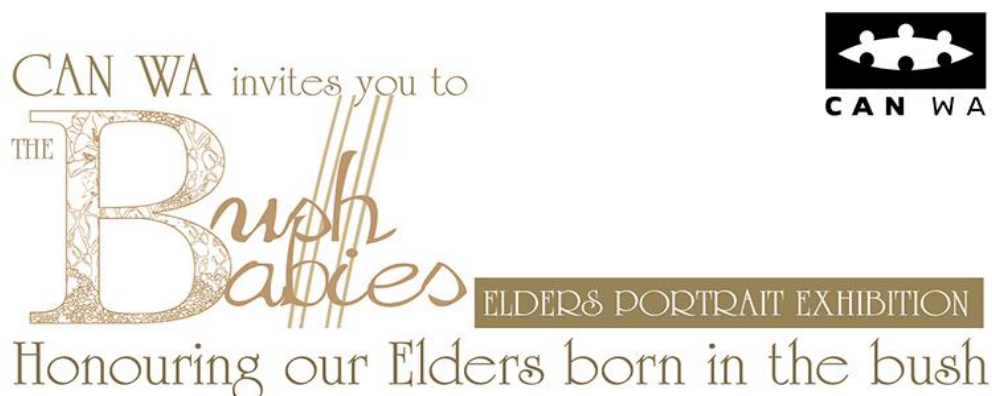
In Goomalling, Bush Babies developed into an intergenerational project called Goomalling Yarns, which combined hip-hop, oral histories, photography and printmaking. This iteration of the project involved senior community members sharing historic photos and stories of when people were living in the bush, on reserves, in missions and on the outskirts of town. More than 350 historic photos were identified in this process and have since been added to the WA State Library's Storylines archive. The photographs, including the significant Mavis Walley Collection, document generations of Noongar families living in and around Goomalling since as early as 1925. This collection is particularly significant and considered extremely rare, given that the photographs were taken of Aboriginal people and lives by an Aboriginal woman; most photographs of Aboriginal people in this era, were taken by missionaries and anthropologists (for photographs, see: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/mavis-walley-collection-aboriginal-past-as-they-saw-fit-to-preserve-it/story-e6frg6z6-1227465331358>).

The stories were recorded by oral historians Bill Bunbury and Jemma King, and like the [Noongar Voices project](#) were used to create a radio documentary. Following this, young Noongar people were invited to reinterpret the stories and images using photography and hip hop with photographers Nat Brunovs and Mary Parker and hip hop MC Scott Griffiths. The adult community members used their photos and stories to create mix-media artworks, which are included in the oral history/ hip hop CD package (to listen to the Goomalling yarns, and see what the young people produced, see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/get-your-copy-of-goomalling-yarns/>).

For more on Goomalling yarns, see: <https://vimeo.com/161149252>

More recently, Bush Babies has been delivered in Busselton and Midland. For more on the Bush Babies project/s, see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/bush-babies/>

Appendix B: Honouring Our Elders Exhibition Flyer



The strength and resilience of Noongar Elders from across the Wheatbelt will be celebrated in an exhibition during NAIDOC week.

The sixteen Elders who have been recorded on canvas are part of CAN WA's Bush Babies community arts project, which aims to celebrate the unique stories of the Noongar babies who were born in the bush, reserves, missions or fringes of towns.

Please join us at the Western Australian Museum for the exhibition opening, which will be officially opened by Ken Wyatt AM, MP Member for Hasluck.

WHEN: 5PM, TUESDAY 8 JULY 2014

WHERE: MAIN FOYER, WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM – PERTH CULTURAL CENTRE

RSVP: BY FRIDAY 4 JULY 2014 TO AMANDA CLARKE, (08) 9226 2422 or
amanda@canwa.com.au

Exhibition runs 9 July – 19 October

Community Access Gallery (adjacent to the Katta Djinoong Gallery)

Western Australian Museum, Perth Cultural Centre, James St, Perth

Open daily 9.30am – 5pm

Image: Portrait of Hazel Winmar (detail) by Graham Smith, inspired by a photograph by Jarrad Seng

Principal Partners



Indigenous Culture Support



Department of Culture and the Arts



Project Partners



CAN WA acknowledges the Western Australian Museum for their generous support.

Appendix C: Ethics Approval

Dear ASPR CHRISTOPHER SONN,

Your ethics application has been formally reviewed.

Application ID: HRE13-054

Application Title: De-racialising practices and identities to foster belonging : The role of community arts

The application has been accepted and deemed to meet the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval has been granted for two (2) years from the approval date; 28/05/2013.

Continued approval of this research project by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the Office for Research website at: <http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php>.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious events or adverse and/or unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes. Researchers are also reminded of the need to notify the approving HREC of changes to personnel in research projects via a request for a minor amendment. It should also be noted that it is the Chief Investigators' responsibility to ensure the research project is conducted in line with the recommendations outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).'

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee Office for Research

Email: researchethics@vu.edu.au

Appendix D: Support Letter from Community Arts Network WA



Our ref: ADMCOR13

Monday, 25 March 2013

Christopher Sonn
College of Arts,
Victoria University
PO Box 14428
Melbourne Victoria 8001

Dear Chris,

CAN WA is delighted to have you and Victoria University (VU) PhD candidate, Amy Quayle, involved in a research project based around CAN WA's activities in the Wheatbelt.

