Cultural Safety in Indigenous Research

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Wiradjuri Ngurambang

"I'm not just Koori, I'm Wiradjuri, that's the one I belong to"
(Williams in Reed, 2009, p.viii).

Karrai binaal birrimal billa
Ngangaana-gu birrimal karrai billa
Dya birrimal karrai billa durai ngangaana ngingu.
Land of much bush and rivers
Look after the bush, land and the rivers
And the bush, land and rivers will look after you.

(Senior Elder Wungamaa Pastor Cec. Grant, 2012, p.1)

WIRADJURI PLACES
The Macquarie River Basin
and some places revisited
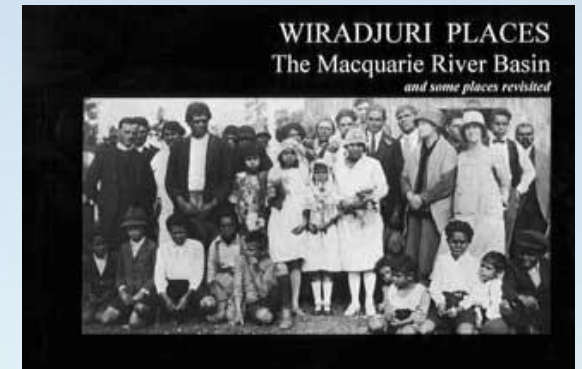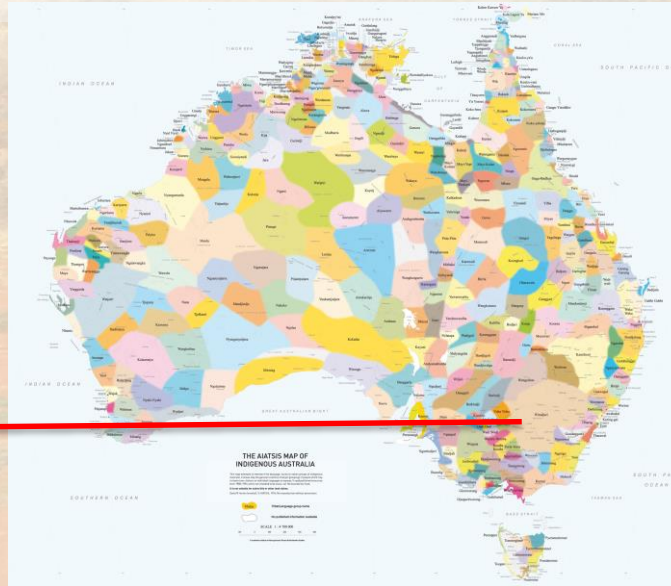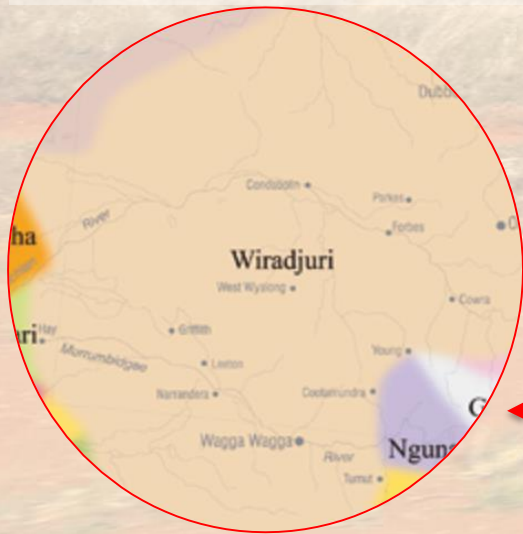
Wiradjuri Country

"For Aboriginal people, land is not only our mother – the source of our identity and our spirituality – it is also the context for our human order and inquiry."
(Healey, 2007)

Cultural Centre in Wiradjuri Country, Condobolin, NSW.

Wiradjuri Country extends from the Great Dividing Range in the east, includes the Macquarie, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Bogan rivers and continues south of the Murray River.

