

Respect for Country

- I thank First Nations, the Turrbal and Yugara, peoples of where I am speaking.
- I undertake to speak respectfully and responsibly on their Country.
- I give my respect to the Elders past, Elders present, and Elders of the future: knowledge holders and Senior people,
- And those who now walk among our ancestors.

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Respect :

there is a difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous concept of respect.

Why this is important in Indigenous research.

*Indigenous: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or First Nations peoples.

Central to Indigenous Research

Respect:

- Integral to NHMRC 2018 Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research,
- AIATSIS GERAIS and new guidelines.
- Used as if it has a universal meaning.
- It does not.

Definitions of respect

- Oxford dictionary, 2000
- “*deferential esteem felt or shown towards a person or quality.*”
 - To demonstrate respect is to “*refrain from offending*”.
- deference is “courteous regard, compliance with the advice or wishes of another”.

What is Respect?

- Respect was a major theme in my 2 PhDs.
- 1st PhD- documented Indigenous Australian Social-Health theory,
- 2nd - non-Indigenous mainstream Australian culture from an Indigenous perspective.
- Comparing the values and principles that construct both cultural identities.
- The concept of respect is very different.
- I use the Indigenous Australian understanding of Respect.

Respect in Indigenous Research

- Indigenous research is research, by, with, about, or on, Indigenous peoples.
- Indigenous research methodologies inspiring non-Indigenous researchers.
- Meanings of respect are culturally embedded.
- Understanding cultural meaning of respect is crucial for ethical Indigenous research.
- Helps researchers articulate what they mean by Respect.

Indigenous Australian Respect is:

- Based on the basic precept that everyone is equal – their ‘soul’ is equal, regardless of position or status:
 - Additional layers based on knowledge, actions, roles etc.
- Refers to a multiplicity of rules that dictate behaviour, towards self, others, and Country;
- Dictates the complex recognition of knowledge, moral behaviour and Eldership/Seniority. And informs, but not limited to, childrearing practices and social interactions within and between groups, peoples and Country.
- Incorporates Ancient Law, Philosophy, Spirituality, and informs an appropriate code of conduct.

Respect *is* Law – Respect **the** Law

Non-Indigenous Mainstream Australian Respect is:

- Individual and individualistic, choice to respect or not.
 - Conditional on behavior and actions - subjective.
- Earned and Commodified
 - linked to value or worth – money or power - youth, and ability to work, to ‘contribute.’
 - Dollar Dreaming, (*Habibis, Taylor, Walter, & Elder, 2016*)
- Fear – police and authority, “*people with authority, are to be respected*” because of their power and maintaining status quo.
- Class, social stratification including race.
 - Coloniser’s egalitarian concept (partially adapted from Aboriginal people).
 - “*As a society, a culture, we don’t believe in equality at all.*” Vera
- Manners/politeness.

Differences & Similarities

Manners/Politeness

Not wanting to offend or breach protocols

- One of the reasons for 2nd PhD to answer some questions about mainstream culture.
- Eg. Acronyms.

Elders

Non-Indigenous

- *“courteous and well-mannered towards certain worthy people.”*
- *“socially expected way for us to behave”*
- Theresa considered her grandmother’s knowledge and experience as *“irrelevant”*, but was kind to her because *“it is a nice thing to do”*.

Indigenous

- At a meeting, non-Indigenous people surprised at respect from youngsters, Phil was *“more surprised that they were surprised”*.

Differences & Similarities Manners/Politeness

❖ Example:

If someone was acting badly.

- A non-Indigenous person might say
- *“they have lost my respect”*
- While an Indigenous person would be likely to say *“they have no respect”*.

Respect in action

- Elders, Senior, Knowledge holders
 - Elders identified by community.
 - Not all older people are Elders, but wisest to treat all as such.
 - Eg. Caterers at Caring for Country conference.
- Often the needs/norms of mainstream culture influence interactions with Elders.
- Voices of all deserve the respect of being heard.

Social Lies

- Minor social lies ease social interactions
 - “How are you – I am good.”
 - Laughing even when not getting the joke.
- Non-Indigenous.
 - Busyness (time = value \$)
 - Way of declining - Suggest importance.
 - Politeness/Tokenism
 - Mainstream Welcome to Country and respect of Elders (Transformative - younger embrace this).

