

Reframing Discourse in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing

William Fogarty, Melissa Lovell, Juleigh Langenberg, Mary-Jane Heron, Michael Davis, Hannah Bulloch and Siobhan McDonnell



the
Lowitja
Institute

Australia's National Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research



**National Centre for
Indigenous Studies**



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‘Show a people as one thing, only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become’

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
The Danger of a Single Story



“Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity.”

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Deficit Discourse and Indigenous Health

How narrative framings of Aboriginal
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Deficit Discourse and Strengths-based Approaches

Changing the narrative of
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Deficit Discourse

Mode of language, which consistently frames Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity in a narrative of negativity, deficiency and disempowerment

Fforde et al. 2013

Impact of Deficit Discourse

‘The way we think speak, hear and understand the world coalesce to construct our realities’

Professor Mick Dodson, 2017

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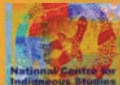


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Research Method

- Desk-based review
- Systematic review
 - 80 peer reviewed
 - 120 grey literature
 - < 130 websites
- Critical Discourse Analysis

	Strengths-based approaches	Key elements
1.	Asset-based	Utilises existing positive attributes, characteristics and resources of a person and/or community
2.	Resilience	The ability to withstand adverse circumstances through mental, emotional, social, spiritual strength
3.	'Cultural appropriateness'	The tailoring of programs, resources and health care to privilege cultural aspects of Indigeneity
4.	Social determinants of health & ecological theories	Factors or conditions that can be converted to metrics for estimating likelihood of disease or ill-health in the population
5.	Protective factors	Non-physical and non-medical elements that counteract or mitigate the effects of adversity
6.	Empowerment	Focuses on self-determination and abilities rather than limiting factors, such as poor physical health
7.	Holistic approaches	Privilege Indigenous ways of knowing and being
8.	Wellness and wellbeing	Measuring health in a wider range of metrics than physical illness or disease, usually including mental, social emotional, spiritual and communal wellness
9.	Strengths-based counselling approaches & positive psychology	Prioritises capabilities, talents, competencies, hope, resources, optimism & autonomy of individs & communities when remedying challenging circumstances
10.	Decolonisation methodology	A broad methodology proactively shifting the Western and European worldview to Indigenous understandings
11.	Salutogenesis	Focuses on the asses and origins of health rather than deficits of ill healt – shifts from a pathologising paradigm

Case Studies

The background of the slide features a complex, abstract pattern. It consists of numerous overlapping squares and circles in various shades of yellow, orange, and light brown. The shapes are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some elements appearing more prominent than others. The overall effect is a warm, textured, and somewhat chaotic visual field.

Ngangkari Program



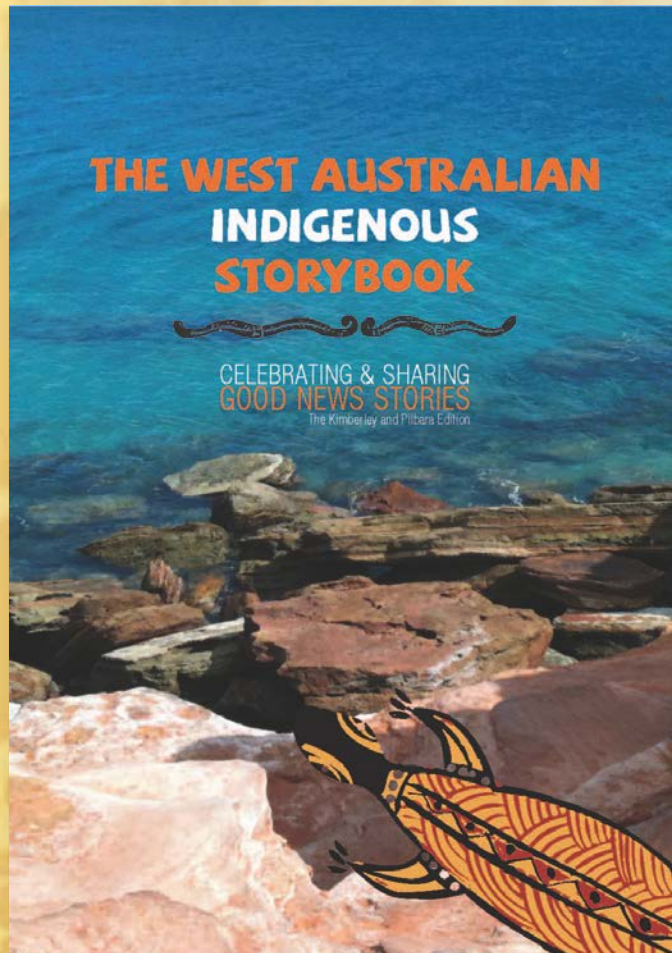
TRADITIONAL HEALERS *of Central Australia: Ngangkari*

*Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara
Yankunytjatjara Women's Council Aboriginal Corporation*



© NPY Women's Council

WA Indigenous Storybook



KANYIRNINPA JUKURRPA

ORGANISATION NAME:

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

CONTACT PERSON:

Zan King

EMAIL / WEBSITE:

zan.king@kj.org.au / www.kj.org.au

PROGRAM / PROJECT PARTNERS:

Martu Leadership program

KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Sue Davenport, Peter Johnson, Muuki Taylor

KEY WORDS:

Working two ways, rangers, leaders, culture, Country

About the Storytellers...

Muuki Taylor

Muuki was born in 1945 at Wuyinikurungu, a soak on the side of the Percival Lakes. His family walked across the entire Great Sandy Desert, north to Joanna Springs and south to Paringurr. He particularly walked around the Karlamitji National Park area between Paringurr and Puntmu and the Kiriwirri area on the Percival Lakes. His family group was large - his father having three wives. His siblings include Nola and Waka Taylor who live with Muuki in Paringurr. Muuki is a very senior Law man and has encyclopaedic knowledge of Martu Law, songs and customs, waterholes and Martu walking tracks, flora and fauna of the desert, and Martu family histories. Muuki works as the Senior Cultural Advisor for KJ providing invaluable cultural advice and guidance.

Sue Davenport

Sue Davenport has been working with the Martu people of the Western Desert since 1987. She trained as an anthropologist and has been chiefly working since then to help Martu preserve many forms of cultural knowledge and facilitate cultural knowledge transfer to young Martu. She has a deep knowledge of Martu history and a broad knowledge of Martu society, culture and Country.

Peter Johnson

Peter has been working with Martu since 2003. He was the founding CEO of KJ. With Muuki Taylor and KJ's Martu Board of Directors, he and Sue oversaw its growth from foundation to its current scale. He is chiefly involved in its governance and social programs, including the Martu Leadership Program, as well as its cultural programs.

About Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa...

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) was established in 2005 to assist Martu in looking after culture and heritage and to ensure that Martu's ongoing connection with Country would remain strong. Over time KJ has broadened its scope to focus on working with Martu to build strong, sustainable communities with the following core objectives: to support Martu to look after culture and Country; to build a sustainable economy in the Martu communities and to build pathways for young Martu to a healthy future.

To meet these objectives, KJ has developed an integrated suite of programs including culture and heritage, land management, communications and social programs.



Pururu rangers Karen Rogers, Michele Thomas and Reano Rogers (R/L) ready for their inspection flight to assess where to conduct the next burn



Minyanu Miller, Purumu Elder and ranger, putting fire into Country using jangli (fire) sticks. Fire is used to keep Country healthy

#IHMayDay

#IHMayDay: 1 day of Twitter action, 15+ hours on Indigenous health issues, 26m impressions, trending No 1 nationally

Editor: **Marie McInerney** Author: on: May 04, 2014

In: #IHMayDay 2014, cardiovascular disease, chronic diseases, Croakey longreads, Federal Budget 2014-15, Federal Election 2013, health inequalities, health literacy, health workforce, HIV/AIDS, Indigenous education, Indigenous health, lesbian gay bisexual transgender issues, media-related issues, men's health, mental health, physical activity, poverty, prevention, primary health care, public health, racism, rural and remote health, social determinants of health, social media and healthcare, trauma, WHO, women's health

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y trending nation
)) #IHMayDa

It was surely what Twitter was made for – a national day of Twitter action that had discussions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues trending nationally, scoring nearly... [Read more »](#)

On transforming conversations around Indigenous health – #IHMayDay

Editor: **Melissa Sweet** Author: on: May 11, 2014

In: #IHMayDay 2014, health and medical research, Indigenous health



One of the clear themes from the recent #IHMayDay Twitter-fest was the value of changing the questions asked and the stories told about the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people... [Read more »](#)

Findings

- 2 reasons for adopting strengths-based approaches
- Not an antidote to deficit discourse

Thank you

Deficit Discourse and Strengths-based Approaches

<https://www.lowitja.org.au/page/services/resources/Cultural-and-social-determinants/racism/deficit-discourse-strengths-based>

Deficit Discourse and Indigenous Health

<https://www.lowitja.org.au/page/services/resources/Cultural-and-social-determinants/racism/Deficit-Discourse-and-Indigenous-Health>

Summary Report

https://ncis.anu.edu.au/_lib/doc/ddih/Deficit_Discourse_summary_report_WEB.pdf