"Wiradjuri nation is the largest cultural footprint in NSW and second largest geographically in Australia."
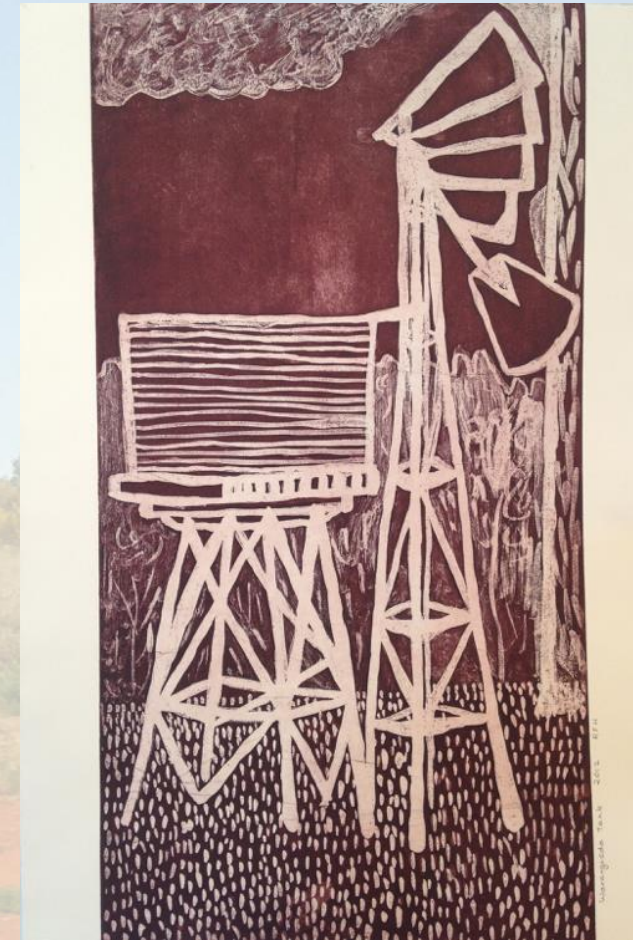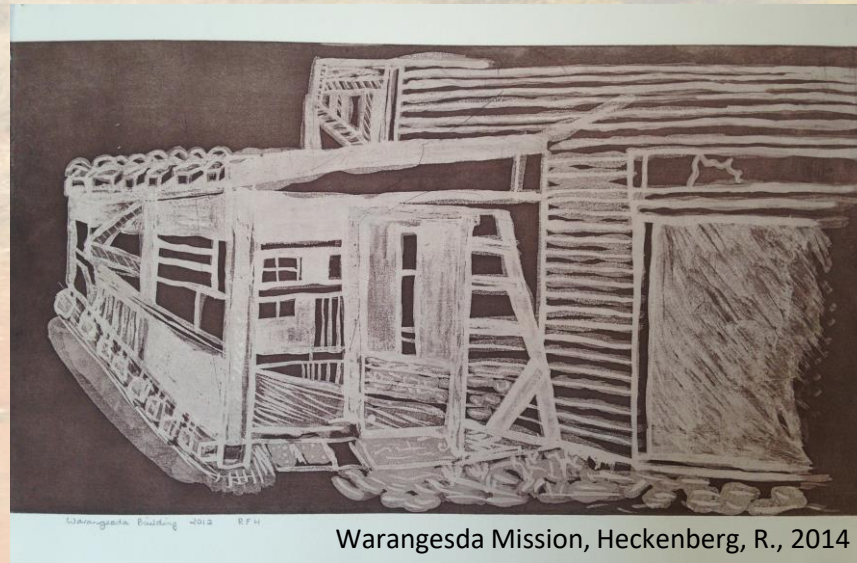(Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation, 2009).

Yindyamarra Methodology

Yindyamarra:

Respect, be gentle, polite, honour, do slowly.

