

## **Engaging with Aboriginal peoples: Challenging inequality in the rural Australian Anglican Church from a sociological, social work and theological perspective**

Karen Kime and Monica Short

### **Abstract**

Nearly two thirds of Indigenous Australians reside outside capital cities. Several Anglican Churches in rural, regional and remote locations strive to engage with Aboriginal communities. A number of Aboriginal people are active and vibrant members of the Anglican Communion, faithfully ministering and sharing the Christian message. Two members of the Anglican Church, one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous, via a co-operative inquiry, explored the question: how do the inquirers perceive the Anglican Church engages with Aboriginal peoples in rural, regional and remote Australia? From a sociological lens this inquiry explored the impact of ongoing colonisation on church praxis. It challenged the rural Anglican Church to be courageous and proactive in role modelling for the world-wide church engagements with Aboriginal people that affirm Australian Indigenous culture, pastors and leaders' ministries. It outlined from a social work perspective the importance of advocating for justice such as fair wages paid in full. From a theological lens the inquiry discussed equality and formation for rural Anglican ministry. The discussion drew upon rural-themed Christian parables, in particular the parable of the sower, as well as faith expressed in action. This inquiry argued for the building of just relationships that are Christ-honouring, led by the Holy Spirit and person-loving. It upheld the reality that all Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are equal image bearers of God and are to be respected and have inherent dignity.

### **Introduction**

This paper outlines a co-operative inquiry into the research question, "How do the inquirers perceive the Anglican Church engages with Aboriginal peoples in rural, regional and remote Australia?" It aims to present a Spirit-led conversation between two female members of the Anglican church, one Indigenous and another non-Indigenous. The purposes of the conversation was: to facilitate justice and engagement, to affirm the many gifts and abilities of Indigenous Christians, to highlight the way in which Aboriginal cultures can enrich the faith journey of all Australians, and to consider what this means for ecclesiology.

### Literature review: Introducing the key inquiry concepts

Aboriginal peoples have experienced violence and conflict since the invasion of their lands in 1788<sup>1</sup>. It is widely recognised that Aboriginal people have survived economic exploitation, discrimination, genocide, marginalisation, slavery and social control, and that churches were directly and indirectly complicit in such actions.<sup>2</sup> Science, philosophy, and theology at times provided philosophical and theological justification to these injustices, as illustrated by Charles Darwin's argument that Indigenous Australians were 'too primitive to have a soul.'<sup>3</sup> Additionally, historians, Indigenous leaders and social workers have documented policies and social mores that, since the arrival of Europeans in Australia in 1788, have resulted in the forced removal of Aboriginal peoples from their lands and segregation of Aboriginal peoples from mainstream Australia.<sup>4</sup> These acts of colonisation have profoundly impacted the rural Anglican Church and its engagements with Aboriginal peoples. Indeed, as the official religion of the colonising state, the Anglican Church had a unique responsibility for the establishment of Christian relationships with Aboriginal peoples. Three key concepts for the research are introduced here to bring clarity to this discussion about engagement.

#### a) Colonisation, Christianity and the Church

Colonisation is an important issue for the Christian church. There are mixed opinions about the Church and its engagements with Indigenous peoples, as illustrated by the following comments and testimonies. Stan Grant states that Christianity and the missions "helped give rise to a greater sense of our rights and our equality and our humanity, yet facilitated the destruction of culture and the denial of tradition."<sup>5</sup> Government reports have found the missions and related institutions were based on ideologies of racial superiority,<sup>6</sup> where every aspect of life for the 'inmates' was regulated.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Aboriginal Pastor and social activist Ossie Cruse, Indigenous

<sup>1</sup> "Historical Context – The Stolen Generations," Bringing Them Home, accessed March 8, 2019, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/timeline-history-separation-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children-their-families-text>