CAN WA has been working along side of Noongar communities (Aboriginal people from the south-west of Western Australia) in the Wheatbelt for over eight years. Our work consists of:

- Celebrating and acknowledging Noongar culture as central to local identity
- Increasing community wide cultural understanding and awareness through providing a platform for the values and perspectives of Noongar people to be heard and acknowledged and
- Working with the Noongar community, local governments and the broader community to identify and explore the potential opportunities for partnership formation.

We look forward to working in partnership with VU on the research component of this initiative and can offer the visiting researcher assistance and support through:

- Introducing the researcher to CAN WA's contacts in the region and setting up interviews with key community leaders, LGA's and other participants
- Introducing the researcher to key Aboriginal community representatives with whom issues around the design and conduct of the research, informed consent, ownership and intellectual property rights as well as publication and dissemination of research findings can be discussed and agreements arranged.
- Identifying sources of relevant historical material and data
- Making available suitably qualified and culturally appropriate persons to interview Noongar participants

HEAD OFFICE King Street Arts Centre Ground Floor 357-365 Murray Street Perth Western Australia 6000 PO Box 7514 Cloisters Square WA 6050		T 08 9226 2422 Tollfree 1800 681 021 F 08 9226 2230 E admin@canwa.com.au	KELLERBERRIN 8 Ripper Street Kellerberrin WA 6410 T 08 9045 6766 F 08 9045 4070	NARRAGOON Corner Garfield & Doney Streets Narrogin WA 6312 T 08 9881 5400 F 08 9881 5411	www.canwa.com.au ABN 72 106 366 407
		 Government of Western Australia Department of Culture and the Arts		 Lotterywest  Australia Government	

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL



- Ensuring that the appropriate risk management and grievance procedures are in place through CAN WA's policies and procedure agreement
- CAN WA will provide appropriate accommodation, transportation and stipend to the visiting researcher and
- Additional support and feedback as required

The opportunity to work with VU on this research project has been very warmly received and I am sure some interesting work will be generated through this partnership. Please don't hesitate to contact CAN WA with any further enquiries.

Kind regards

Pilar Kasat
Managing Director
Cc: Amy Quayle

HEAD OFFICE		KELLERBERRIN	NARRAGIN
King Street Arts Centre	T 08 9226 2422	8 Ripper Street	Corner Garfield & Doney Streets
Ground Floor 357-365 Murray Street	Tollfree 1800 681 021	Kellerberrin WA 6410	Narragin WA 6312
Perth Western Australia 6000	F 08 9226 2230	T 08 9045 4766	T 08 9881 5400
PO Box 7514 Cloisters Square WA 6850	E admin@canwa.com.au	F 08 9045 4070	F 08 9881 5411

www.canwa.com.au ASN 72 104 364 007

 Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts  lotterywest  Australian Government 

Appendix E: Details of Fieldwork

Fieldwork visits

I conducted fieldwork visits to Perth and Narrogin to meet with CAN staff, discuss the research, attend project activities and begin to familiarise myself with the community and the different projects, as well as to develop and refine the focus of the research. In the early stages, I spent a lot of time with CANs Aboriginal projects coordinator travelling to and from Perth (to Narrogin) and around town, discussing the projects, the community, and the research (as well as with the Managing Director whose house I often stayed in while in Perth). I also had informal conversations with the Noongar staff based at the Narrogin office, and began to get to know them, and let them know what I was doing here, and what the aims of the research were. It was important to communicate to them, why, as a non-Indigenous person (from Victoria) I was there conducting research with Noongar people about community arts and cultural development.

1. My first visit was in 2013 (November 25/ December 2). During this visit, I attended storyline workshops at the Primary school and high school in Narrogin, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, but mostly Noongar students. These workshops were organised as part of the Bush Babies project (given the focus on retrieving photographs and stories that capture aspects of our longer history). Storylines is an archival database of photographs developed by the State Library (WA) for Aboriginal people across WA. It provides an opportunity for Aboriginal people to find photos of themselves or family members, that they may not have seen; photographs often taken at missions (by wadjela people), as well as photographs of places (e.g., reserves, missions, towns). During fieldwork, I recall seeing photographs that had been taken by A.O. Neville who was the Chief Protector in WA of Aboriginal children. As part of the Bush Babies project, CAN organised for library staff to visit Narrogin and introduced the students to the Storylines database (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-10/indigenous-images-made-available-for-families-to-view/6455386>). Students searched through the collection of photographs, and people shared stories, prompted by the photographs (e.g., at the missions everyone celebrated their birthdays on the same day; had weddings on the same day). On one occasion, one of the Aboriginal Education Officer's was present and he found a photograph of a family member that he had not seen before.