(Grant and Rudder, 2005, p.335)

Warangesda Mission, Heckenberg, R., 2014

Heckenberg, R., 2014

Yindyamarra

Yindyamarra lights the stories in the stars in the night sky over Wiradjuri Country. Yindyamarra is the breath in the people and the breeze through Wiradjuri country.
(Sullivan and Grant, 2016)

Yindyamarra is in the song. This song is the song of the past and the song of the future. Yindyamarra is the beat belonging to this, Wiradjuri country.
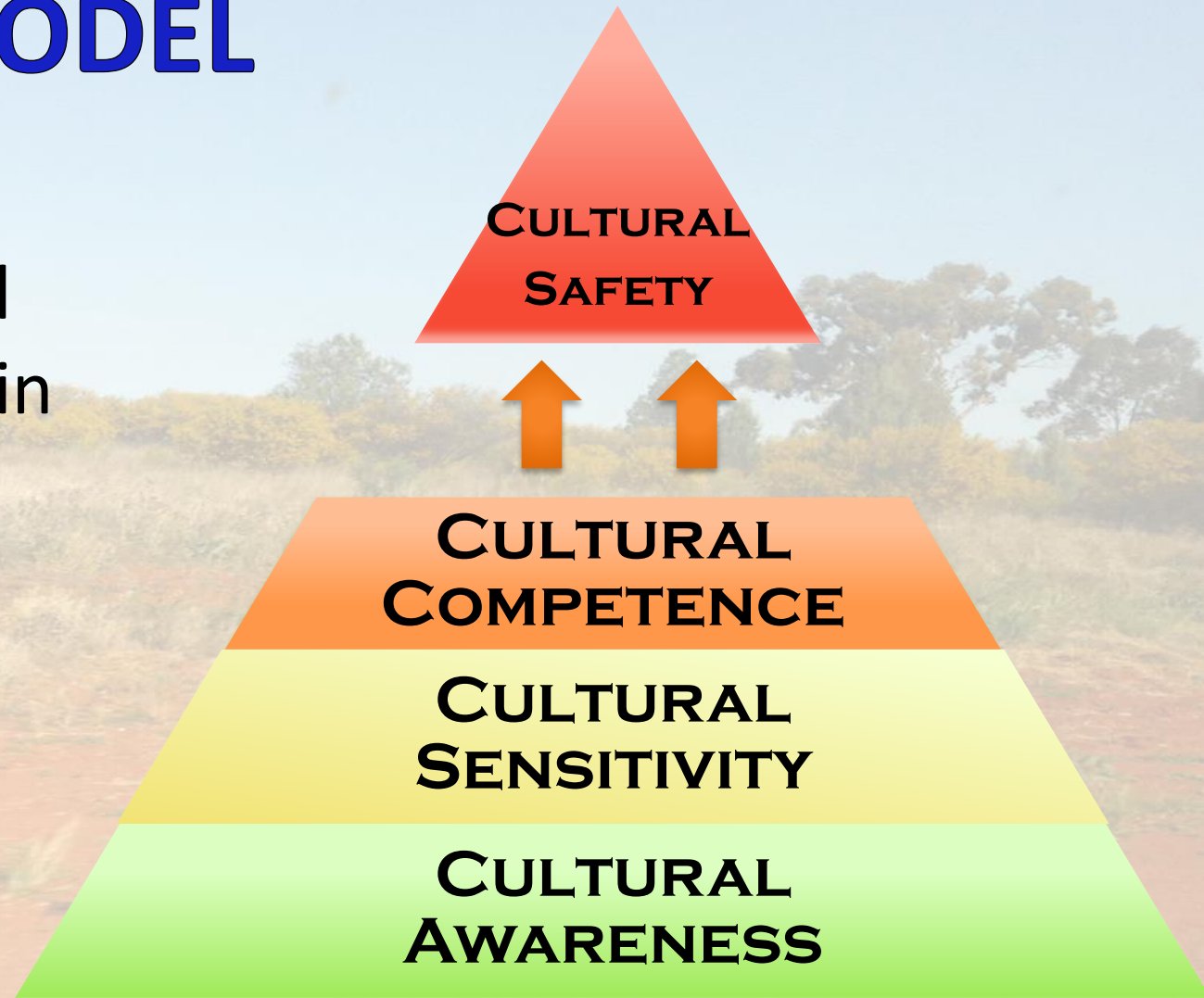(Sullivan and Grant, 2016)

Two clap sticks beating time.