<sup>2</sup> Frank Brennan, *Sharing the country: The case for an agreement between black and white Australians* (Melbourne, Victoria: Penguin Books), 1991; Michael Dodson, "The End in the Beginning: Re(de)finding Aboriginality: Dodson (1994)", March, 8, 2019, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/news/speeches/end-beginning-redefinding-aboriginality-dodson-1994>; Henry Reynolds, *Dispossession: Black Australians and White Invaders* (Sydney, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1989); Isabell Reid and Katie Murrell-Orgill, "Isabell Reid" in *Social Work: Engaging Indigenous communities*, eds., A. Anscombe et al., (Wagga Wagga, NSW: CSU, 2005), 18-19; Murray Wilfred Seiffert, *Refuge on the Roper: the origins of Roper River Mission Ngukurr* (Brunswick East, Victoria: Acorn Press, 2008), 36-37.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1889)

<sup>4</sup> Laura Rademaker, *Language and the mission: Talking and Translating on Groote Eylandt 1943-1973* (PhD diss., Australian National University: Canberra, 2014), 27; Reid and Murrell-Orgill, 17-18.

<sup>5</sup> Emma Halgren, "Stan Grant – 'Christianity gave us a divine sense of equality,'" The Melbourne Anglican, March, 8, 2019, <http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news/stan-grant-190416>

<sup>6</sup> Patricia Anderson et al., *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts: Report for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* (Sydney: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; Telethon Kids Institute, 2017) [https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/research\\_report\\_-\\_aboriginal\\_and\\_torres\\_strait\\_islander\\_children\\_and\\_child\\_sexual\\_abuse\\_in\\_institutional\\_contexts\\_-\\_causes.pdf](https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/research_report_-_aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_children_and_child_sexual_abuse_in_institutional_contexts_-_causes.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Charles Dunford Rowley, *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970), 248.

sociologist Dr Maxine Knapp and Indigenous leader Aunty Jean Philips, testify to the immense barriers, exclusion and opposition experienced by Aboriginal Christian leaders from the churches in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>8</sup> The spirituality of Aboriginal people may have been respected in some cases, but this was not always so, and too often Aboriginal spirituality and culture was rejected as naïve and pagan, an attitude that undermined civil, cultural and human rights.<sup>9</sup>

In more recent times, Karen Kime holds that churches in Australia continue to marginalise Aboriginal people, even if indirectly; through the lack of payment for Indigenous ministries, the absence of Aboriginal people in senior ministry positions, and its silence on matters of injustice.<sup>10</sup> A notable symbol of this marginalisation in Anglicanism is that it was not until 2009 that the first traditional Aboriginal Anglican woman, Yulki Nunggamajbarr, was ordained.<sup>11</sup>

#### b) Defining the rural Anglican Church of Australia

The Anglican Church of Australia is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion and is organised into 23 Dioceses which contain both urban and rural parishes.<sup>12</sup> The amorphousness of spirituality as expressed by Anglicans in their every-day life in Australia makes it difficult to describe. Pickard argues that this spirituality is rooted in the incarnation of the Word become flesh dwelling amongst us in solidarity, and that it underpins the life of communities of faith, hope and discipleship in local contexts.<sup>13</sup> In regards to the rural Anglican Church, it is connected to the challenges faced by its non-urban communities such as declining populations, loss of infrastructure, climate change and churches without clergy.<sup>14</sup> Rural Anglican churches also retain many strengths associated with rurality, such as the inter-personal nature of communities.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, rural churches can appear oblivious to the rich cultural heritage and the needs and history of their local Aboriginal community.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ossie Cruse, "Introducing an AEF Founder: Pastor Ossie Cruse," in *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, Testimonials, Indigenous Theology, Sermons and Bible studies*, eds., Kathryn Naden et al., (High port City, Victoria: Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Australia, 2017), 11; Maxine Knapp, "A story of hope, struggle and achievement: Laying the foundations of the AEF, 1960-1970" in *A celebration of God's faithfulness*, eds., Kathryn Naden et al., 34; Jean Philips, "Jean Philips' Testimony," in Naden et al., 50.