During this visit, the Charnock woman mosaic was also being completed at the Gnarojin Creek (<http://www.canwa.com.au/project/the-charnock-woman/>). The Charnock woman is a dreamtime story. As noted on the CAN website (2017b),

the evil spirit of the Charnock woman would wander from kallep to kallep (campfires), stealing little koolongurs (children). She was very tall, taller than the jarrah trees, and she had long white hair that she used to keep the spirit children captive while she gathered more children in her arms. Once she had collected enough children, she would take them to her 'man' who dwelled in a cave near Wave Rock, and feed the children to him (see: <http://www.canwa.com.au/project/the-charnock-woman/>). (para. 1)

Aboriginal (mostly Noongar) students from the primary school and the high school participated in mosaic workshops, creating mosaic animals that were placed on rocks near the main mosaic of the Charnock woman. I also participated in getting the mosaic finished on time. The launch of this mosaic occurred on the same day as the inaugural Kambarang festival, which is supported by CAN. Kambarang refers to a Noongar season. I attended this festival; the video produced as part of the Noongar Pop Culture project was played at the festival.

On this trip, the desert feet tour, also conducted song writing workshops with school students. I attended these workshops.

2. My second field visit was in March 2014 when I travelled to Katanning to the Harmony Festival where CAN WA had organised for Chronicles to set up their storytelling caravan for people to come and share their Bush Babies stories. Several Noongar people recorded their Bush Babies story/stories on this day. In promoting the storytelling caravan, we informally chatted with Noongar people attending the festival, who shared stories of growing up. While we were in Katanning we also went to the local high school to run a storylines workshop. While we were in Katanning we also went to the Carrolup mission, where we happened to meet an Elder who informally shared his Bush Baby story. We then went back to Narrogin. We met with Noongar Elders to have their photographs taken for the Honouring our Elders Portrait Exhibition that was emerging. The Elders would often share their Bush Baby stories with us informally, and sometimes these were recorded (though not always). Some of the Elders took us to significant places around Narrogin to have their photograph taken and share their story (e.g., an old birthing site; the site of the old reserve).
3. I visited Narrogin again in April 2014 specifically to attend the two-day Chronicles workshop at Narrogin Senior High School. This involved some Elders going to the high school to share stories with Aboriginal media studies students (mostly Noongar). They first shared stories as part of a large storytelling circle. Students then had the opportunity to speak to Elders in small groups, to ask them questions, and to hear more of their stories. The Elders then had their story/stories recorded by Chronicle staff. The young people then created short films, using photographs and the Elders recorded stories. This provided an opportunity to meet and speak with different Noongar Elders, as well as students, and to begin to hear the Elders' stories. Back in Perth, I had the opportunity to attend the official launch of Noongar Pop Culture (Language revival) (April 2014). The project had been conducted in 2013 (and the second iteration of the project was in development). This project had gained significant media attention. I was able to speak informally with those involved (artists, facilitators, high school staff) about the significance of Rekindling Stories on Country, more broadly.
4. I came back to Perth in July 2014 for the official launch of the Bush Babies Elders portrait project, and then to Narrogin to spend the next week, conducting interviews with Elders, artists and CAN staff. Following this trip, I decided it was important to include young people as another participant group given the emphasis in what people were saying, in the need for the young people to hear these stories (This required an amendment to ethics and approval from the WA Education department; approval was received towards the end of 2014). While I wanted to incorporate interviews with young Noongar students as part of this

research, this ultimately did not eventuate as planned. The suicide of a high school student occurred in Narrogin, at the time, I was planning to go back to conduct interviews (as part of Noongar pop culture 2). In the meantime, the analysis of the Elders' stories, was leading to the explicit focus on the Elders' stories.

5. I went back to Narrogin in May 2015 to meet with as many Elders and artists again, to discuss some of the preliminary themes that were emerging in the data analysis process, and to have more focused discussions in those areas. I spoke through the emerging themes that were developing, namely, the lack of recognition and acknowledgement of the history and the contributions of Noongar people, as well as the cultural continuity and survival of Noongar people despite this history of disruption. This provided an opportunity to ask the Elders if this emerging analysis rings true, and if there was anything else, they wanted to add. Unfortunately, I was only able to meet with three of the four Elders I had initially interviewed. It was beneficial to speak with Elders again at this time, 10 months after the launch. The mood of the interviews, seemed to have shifted somewhat.

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “Exploring the Meanings and Experiences of Participation in Rekindling Stories on Country Projects” (Working title). This project is being conducted by graduate researcher Amy Quayle as part of a PhD study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Christopher Sonn and Dr. Julie Van Den Eynde from the College of the Arts at Victoria University, Melbourne.

Project explanation

The research will examine the role of community arts and cultural development for individuals and communities, focusing on the work of Community Art Network WA in Narrogin, as part of their Rekindling Stories on Country strategy, which aims to:

- Create opportunities for cultural dialogue between Noongar elders and young people that ensures intergenerational cultural transmission beyond the life of individual projects.
- Nurture the capability and resilience of the Noongar community to explore and express their unique culture.
- Produce excellent art by, with and for Noongar communities and share the work/s locally nationally and internationally.

We want to speak to Noongar elders and young people; community members, community artists; Community Arts Network staff; Narrogin Senior High School staff, about their experience of participating or being involved with these projects.

This research project has Victoria University ethics clearance. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148. Permission to conduct research on a Department of Education, WA site, has also been received.

What will I be asked to do?