Opportunities

- Transformative effect
 - Understanding respect is not based on the same values and principles as non-Indigenous people.
 - Building on similarities.
- Developing this awareness can help nurture Inter-Cultural Respect.
- Reciprocity – Circular learning
 - 2nd PhD, thanks for learning from interviews:
 - Erica *“I realise I have treated my mother disrespectfully without really comprehending it”*.
- *Can make research easier, and richer.*

Demonstrating Respect

- Learn how to listen – Listen carefully
 - Not listening: disrespect, or lack of intellect.
- Expect Intellect
- Be informed
 - Local history
 - EG. History of colonisation
 - At the time of colonisation, Indigenous Australians enjoyed better health than most of the European colonisers.
 - Sophisticated social structure, trading, stone houses.

Reflect

- Reflect on own culture's values and principles.
 - What respect means to you.
 - Social script of non-Indigenous mainstream Australia's coloniser culture
 - Reinforced by stereotypes
 - Social stratification based on race
- On how colonisation influences both colonised and coloniser culture.
 - MS myth of egalitarian society hints of Indigenous Australian worldview.
 - We are linked *“socially, genetically or emotionally ... in positive and negative ways ... in our past, present and future”* (Muller, 2014, p225).

Reflect

- Social stratification & Racism.
 - Racism impacts on physical and mental health
 - Racism, including subconscious, diminishes NIMAs – particularly in the research space.
- To develop understanding and be confident in being able to yarn about personal values, principles and worldview.

Negotiating respect in research

- Common knowledge. Eg. Elders/Senior people, Country, Sorry business.
 - Sorry business.
 - Ask and clarify – each community/family differs.
- Consult properly
 - not just ‘leaders’: women and men
 - Being aware of, and acting according to, gender protocols.
- Reflect on reciprocity
 - What can you give in exchange for knowledge shared.

Negotiating respect in research

- Respect Indigenous Knowledges and Worldview.
 - There is a significant body of knowledge that runs parallel to Western knowledge. This knowledge operates independent of, but selectively informed by, Western academic knowledge.
- Literature – what do Indigenous authors say on the issue?
- No evidence of having read Indigenous authored work = lack of respect.
- Not knowing is no longer an excuse.

Respect Knowledge

New information emerging daily

- Inform yourself, not just the easy, corporate endorsed views – EG Twitter @IndigenousX, @BronFredericks, @TracyWesterman, ...
- June 26, 2019 *“First Nations woman, Amy Creighton, asked a room of infectious disease researchers to make sure they are the right kind of “Deadly” before even beginning to become involved in research with First Nations people.”*
<https://www.apprise.org.au/health-researchers-which-deadly-are-you/>
- The Blackfulla Test: 11 reasons that Indigenous health research grant/publication should be rejected. A/Prof Chelsea Bond, Dr Lisa Whop and Mr Ali Drummond (2019) <https://indigenousx.com.au/the-blackfulla-test-11-reasons-that-indigenous-health-research-grant-publication-should-be-rejected/>
- Prof Chelsea Bond: *“Place of non-Indigenous researchers: We are not recruiting non-Indigenous overseers, but feel free to participate as a foot soldier.”* [@drcbond](https://twitter.com/drcbond) 19 June 2019

Benefits of Respect

Being aware of, and sensitive to the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous concept of respect

- Helps avoid pitfalls,
- Enhances research,
- Can help develop Intercultural respect and humility.
- Is a positive for everyone.

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- More detail on Respect from an Indigenous perspective is available in my book.

A THEORY FOR
INDIGENOUS
AUSTRALIAN HEALTH
AND
HUMAN SERVICE WORK

Connecting Indigenous knowledge and practice

LORRAINE MULLER

References

- A/Prof Chelsea Bond, Twitter, 19 June 2019 [@drcbond](#)
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- Muller, L. (2014). *A Theory for Indigenous Australian Health and Human Service Work*. Crows Nest, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Muller, L., & Gair, S. (2013). Respecting Knowledge: Circular movement in teaching and learning for Indigenous social work education. In C. Noble, M. Henrickson, & Y. Han (Eds.), *Social Work Education: Voices from the Asian Pacific* (2nd ed.). Sydney: University of Sydney Press.

Holiday read:

- Pascoe, Bruce. (2014). *Dark Emu. Black Seeds: Agriculture or accident?* Magabala Books.
- Gammage, B. (2011). *The Biggest Estate on Earth : How Aborigines made Australia*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.