<sup>9</sup> *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families* (Sydney, NSW: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997)

[https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social\\_justice/bringing\\_them\\_home\\_report.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Karen Kime, *Time for change: Inequality in the Church*. (Unpublished conference paper, Belgrave Heights, Melbourne: Surrender Conference, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> Yulki Nunggamajbarr, "Yulki: Arnhem Land Priest", Interview by Geraldine Doogue et al., *ABC Religion and Ethics Broadcast*, November 2010, <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/watch/compass/yulki-arnhem-land-priest/10141134>

<sup>12</sup> "About Us", Anglican Church of Australia, accessed March, 8, 2019, <https://www.anglican.org.au/about-us>; Monica Short, *Anglican churches engaging with people living with disabilities* (Sydney, NSW: The Bush Church Aid Society of Australia and CBM Australia's Luke 14 Program, 2018), 35.

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Pickard, *Spiritual Life on the Anglican Verandah* (Barton: St Mark's Theological Centre, 2003), 8.

<sup>14</sup> James Collins, *Four Rural Anglican Communities of Faith: An Ethnography of Hope* (Phd diss., University of Tasmania, 2010); Philip Hughes et al., *Building stronger communities* (Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 2007), 181; Jessica K. Weir, *Murray River Country: An Ecological Dialogue with Traditional Owners* (Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Hughes, *Building stronger communities*, 181.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Leigh, *Disconnected* (Sydney, NSW: The University of New South Wales Press, 2010), 152.

c) Engagement, solidarity and the Church

The Anglican Communion has undertaken steps to improve relationships with Aboriginal peoples - such as apologising and repenting of its role in the removal of Aboriginal children from their parents<sup>17</sup>. Nevertheless, theologians like Broughton argue that the Anglican Church ‘has wronged’ Indigenous Australians<sup>18</sup>. Broughton states this is ‘because Anglicans are either ignorant or neglect wrongs committed in the past by the church’.<sup>19</sup> This paper responds to such wrongs by challenging rural Anglican Churches to fully recognise the heritage of Indigenous peoples and to engage with Aboriginal peoples accordingly. Indigenous leaders call for such engagement, which is described by the United Nations as “a two-way process: by which the aspirations, needs, strengths and values of citizens and communities are incorporated at all levels and involve all stakeholders in the process.”<sup>20</sup>

Wiradjuri woman, Katrina Fanning, posits that engagement with Indigenous communities can be rewarding for all parties, and allow for fresh perspectives and new ideas.<sup>21</sup> There are historical examples of the church engaging such as offering refuge during times of violence, as at Roper River Mission.<sup>22</sup> There are also some contemporary examples, such as Noel Pearson referring to the positive role the Church had in relation to land rights in Queensland.<sup>23</sup> Currently, there is an increasing documentation of the spirituality, leadership and service of Indigenous Christians in the church, even if this leadership is too often informal and unrecognised.<sup>24</sup>

### Methodology

In order to better promote engagement, this co-operative inquiry draws on Indigenist research principles including the contestation of colonisation and privilege; the ensuring of respect, reciprocity, equality and equity in all aspects of the research; deep listening so as to hear one Indigenous voice amongst the many dominant voices describing Australia; community engagement; and yarning.<sup>25</sup> Yarning is ‘an informal and relaxed

<sup>17</sup> “Chapter 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice,” in *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission: Annual Report 1998-1999* (Sydney, NSW: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1999), 59-61.

<sup>18</sup> Geoff Broughton, *Restorative Christ: Jesus, Justice, and Discipleship* (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 159;

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *Brisbane Declaration* (Brisbane, QLD: International Conference on Engaging Communities, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> Katrina Fanning, “Engaging with Communities: Key Success and Learning” in *Social work: Engaging Indigenous Communities* eds., A. Anscombe et al., (Wagga Wagga, NSW: CSU, 2005), 30.