If you choose to be involved in this research project, you will be asked to participate in a conversational style individual or small group (audiotaped) interview to explore the following topics:

- Everyday life in your community
- Your experience of participating in, or reflections on CAN WA's Rekindling Stories on Country projects
- Benefits of the project(s)(at an individual, school, and community level)
- What you have learnt about yourself, others, and your community
- Understanding of intergenerational dialogue, its role for individuals and communities and if and how this project/s fostered intergenerational dialogue
- Understanding of intercultural dialogue and its role for individuals and communities and if and how this project/s fostered intercultural dialogue
- Your hopes for the future

In order to more adequately preserve your words, you will be asked to give permission for the interview/discussion to be tape-recorded.

What will I gain from participating?

Your participation will provide you with an opportunity to voice your opinion about what life is like in your community, about your experience of participating in CAN WA projects and what it has meant to you, and about issues impacting Noongar people, and relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, more broadly. The research aims to better understand the psychosocial processes and outcomes associated with CAN WA's community arts and cultural development projects. By developing a better understanding of the role of these projects for individuals and communities, we will be better able to advocate for projects such as these to be continued within this and other communities. Therefore, your experience and reflections on these projects may contribute to policy debates around the valuable role of Aboriginal storytelling on country for individuals and communities.

This research project has Victoria University ethics clearance. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148. Permission to conduct research on a Department of Education, WA site, has also been received.

How will the information I give be used?

The information you provide will be tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. These transcripts, which will inform the final report, will be confidential and only seen by the researchers. All of your information will be coded and not attributed to yourself. The research will be produced into a written report, student investigator Amy Quayle's PhD dissertation, as well as academic journal articles and conference presentations. Your name and other identifying features will not be included with the exception of noting the organisation that participants' were recruited through and the community arts project.

If you choose to participate in a small group interview, you will be sharing information in a group setting. Please be advised that although the researchers will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of this format prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researchers would like to remind participants to respect the privacy of your fellow participants and not repeat what is said in group interviews to others.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

The aim of the questions asked in the interviews is to elicit the meanings made of your experiences participating in community arts and about what life is like in your community more broadly. This will involve sharing part of your personal history and life experience, which could potentially cause distress. The interview and/or group discussion may heighten your concerns about particular aspects of your history, culture, identity and belonging or any negative experiences from your involvement in this particular community arts project. If you do become distressed you can contact Community Arts Network Western Australia, who will be able to put you in touch with an independent psychologist and/or other support services available in your community.

Who is conducting the study?

Victoria University, College of Arts, Psychology

Chief Investigators: Christopher Sonn, Christopher.sonn@vu.edu.au, Ph: 03 9919 5226, and Dr. Julie van den Eynde: (03) 9919 5221;
Julie.vandenEynde@vu.edu.au

Student Researcher: Amy Quayle, amy.quayle@live.vu.edu.au, Ph: 03 9919 5459

This research project has Victoria University ethics clearance. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148. Permission to conduct research on a Department of Education, WA site, has also been received.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, _____ of _____

certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study: "Exploring the Meanings and Experiences of Participating in Rekindling Stories on Country Projects" being conducted by graduate researcher Amy Quayle as part of a PhD study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Christopher Sonn and Dr. Julie Van Den Eynde from the College of the Arts at Victoria University, Melbourne.

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by: Amy Quayle (Graduate Researcher)

and that I freely consent to participation in an audio-taped individual or small group interview

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional owners of this country and its waters. In particular, we pay our respects to the people of the Noongar nation and to their Elders both past and present.

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the
Amy Quayle: 0448 109 288; amy.quayle@live.vu.edu.au
Dr. Christopher Sonn: (03) 9919 5226; Christopher.sonn@vu.edu.au, or
Dr. Julie van den Eynde: (03) 9919 5221; Julie.vandenEynde@vu.edu.au

This research project has Victoria University ethics clearance. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148. Permission to conduct research on a Department of Education, WA site, has also been received.

Appendix G: Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule (Noongar participants)⁶⁵

The semi-structured interviews will be conversational style and guided by the themes of

- history and connection to community
- identity and belonging, and
- experiences and meanings of participation in Bush Babies

A conversational style interview is considered particularly important with Aboriginal participants, as it is more akin to yarning. Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010) explain that Yarning is:

conducive to an Indigenous way of doing things; its strength is in the cultural security that it creates for Indigenous people participating in research. Yarning is a process that cuts across the formality of identity as a researcher and demands the human-to-human interaction where both are knowers and learners in the process. (p. 47)

History and connection to their community

- Have you always lived in Narrogin? How long have you lived here?
 - No---Where did you live before hand and what brought you here?
 - Yes--- Would you/ have you ever considered moving? Why/why not?
- Can you tell me a little about life in this community? (How would you describe living here to someone not from this part of Australia?)
 - What do you like about living here? *Or* what would you miss the most/ or what do you miss the most when/if you leave your community? *Or* what makes it a special place for you personally?
 - Is there anything that you don't like about living here? What would you change if you could?