CULTURAL SAFETY MODEL

You people talk about legal safety, ethical safety, safety in clinical practice and a safe knowledge base, but what about Cultural Safety?.

(Hinerangi Mohi, 1988 in Wepa, 2006, p.7)

CULTURAL SAFETY

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

CULTURAL AWARENESS

Heckenberg, S., 2010, p.9

Creating Safe Spaces within Research

As Indigenous people of this country, our stories are precious. They have survived our generations. Our elderly have passed them on to us and we will continue to pass them onto our children. We have our own ways of telling and listening to stories which are important to us.

(Wingard, 2001)

- Research needs to be for the benefit of the people we are working with.

- Ways of collecting knowledge or protecting knowledge should be defined by the community itself.

- Remember to create places of safety that are defined by the person being researched.

- Community timelines or personal timelines need to be researched above institutional ones.
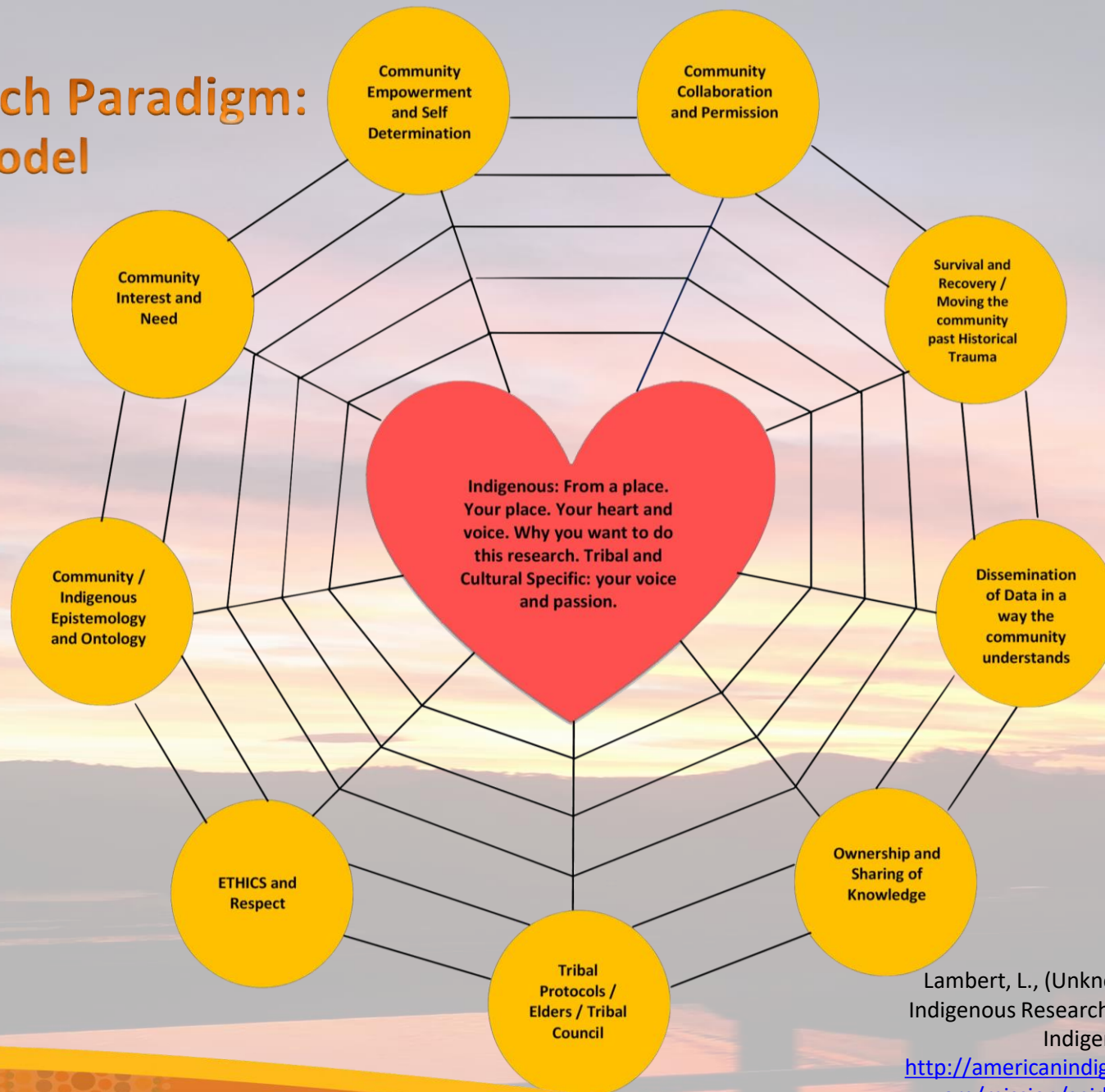
Creating Safe Spaces within Research

