

Ethical Non-Indigenous Citizenry:

possibilities and implications for research

Mary Frances O'Dowd



BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE
cqu.edu.au

acknowledgement of country

I pay respects to Yuggera Nation and to all Elders past, present and emerging.

I acknowledge your sovereignty and that your sovereignty has never been ceded.

I also respectfully acknowledge that I live in the country of the Darumbal people in which the city of Rockhampton is located.

Aspiring to imagine what are the obligations of being in Country: to move into how to respectfully acknowledge country in praxis?

To demonstrate my acknowledgement of country I aspire to
enable non-Indigenous capacity, commitment and actions to reduce racism, including institutional racism, move toward restorative justice and an understanding of the obligations of NI people in Country.

My location in knowledge

- Currently a guest in Darumbal Country.
- Irish & NI Australian
- Story & vision: seeing through body and another colonisation
- Growing up: The Troubles (news, coloniser's normative behaviours & assumptions & humour)
- Colonisation: problematisation; deficit; justification of theft of land via necessary 'deficit perspective'
- SC contexts produces a reconciliation of the theft which is unjust, limited, disrespectful and normative of a taken for granted 'reconciliation' which is deeply problematic

So positioning of paper: a cultural interface (Nakata, 2007)

- This paper is the exploration what it may mean for non-Indigenous people to aspire to be non-Indigenous citizens of and in Indigenous nations and continents.
- It is an imagining of a possible space and place in some more ethical future
- It is a non-Indigenous exploration, arising from reflections on predominantly Indigenous scholarship
- To name and reposition discourse and reflect on what it is to be a non-Indigenous person who aspires to NI descendants becoming able and skilled to be not SC but a NI citizen on Indigenous land.

How NI People have imagined citizenship for the 'other'

- Consider 1901 to 1962/7 to 2017
- Indigenous people were given the ability to vote in Federal elections in 1962
- 1967 referendum was presented as providing 'citizenship' for Aborigines: implications citizenship for whom and by whose power and the ontological & epistemological assumptions
- the perception that Indigenous people were gaining political equity with the rest of the Australian community (Hobbs, 2018) an inclusion (incorporation) into '*Australian*' identity and citizenship.
- 'Australian' is a claim by NI people, like theft of land, embodies an ontological and epistemological assumptions that embody a NI normative- taken for granted

What is citizenry? A traditional (SC) landscape into...

Summary

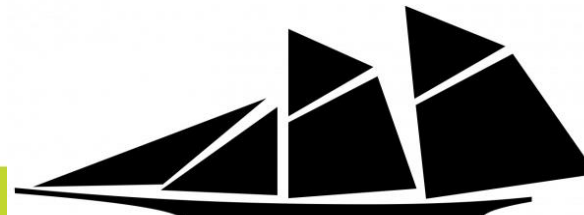
- ‘Australian’ citizenry is a taken for granted construction (origins= the non-Indigenous nation-state.)
- Conceptualised 1901 & 1967 as membership of the NI ‘Australian’ State
- 1967: not a vision of a ‘shared’ space in the nation-state (NI & FN) but a ‘coming into’ an Australia (as a taken for granted NI)
- Coming into: NI normative= attempted assimilation
- Equality vs equity in citizenship & a lens of SC

2017 a new discourse in the public space

- When compulsory voting was extended to Indigenous people in 1983 was the illusion that you were able to freely engage in political and government matters: equality not equity
- Recognition of First Nation as a distinct people was lost as citizenship made First Nation people members of a single political community (Hobbs, 2018)
- As such an ontological assumption and an implicit truth claim of NI sovereignty

NI Citizenship- citizen-shit/p- citizen?- a conceptual NI journey

- 2017: Statement from the Heart & response re implications of democracy as NI autocracy
- In recognising the enduring sovereignty of Indigenous nations, NI “citizenship” must be unsettled
- This unsettles a/the nation-state.
- The absent citizenry is that of NI people on FN land: ignored
- Recognising absent citizenship enables thinking into practices that move toward NI (self)-decolonisation.




- 
- Recognising decolonisation and a process leading to ‘...repatriation of Indigenous land and life’ (Tuck & Yang, 2012:1).
 - Reconciliation as another colonisation about incorporation into nation-state.
 - What is NI decolonisation: a silent discourse
 - NI perpetuate the study of First Nation people in absentia with claims of a shared history

Illustration: yea- citizens of Australia ... Or citizens in the NI Australian state? And therefore what of FN Australia?



Cultural interface (Nakata, 2008)

- Taking the conceptualisation of cultural interface into citizenry
- What are the obligations of NI people on FN land.
- Asked as a NI question for reflection and thinking into citizenship in another way

An example of the non-binary: First Nation 2017 Statement of the Heart- citizenship of the nation-state vs NI citizenship of FN states

- Statement from the Heart indicated the changes required by FN people to current social policies and structures that relate to and impact on FN peoples (McKay, 2017)
- This provided two key requests which are linked to objectives for justice and human rights

Firstly, First Nations rights

Secondly, a representative FN body to enable this the Makarrata Commission

- No NI leadership discussion of obligations but Turnbull and the 'right to rule'
- Ethical impact assumption

What does this tell us

- Colonialism and is instigated the most powerful structure in Australia to maintain control over the FN peoples (Atkinson, 2015).
- Through cultural interface, there is possibility for change through recognition of alternative perspectives void of egocentricity and power.
- In this perspective a treaty and a non-SC concept of democracy is not only is right but an obligation.