Identity, belonging

- How do you self- identify? (e.g., as a Noongar person, a Noongar elder, an Australian etc.).
 - How do you think the community identifies you?
 - Do you think that the way you see yourself and the way that the broader community might see you are in line?
- Do you think that Noongar people in Narrogin have a strong sense of connection with their Aboriginal identity, culture and history?
 - Do you think that it is important that they do?
 - Can you say something about what the differences might be for those that do, and those that don't?
 - What do you think has contributed to this (either strong/weak connection)? I.e., what are the barriers for Aboriginal people developing positive forms of personal and collective identity? What has allowed Aboriginal people to maintain a strong connection to their Aboriginal identity and culture, and positive forms of identity/culture?

⁶⁵ This was the interview schedule developed as part of the ethics process for interviews with Noongar participants. Ultimately, the interviews with Elders diverged from this structure, with the Elders wanting to tell me their stories (as discussed in methodology chapter).

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- What does having a strong connection with Aboriginal identity and culture mean for individuals and communities? This community/ Narrogin? Why do you think it is important?
 - How would/do you describe to a Wadjella the meaning of Noongar identity, and community?
- As a Noongar person, can you describe what belonging means to you within this town, within Australia more broadly? When have you felt a strong sense of belonging? Have there been times when you have felt as though you do not belong, or have been made to feel as though you do not belong?
- Do you think that Noongar/Aboriginal identity and culture is positively valued and reflected at a broader community level in Narrogin/ Australian society? Can you describe a time when it has been? When it hasn't been? How has that made you feel? What impacts has that had at a personal level- for your family, for the community?
- In this research we are interested in individual and collective wellbeing. Generally speaking, can you tell me about the wellbeing of the Noongar community (as a group) within Narrogin?
 - What do you think might improve wellbeing for Aboriginal people in this town; within Australia more broadly?
 - We are also interested in exploring the notion of Aboriginal empowerment. How do you understand empowerment? What do you think needs to happen for Aboriginal people to be empowered? Do you find the term useful? Do you see problems with the way it is used? What might be lacking in the way people understand empowerment?
- How do you think Noongar people remain strong in a context marked by entrenched poverty, inequalities- history of colonisation and racism?

Participation in Bush Babies

- Can you tell me a little bit about:
 - The Bush Babies project (e.g., what has the project involved- different activities and arts mediums? what do you see as the main aims of the project? who has participated in the project?)
 - How you have been involved? (Which activities etc.)
 - CAN WA (staff, facilitators, community artists)
- Can you describe what happens in the spaces created through community arts?
- Can you tell me
 - What it has been like to be involved? How did being involved in Bush Babies make you feel?
 - What the end product/outcome was like. How did this make you feel?
 - What you enjoyed most about this project?
- There may have been things you didn't enjoy about the project, or things that you may have found challenging. Can you tell me about anything you didn't enjoy, or found difficult or challenging?
- What do you think you have gained from your participation in this project?
- Can you tell me about the impacts of the project for:
 - you personally
 - for relationships within the community
 - and for the community in a broader sense

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

- In the broad scheme of things, how do you think this project benefitted your town? (Why/Why not?)
- What has your experience participating in this project taught you?
 - about yourself
 - about others within your community
 - about your community (relationships as well as spaces)
- What aspects of the project, do you think are most important in achieving these impacts?
- What do you think some of the impacts might be for non-Indigenous people within the community? What effects might the projects have on them?
- Do you think projects such as this can contribute to individual and collective wellbeing? Or the development of better relationships between different groups within the community? In what ways/ why not?
- Would you like CAN WA to do anything else or change the way it does things?
- What do you want for the future of Narrogin, and/or for Noongar people in this town?

Appendix H: Example of Summary of Elders' Storytelling

Enid, Interview

Nostalgia about life on the reserve: reminiscing about happy lives, with strong, supportive, close families that looked after one another—a sense of connectedness. Even though they didn't have much (e.g., lived in tin shacks, were always hungry but never starved) and their lives were directly impacted by policies of the time (e.g., Curfews), they were happy and they made do.

In reflecting on life on the reserve, there is an implicit contrast with life now—a sense of loss of that connectedness that points to community fragmentation (but at the same time, an emphasis that they are all still connected). Enid believes that the community is not so close anymore. When speaking about the past she says that they could trust anyone, with the implication that now that is not the case; that babies, used to be special, that now they are not treated as though they are special?.

In discussing life on the reserve, Enid emphasised that while they had tough lives, they survived. She discussed how they used to pull together and how resourceful they were (e.g., collecting copper from the dump to sell for food; how her Uncles used to steal food and hide from it under floor, and outsmart police who routinely raided their homes/tin shacks; how they used to set traps and sell rabbits for money and eat them—how 'the men did double work'). She recalls how her family would work for the farmers, but doesn't know why they stopped employing Noongar people.

Noongar people worked hard clearing land, doing dirty work, but have never been properly acknowledged for this work. They were also only paid in rations. She recalls how they were required to get permits to work. This lack of acknowledgement was also true of those who went to war; when they came back from fighting for their country, they were still not recognised and experienced racism. For example, she tells a story of how an Aboriginal man came back and a publican refused to serve him, so he came back and shot him dead.

While they never really had any luxuries, she recalled some happy childhood memories. For example, about going to matinees, and going to Showtime. "It was a big thing for Noongar kids to be dressed up". Boxing was the main attraction. The boxing was an opportunity for the Noongar men to make some money, though it wasn't a pretty site and they didn't want to box 'their own kind'.