<sup>22</sup> Sciffert, *Refuge on the Roper: the origins of Roper River Mission Ngukur*, 133.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Catt and Noel Pearson, “Anglican Church enters Wild Riders debate,” Interview by Melinda Howells, *ABC PM*, April 2010, <http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2010/s2885131.htm>

<sup>24</sup> Fiona Magowan and Carolyn Schwarz, *Christianity, Conflict, and Renewal in Australia and the Pacific* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> Judy Atkinson, “The Value of Deep Listening – The Aboriginal gift to the Nation,” *TedX*, June 2017, <https://tedxsydney.com/talk/the-value-of-deep-listening-the-aboriginal-gift-to-the-nation-judy-atkinson/>; Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council, “Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders,” accessed March, 8, 2019, <https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/ethical-conduct-research-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples-and-communities>; Donna J.M. Phillips, “Resisting Contradictions: Non-Indigenous Pre-Service Teacher Responses to Critical Indigenous Studies,” (PhD Diss., Queensland University of Technology, 2011).

discussion...that requires the research to develop and build a relationship that is accountable to Indigenous people participating in the research.<sup>26</sup> Such Indigenist principles facilitate cultural safety in research with Aboriginal people. An integrated lens with an epistemological base in theology, social work and sociology (a critical lens) also assisted us in exploring the narratives about the topic, please see figure 1.

This paper presents Karen's perceptions about and engagement with the rural Anglican Church. To achieve this we undertook participatory research as it is a recognised approach for investigating themes around spirituality and religion.<sup>27</sup> Participatory research breaks the monopoly of privileged knowledge.<sup>28</sup> It is research where all involved can 'contribute both to the thinking that informs the inquiry and the action which is its subject.'<sup>29</sup> Co-operative inquiry, which is described below, was chosen because it would facilitate the presentation of both Karen's and Monica's emic (insider) and etic (outsider) knowledge and perspectives.<sup>30</sup>

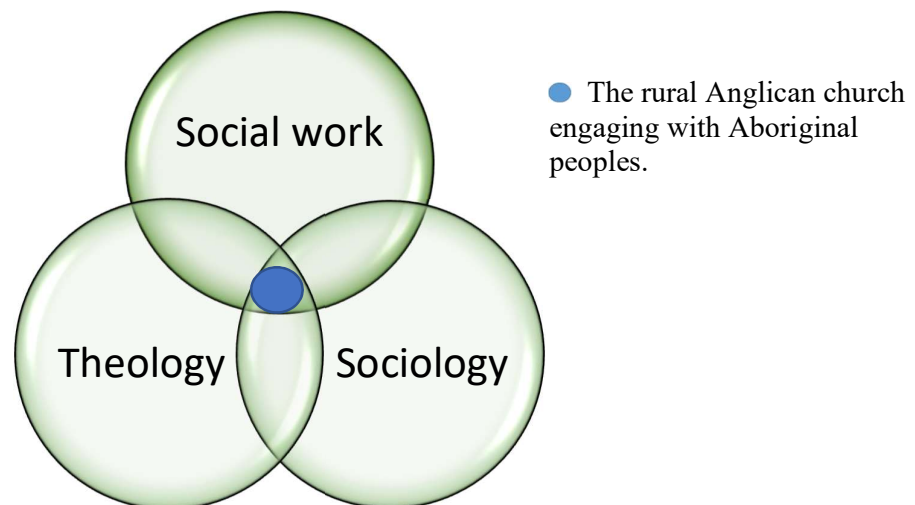


Figure 1. An integrated lens: theological, sociological and social work concepts informed the investigation.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Dawn Bessarab and Bridget Ng'andu, "Yarning About Yarning as a Legitimate Method in Indigenous Research," *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 3, no. 1 (2010): 38; Alison Laycock et al., *Researching Indigenous Health: A Practical Guide for Researchers* (Carlton South, VIC: The Lowitja Institute, 2011).

<sup>27</sup> James R. Dudley, *Spirituality Matters in Social Work: Connecting Spirituality, Religion and Practice* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 295.

<sup>28</sup> Marja Liisa Swantz "Participatory Action Research as Practice" in *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice* eds., Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (London, UK: SAGE Publications, 2008): 45.

<sup>29</sup> Reason and Bradbury, "Introduction," in *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research*, eds. Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (London: SAGE Publications, 2008), 8.