So learning of NI self from First Nation scholars

- Craig Richie: 'tell our stories'
- M: tell our story in First Nation history
- Angela Barney-Leitch: NI views formed by newspapers
- M: NI obligations to (First) Nation
- Jacob Prehri: discourse of deficit/pathology
- M: avoidance of discourse of NI deficit and failure to deconstruct discourse of superiority (master narrative)
- Distinguished Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson: sovereignty
- M: NI hegemony and liberating this via First Nation Scholarship

Limits of an ally

- Discourse of being NI 'allies'
- Supposition the struggle is the same/shared
- Not shared
- Intellectual imperialism
- Physical imperialism
- Superiority complex a psychological problem of colonisation as a socialisation process

OBLIGATIONS FRAMEWORK for SC

- Australia Day
- Australian Anthem
- School curriculum inclusion but also speaking back & into NI content
- Intellectual sovereignty vs NI taken for granted superiority
- And so and so

A re-visioning

- Okay now a re-conceptualisation arising from FN scholarship; literature on decolonisation; literature from SC
- The taken for granted assumption and *discourse* is that the nation-state confers and controls citizenry
- It is an imagining with politics & with an un-ethics
- Place and position of NI people
- In SC contexts non-Indigenous (NI) people do not yet imagine.
- What may it mean to be/apply for 'citizenship' on/in First Nation lands. A question for SC people

References

- Atkinson, J. (2015). *Trauma trails recreating song lines: The transgenerational effects of trauma in Indigenous Australia* (4th ed.). North Melbourne, Victoria: Spinifex Press Pty Ltd.
- Banner, S. (2005). Why terra nullius? Anthropology and property law in early Australia. *Law and History Review*, 23(1), 95-131. Retrieved from https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/A7AD2FB69A96E8B811BFF02A664F2A3E/S073824800000067a.pdf/why_terra_nullius_anthropology_and_property_law_in_early_australia.pdf
- Bennett, B., Green, S., Gilbert, S., & Bessarab, D. (2016). *Our voices: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social work*. South Yarra, Victoria: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Broome, R. (2010). *Aboriginal Australians: A history since 1788* (4th ed). Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Davis, M. (October 28, 2008). 'Indigenous Rights and the Constitution: Making the Case for Constitutional Reform'. *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, Vol. 7, pp. 6-8, June/July 2008; UNSW Law Research Paper No. 2008-63. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1402449>
- Davis, M. (2006). A culture of disrespect: Indigenous peoples and Australian public institutions [online]. *UTS Law Review*, No. 8, pp. 135-152. Availability: <<https://search-informit-com-au.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/fullText;dn=20081014;res=AGISPT>> ISSN: 1442-4959. [cited 04 Jun 19]
- Docker, J. (2015). A plethora of intentions: genocide, settler colonialism and historical consciousness in Australia and Britain, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 19(1), pp. 74-89. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2014.987952>
-

Refs Continued

- Dudgeon, P., Wright, M., Paradies., Garvey, D. & Walker, I. (2014). 'Aboriginal social, cultural and historical contexts'. *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice*. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Barton, ACT.
- Gilbert, K. (2013). *Because a white man'll never do it* (2nd ed.). Sydney, NSW: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Higgins, I., Brennan, B., & Henderson, A. (August 5, 2018). 'Prime Minister accused of 'humiliating' Aboriginal leaders with rejection of referendum'. *ABC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-05/prime-minister-accused-of-humiliating-aboriginal-leaders/10075834>
- Hobbs, H. (2017). Constitutional recognition and reform: Developing an inclusive Australian citizenship through treaty. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 53(2), 176-194. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/doi/full/10.1080/10361146.2018.1449801>
- McKay, D. (2017). *Uluru Statement: a quick guide*. Research Paper Series 2016-2017. Parliamentary Library. Retrieved from <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2017/06/apo-nid95356-1116006.pdf>
- O'Dowd, M. (2011). Australian identity, history and belonging: The influence of white Australian identity on racism and the non-acceptance of history of colonisation of Indigenous Australians. *The International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations*, 10(6), pp. 29-43. Retrieved from <http://www.Diversity-Journal.com>
- Pearson, L. (2017). What is a Makarrata? The Yolngu word is more than a synonym for treaty. *ABC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-10/makarrata-explainer-yolngu-word-more-than-synonym-for-treaty/8790452>
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00089>
- Referendum Council, (2017). *Final Report of the Referendum Council*. Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from https://www.referendumcouncil.org.au/sites/default/files/report_attachments/Referendum_Council_Final_Report.pdf
- Sartre, J.-P. (2001, June 01). Colonialism is a System. *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 3(1), 127-140. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/doi/abs/10.1080/13698010020027074>

Refs Continued

- Schultz, J. (2018). Whispering in our hearts: Time to learn from the past. *Griffith REVIEW*, (60), [7]-11. Retrieved from <https://search-informit-com-au.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/fullText;dn=585273018226783;res=IELAPA>
- Stocker, L., Collard, L., & Rooney, A. (2016). Aboriginal world views and colonisation: implications for coastal sustainability, *Local Environment*, 21(7), pp. 844-865. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13549839.2015.1036414>
-
- Thorpe, N. (2018, August 5). Turnbull government chose to write itself out of history. *NITV*. Retrieved from <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2018/08/05/turnbull-government-chose-write-itself-out-history>
- United Nations. (2007). *United nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples*. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf
- Veracini, L. (2018). Containment, Elimination, Settler Colonialism. *Arena Journal*, 51/5(18). Retrieved from <https://search-informit-com-au.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/fullText;dn=103698189868469;res=IELLCC>
- Williams, G. (2012). Does true reconciliation require a treaty?. *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, 8(10), 3-5. Retrieved from <http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/journals/ILB/2014/1.html>
- Zillman, S., & Karvelas, P. (2017, August 5). Garma: Malcolm Turnbull defers decision on how Government will respond to Referendum Council. *ABC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-05/pm-defers-decision-government-respond-referendum-council/8777620>