Throughout Enid's story, the intrusion of assimilationist policies into her life and her family was evident, with intimate aspects of Noongar people's lives controlled by white people. For example: her grandfather classified as a white man, couldn't be with his own family in fear of being fined by police; Noongars needing permits for work, curfews for Noongars, not being able to go to the hospital or having to come through the back door. And in the most extreme case, of being separated from her family and taken to a mission, and not knowing where she was going.

She recalled how hurtful it was that these policies would mean that your own family was not recognised as your family (because darker or lighter), that there was no concern for Noongar people. For example, thinking about how her father must have

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

felt when his kids were taken away. They did not care if her dad died of loneliness, the pain her dad must have felt to not have control over his own children).

Enid was taken to Wandering mission at aged about 10 or 11. She didn't know what was happening (she had never been in a good car). She discusses the pain of being separated from her family. Not only was she separated from her parents, she was also separated from her brothers who had to stay in a different dormitory, so there were two separations in one day. She should have been with her family.

She was not able to bond with her brothers. She described how the mission kids become your family. She recalls the heartache of the children for their families, describing how children just kept coming into the mission, always crying. She mentioned how the kids who had been there for longer, would bully or pick on the new, and young ones, and would tell them to stop crying— it hurt that one of 'their own' would act like that.

Enid stated she was still able to have some contact with family, as they were not too far away (she guesses her family were the lucky ones). When they came to visit they would just sit and yarn and the nuns would bring them tea, which reassured the parents that they were 'nice'. Also mentioned how, when they knew visitors (wadjela visitors) were coming they would put them in their nice clothes and put the nice sheets on their beds.

While she felt that she was treated alright, she recalls the mistreatment of her little brother on the mission, who was punished a lot (beaten with cane and pulled by the ear until blood came). They were told they were 'bad' and explained how you start to think you're bad after being told that so many times (e.g., we were forever saying hail Marys).

She recalls how her and her brothers used to sleep in the same bed—they were close, but how they were told that was wrong and sinister, 'evil'.

She recalls memories of learning to sing or dance at the mission, and described how the Wandering mission became famous for their dancing. They would put on a performance for all the local wadjela people. Noongar children performing for the wadjelas.

Enid described everyday life on the mission, including the everyday routine of chores-school. She described the food and laughed that while kangaroos were hopping around outside, when they cooked a stock, they had to scoop the maggots from the meat off the top of the soup. She described the missionaries as having no compassion, as not being loving (just authority) and as mentioned before, emphasised the sense of loss associated with not being able to bond with brothers and family in general.

Enid stated that the fact that they knew their families were waiting for them, kept them strong and lots of the children taken went back to their families on the reserve after the mission. For others, the mission broke them (e.g., her brother who was punished excessively by the priests and nuns died at 27, he was driven to drink). She described how they were driven to drink/ early death and suicide etc. Their spirit had been broken.

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

Enid recalled how it was a taboo to speak language at the mission, and shares a story of how the missionaries ridiculed Aboriginal cultural beliefs (e.g., killing a carpet snake).

She talks about being indoctrinated into Christianity: She was Baptised, did her holy communion etc. She laughed at the fact that they were little black kids dressed as white angels.

Once Enid was 15 she was kicked out of mission to work (again emphasising that they never gave her a chance to spend time with her brothers). This was once the endowment stopped she presumes.

She described how she was sent far away to work, and wonders how her father still made it out to see her—still found her (loving family). She recalls that she worked for some good people. She also described the local Doctor (Doctor Jacobs) as a protector of Aboriginal people. I found a letter to the editor from 1951 from Dr. Jacobs. He argued that there should not be separate wings for ‘Natives’ because these are usually substandard. Dr. Jacobs argued that there should not be separate areas, as “they are our fellow Australians” (Some good White people). Similarly, in response to a question about continued experiences of racism, Enid thought that there are some good ones, some bad ones (e.g., reconciliation will work for those that want it to work).

At different points throughout the interview Enid expressed that she did not know her culture or language (thus pointing to the cultural disruption brought about by policies of protection and assimilation), though she did know about the respect for Elders and the storytelling, which was central to Noongar culture. She also emphasised that all the Noongar families in the area are connected.

Enid expressed a strong connection with Narrogin (even though she married a man from another area, and spent some time away from Narrogin). Central to this strong connection with Narrogin is the fact that she can still feel the presence of her grandparents/ ancestors when walking on the old reserve (memories of where they have been etc.). She often takes her grannies out to the reserve, but they will never feel the way she feels when she is out there.

It was apparent throughout the interview that Enid was conscious of how oppression works. She described the cruel treatment as serving the purpose of putting fear into Aboriginal people, making comparisons with African slaves. She described how they used to be strong and healthy people, with the implication that colonial oppression has broken them and their spirit. Comparisons are made between the treatment of Aboriginal people here and African Americans. She recalls a story, for example, of the way Aboriginals were treated after returning from the war (after fighting for the country—even though they were fighting their own war here, since colonisation) and were still refused service at the pub (Aboriginal man then shot the publican). And recalled a similar story about the treatment of African Americans after the war (being made to eat bananas).