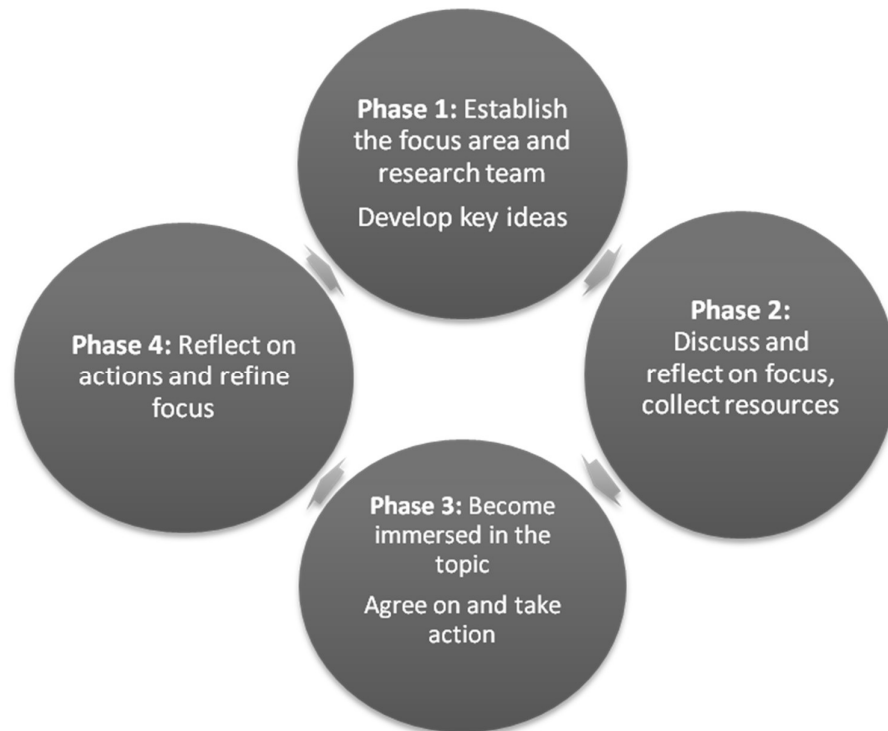
<sup>30</sup> Peter Buckley et al., "A Linguistic and Philosophical Analysis of Emic and Etic and their Use in International Business Research," *Management International Review* 54, no. 3 (2014): 307-324.

<sup>31</sup> Monica Short, *Anglican Churches engaging with people living with disabilities* (Sydney, Australia: The Bush Church Aid Society, CBM Australia - Luke 14 Program, 2016), 28.

This inquiry was conducted by two Australian-born female academics, both studying PhDs and over 45 years of age, who have shared experiences of living in non-urban settings. Each of the participants were co-authors, co-researchers and co-subjects and subsequently the project did not require ethics approval.

The Reverend Karen Kime is a Biripi woman whose family come from Dingo Creek Country near Kempsey, NSW. Having lived and worked with Aboriginal communities in south-eastern Australia for thirty years, she is proud of her heritage and immersed in the spirituality of people and Country. Karen believes there are many similarities between Aboriginal spirituality and Christianity, particularly in the use of story, and the teachings which arise from both traditions. Karen is a social activist, passionate in living the Gospel.

Monica Short is non-Indigenous social worker. She has lived in both rural and regional Australia. Monica is a Christian and a member of the Anglican Church of Australia. Monica has learned much from her Aboriginal colleagues and friends over many years. Quite a few have told her that Australia often does not hear Aboriginal voices, and she thus wants to elevate Karen's stories about engagement with the rural Anglican Church. According to the co-pioneer Heron, a co-operative inquiry involves two or more people researching a topic through their own experience of it.<sup>32</sup> The preference for small groups of people allows an individual to be heard, to generate knowledge from their own experience, and to both participate and control what is being generated.<sup>33</sup> It cycles through four phases, which are summarised in figure two.



<sup>32</sup> John Heron, *Co-operative Inquiry: Research into the Human Condition* (London: SAGE Publications, 1996), 1.

<sup>33</sup> Sonia Ospina et al., "Cooperative inquiry for learning and connectedness," *Action Learning: Research and Practice* 5, no. 2 (September 2007): 132, 137-138.