1. Respect that you are standing on someone else's country.

2. Respect that Indigenous people still seek sovereignty from a country you might identify as being a part of.

3. Be aware that you may need to be welcomed into Indigenous Nations by community leaders before research begins.

4. All research conducted with communities must be of benefit to those communities in a tangible way.

5. Create links and try to attend community events before research to build a rapport and show ongoing respect.

6. Acknowledge that English may not be the most culturally appropriate language to conduct research in.

7. Learn the local history and, if possible, the language of the community you are working with.

8. Respect community timelines and that those timelines may be longer than those of your research grant or institutional outcomes.

9. When researching with community understand that they are giving up their time and even if monetary compensation is not available provide meals, tea and coffee and other commitments to prolonged discourse.

10. Be open to discussions around your own cultural background. You are asking communities to share intimate details of their lives; you can also share yours.

11. Recognise the traumatic nature of some topics discussed. Provide information about where to find culturally appropriate help to support interviewees. Respect the need for breaks or abrupt conclusions to discussions.

12. When working with Elders embrace the knowledge they share with you, even if it does not answer your question the way you want to hear it. Remember that it is a privilege to be given such knowledge.

13. Questions should always be straight forward, and open ended, so that participants are able to freely discuss their life history in whichever way best suits each participant. This creates organic and honest dialogue.

14. Do not enforce a certain type of audio or audio-visual recording on participants. Choose whichever medium they prefer. Some researchers still even use pencil and paper if this ensures a more culturally safe environment.

15. Following the interview process audio-visual recordings and transcriptions should be provided to the participants, to review and, if necessary, modify their statements. This practice shows the process is conducted in good faith and is also culturally safe.

16. If Elders or community members request certain audio-visual technology is used, for community or family record keeping processes, honour their requests. The testament nature of the process can give lasting significance to future generations.

17. De-identification as required by institutional ethics processes may not fall within community wishes. Be aware that this practice can be contentious, particularly as this information then loses its community ownership.

18. Work with communities around de-identification. A solution can be created that follows both community and institutional ethical protocols.

19. Acknowledge that research may highlight a contradiction between community experience and government liability.

20. Recognise that you as a researcher may have access to more government documents on the community, than the community itself, due to varying access issues. Share these resources openly.

21. All Knowledges shared within the research should remain the intellectual property of the people / community who has been researched.

22. If the publishable outcomes rely on the knowledge collected within the research, co-authorship should be given to the people / community from which the knowledge derives.

Indigenous Research Paradigm: A Conceptual Model

Community Empowerment and Self Determination

Community Collaboration and Permission

Community Interest and Need

Survival and Recovery / Moving the community past Historical Trauma

Community / Indigenous Epistemology and Ontology

Indigenous: From a place. Your place. Your heart and voice. Why you want to do this research. Tribal and Cultural Specific: your voice and passion.

Dissemination of Data in a way the community understands

ETHICS and Respect

Tribal Protocols / Elders / Tribal Council

Ownership and Sharing of Knowledge

Why write down what people say when most people can tell their own stories?.

(Kabaila, 1998, p. 8)

Lambert, L., (Unknown), Conceptual model of Indigenous Research Methodologies, American Indigenous Research Association, http://americanindigenousresearchassociation.org/mission/spider-conceptual-framework/