Enid discussed her involvement with doll making. She called her doll Jandamarra. This is what she said about her doll (taken from Yarns of the heart publication)

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

This is the first time I've made this doll, and I feel like it's something strong – what our Noongar people carry with them, some strongness in them. A lot of people think they're weak, but I thought that maybe this little doll would give me strength, to fight battles. It reminds me of a strong leader – like Yagan, or a lot of our Noongar elders, who are pretty strong, and took a lot of put-me-down things, but they still stood up amongst them all. They might have killed the body, but they couldn't kill the spirit. 'I thought that maybe this little doll would give me strength.

Enid stated that she wanted to honour Noongar heroes and shares that her family are descendants of those killed at the Pinjarra Massacre, which took place in 1834. These are her heroes, and they are unacknowledged heroes. Their heroes are not celebrated. You never hear of them. The 'white' man's heroes (e.g., Governor Stirling) are murderers to her. This is why the project was significant for her. The young ones will be talking about them when they are gone. Like Elders are her heroes, she is now 'famous'—the unsung heroes

Wadjela people not wanting to listen to what they have been through. But how can you move on? She emphasised that even though it's been 50 years since they left the mission, the pain is still there (e.g., person who didn't want to hear about the mission again getting cancer).

Enid expressed that she felt a responsibility to pass on her stories, stories of what they have been through, but also stories about, for example, the Pinjarra massacre, because otherwise the stories die with her. She says that it is up to them to put these stories in writing.

Enid expressed that her children are anxious to hear her stories, but the difficulty she has in sharing these stories because of bad feelings she carries— it is emotionally difficult to tell these stories. She emphasised that she has sought to write her story and is committed to writing her story.

Further pointing to the control and authority of white people into their everyday lives, Enid described how Aboriginal people are fearful of the police, and that they are taught this from a young age, given their treatment. She discusses this as stemming from treatment in the past, but emphasises that Noongar people are still fearful, and explains why. For example, she discusses Aboriginal deaths in custody and expresses suspicion regarding apparent 'suicides'—they don't know how Noongars are dying in custody, emphasising that it all happens behind closed doors. Marcelle commented that some of the *Madarch* (Police) are full of hatred.

As an extension of this authority, Enid discussed how welfare can still walk into your home and take your kids (or grandkids) away. In informal conversations with her, she talked about this a lot—the new stolen generations. She described her personal experience of this within her family, and expressed disappointment in the department of child protection in Perth who do not work with Noongar families cooperatively (like they do in Narrogin).

She described watching (A VERY CLOSE FAMILY MEMBER) go from the woman she was to a drug user. People turn to drink/drugs after kids are taken; when their

DISPOSSESSION, SOCIAL SUFFERING, AND SURVIVAL

spirit is broken. Like those taken to the mission, were broken (turned to drink, drugs, suicide), this is still happening today—Noongar people's spirit continues to be broken through the intrusion of coloniality into their lives.

At different points throughout the interview, Edid talked a little bit about, or at least pointed to the issue of feuding—lateral violence within Aboriginal communities, and in particular how she seeks to avoid conflict, yet will have a yarn with everyone. She described how the only famous Noongar people are those whose family was on the side of the trackers (i.e., working for wadjelas), and so points to how the issue of lateral violence is inextricably tied to colonial dispossession and the continuity of coloniality. Feuding—dysfunction within communities, trying to stay out of it, but have a yarn with everyone.

Enid thought that there is still racism going on today, stating that there are good ones and bad ones. She did recall some local experiences of racism, and described how once a yarn like that gets around town, no Noongar person will want to be employed there.

She does not experience racism at her work; she says she does not know if they really like her, but they show her respect. If she experienced racism at her work, she certainly would not stay. While everyone wants to work, they can't be expected to tolerate racism in the workplace, because of how it makes them feel.

Enid shared her Bush Baby story. Her son was also a bush baby (born on the reserve). She emphasised that she did not know where the traditional birthing site was in Narrogin, when I asked; "I don't know much about culture", and talked about how some families have more knowledge. She described how her grandparents were not trained as midwives; they did what came naturally and knew because of the cultural knowledge passed on through generations.

Did go to school in year 1 with lots of other Noongar kids. She described how the Noongar and wadjela kids mixed: they did not know what racial discrimination was. The convent kids would call them racial names, but they would give it back to them.

Unfortunately I was unable to do a second interview with Enid* in 2015.

Appendix I: Initial Coding Scheme

I developed this coding scheme through the process of analysis. I then used this coding scheme for later rounds of analysis. This coding scheme evolved through the process of analysis and writing up, ultimately leading to the three broad community narratives, encompassing the various themes identified:

- Narrating the history and continuity of oppression
 - Narrating the effects of oppression
 - Narrating resistance, resilience, and survival
-

“LIFE WAS PUT UPON US”: NARRATING SUFFERING AND ENFORCED ASSIMILATION

- **VIOLENCE**
 - Direct/ Physical forms of violence
 - Exploitation
 - Segregation and Neglect
 - Control and Surveillance
 - Blatant Racism, Disregard
 - **DISPOSSESSION**
 - Family and Community
 - Culture and Language
 - Dignity and Self worth
 - Collective Biography/history
 - Land
-