Figure 2. Co-operative inquiry phases.<sup>34</sup>

In phase one, Karen and Monica as co-inquirers decided to share perceptions about rural Anglican church engagements with Indigenous peoples<sup>35</sup>. It was established from the inception of the research that the Indigenist Standpoint, cultural safety, relationship and trust were integral to the inquiry. For these reasons the research team was kept small and female, with an auto-ethnographical incline. Auto-ethnography is a research method that ‘opens a door for those of us interested in offering accounts of professional practice that are committed to acknowledging a human-ness to the work.’<sup>36</sup> This method ‘may enable voices previously silenced to speak back’ with the aim of moving others ‘to ethical action.’<sup>37</sup>

Karen and Monica conducted weekly telephone conversations over a period of two months and took turns minuting the conversations which would subsequently form the basis of their data.

Karen and Monica manually interrogated the data through yarning rather than by computer generated programs or white sociological principles<sup>38</sup> to ensure cultural safety and respect Karen’s Indigeneity.

In phase two Karen and Monica undertook two key actions. Becoming co-subjects they reflected on the focus area<sup>39</sup> and collected resources such as newspaper articles about church engagements with Indigenous peoples. Second, the researchers affirmed through conversations the axiom that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are equal image bearers of God and Indigenous Christians in Anglican Churches are to be respected and have inherent dignity. Weekly tasks were identified and allocated such as conducting literature searches about research themes.

Next, the researchers cycled into phase three and became fully immersed in the topic.<sup>40</sup> Reason and Heron describe this phase as the ‘touchstone’ of the research methodology because it facilitates the generation of new knowledge and understandings.<sup>41</sup> Karen and Monica reflexively and critically reflected on their emerging knowledge, and its application to the understanding of others’ perspectives.

In phase four Karen and Monica resumed being co-researchers, reflecting on the action—and started drafting this article.<sup>42</sup> To ensure rigor, the researchers cycled once more fully through the inquiry cycle – comparing inquiry themes to current literature. Throughout the writing process, both researchers identified themes that were underdeveloped. Karen and Monica re-cycled over these themes until strong connections were made

<sup>34</sup> Peter Reason and John Heron, “A short guide to co-operative inquiry”, *South Pacific Centre for Human Inquiry*, accessed March 8, 2019, [www.human-inquiry.com/cishortg.htm](http://www.human-inquiry.com/cishortg.htm); Monica Short, & John Healy, Writing 'with' not 'about': Examples in Co-operative Inquiry In, *Sharing Qualitative Research: Showing Lived Experience and Community Narratives*, edited by S. Gair & A. V. Luyun, 188-203. London: Routledge, 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Reason and Heron, “A short guide to co-operative inquiry.”

<sup>36</sup> Tai Peseta quoted in Sally Denshire, “On auto-ethnography,” *Current Sociology Review* 62, no. 6 (2014): 838.

<sup>37</sup> Denshire, 833; 842.

<sup>38</sup> Joyce A. Ladner, “Introduction” in *Death of White sociology: Essays on Race and Culture*, ed., Joyce A. Ladner (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1973), xix –xxix.

<sup>39</sup> Reason and Heron, “A short guide to co-operative inquiry”

<sup>40</sup> Reason and Bradbury, *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research* (London: SAGE Publishing, 2006)

<sup>41</sup> Reason and Heron, “A short guide to co-operative inquiry”

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

between ideas and their lived reality of the rural Anglican Church engaging with Indigenous peoples<sup>43</sup>. Overall, this inquiry enabled Monica and Karen to clarify their own perspectives about rural Anglican churches engagements.

This inquiry has certain limitations. It is very small, dependent on the experience and knowledge of two people and has an auto-ethnographical incline towards macro and meso Indigenous cultural issues. Therefore, the themes are a glimpse into, rather than a representation of the field. They cannot be generalised and do not statistically represent the rural Anglican Church or Indigenous people groups. Regardless of these limitations, it is possible to make the following observations about rural Anglican church engagements.