CONTINUITY, RESISTANCE, SURVIVAL: WE'RE STILL HERE

- Cultural knowledge, history, and practices
 - Connection with Country: “Sacred connection to land is still going on, can’t be broken”
 - Family and Kinship: “the love, or the something just kept us going you know, we knew we had families back in town”
 - Achievement in the face of adversity: Look at what we can do
 - Demanding Recognition
-

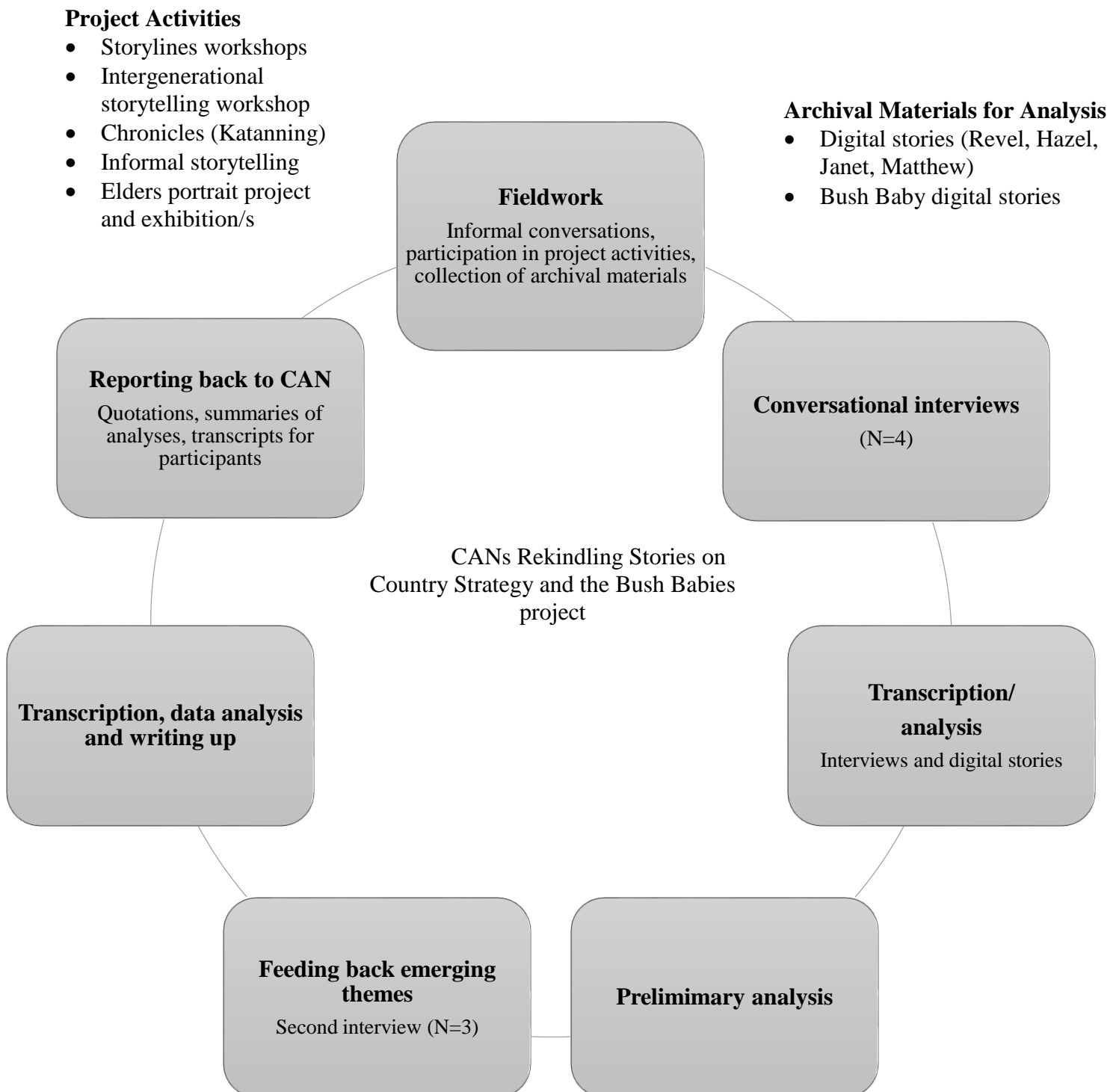
TOUGH BUT HAPPY LIVES: “NOTHING WORRIED US”

- Tough lives (Didn’t have much), but “nothing worried us”
 - Connectedness of extended family
 - Resourcefulness: “We all had to pull in together”
 - Discipline and Respect for Elders
 - Happy memories: normal lives
-

THE PAST IN THE PRESENT: “IT ALL STEMS FROM THERE”

- Broken spirits/trauma: Cycle of dysfunction stemming from history
 - “We’re still underneath”: Racism still going on (Disregard)
 - Community Fragmentation (Lateral Violence): “Noongars our own worst enemy”
 - “The past still here, can’t escape it until you die”: “It’s burnt in our brains”
 - Cultural disruption/Loss
 - Absences, silencing of history, lack of recognition and acknowledgement
 - We need help for our people: ‘I want to be something for our young people’
-

Appendix J: Research Process



Data triangulation

- Archival: Related CAN project outputs (e.g., Karla Kurliny)
- Discussions with other Noongar participants