### **Themes (findings)**

#### *Theme I: Challenging colonisation: Sociological insights leading to engagement.*

For Weber, part of the task of sociological investigation is to analyse the influences that can satisfactorily be explained in terms of reactions to environmental conditions<sup>44</sup>. Karen believed that the analysis of the influence of colonisation in society and the church from a sociological perspective needed to precede the inquiry conversation about the rural Anglican Church's engagements with Indigenous peoples. Karen states;

I see the church as 'a tool of colonisation' and as having benefitted from it. For instance, instead of speaking out against the violence of dispossession, the Church tolerated it. This enabled them to appropriate Aboriginal land without reimbursement. Indeed, it was often their own parishioners participating in the hunting parties that looked for, and massacred Aboriginal people.

Colonisation gave non-Indigenous people power over Indigenous people<sup>45</sup> and land, and this power resulted in exploitation. Karen furthers her sociological interpretation of colonisation and power by connecting it to the ignorance of non-Indigenous people about Country and her kin. Early colonisers were ignorant about the centrality of Country in the spirituality of Aboriginal people and disrespected Indigenous peoples' family life. Karen explains below what many early colonisers did not understand;

The term 'kin' for us includes those in the human and non-human world; it includes reciprocal relationships that require us to care for kin, including the land itself. It is a system of belonging, made up of a rich cultural and social matrix of relationships and obligations. For us, the cosmos is penetrated with connectedness; penetrated with relatedness, with everything having the intrinsic right to exist.

<sup>43</sup> Monica Short, & John Healy, Writing 'with' not 'about': Examples in Co-operative Inquiry In, *Sharing Qualitative Research: Showing Lived Experience and Community Narratives*, edited by S. Gair & A. V. Luyun, 188-203. London: Routledge, 2017.

<sup>44</sup> Max Weber, *Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. (New York, NY: Routledge Classics, 2001), xxvi.

<sup>45</sup> Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977 by Michel Foucault*. (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd, 1980), 90.



Karen's comments above about colonisation emerge out of her personal experiences and observations about life in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia. Karen knows that colonisation continues. Throughout the inquiry, Karen pointed to the currently high rates of incarceration of Aboriginal people, the increasing removal of Aboriginal children from their parents and the attempted closure of remote Indigenous communities as current examples of colonisation.<sup>46</sup> Karen also believes the implementation of the Northern Territory Intervention and the dismantling of the Racial Discrimination Act are human rights abuses against Indigenous Australians.<sup>47</sup>

The literature supports Karen's observations about colonisation and power. In reference to the Anglican Church, for example, Connie Nungulla McDonald's autobiography described instances of her facing violence, discrimination, having her abilities disrespected and minimised, and her dealing with mistaken colonising beliefs including an instance when she was told by an Anglican parishioner, "Now that you are a Christian you should give up your Aboriginality"<sup>48</sup>.

Karen's own experiences alongside Connie's autobiography lead her to posit that there are two reasons colonising concepts need to be understood by the rural Anglican church. First, colonising concepts result in a lack of recognition of Aboriginal peoples' gifts and talents within the church and second, result in the exploitation of human rights and another's country. Karen provides examples of how this occurs. With regards to gifts and talents, she states;

Our strengths continue to be unrecognized by the Church. I have applied for mainstream parish positions where the selection committees could not understand why I had even applied – as if an Aboriginal person could have any relevance to their faith journey...I dream of the day when I see an Aboriginal person as Bishop for non-Aboriginal people.

With regards to Country, Karen explains;

'Country' for Aboriginal people is deeply personal and resonates with the sacred. In contrast, non-Indigenous Australians, perceive land as having a predominantly economic value; something which is to be exploited...Jesus constantly revealed how important Country was to Him as he often visited rural locations - mountains, lakes and deserts so as to connect with the Father.

<sup>46</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Prisoner characteristics Australia", accessed March 8, 2019, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4517.0~2017~Main%20Features~Prisoner%20characteristics,%20Australia~4>; Australian Government, & Australian Institute of Family Studies, "The growing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care", accessed March 8, 2019, <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/2018/05/07/growing-over-representation-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children-care>; Cass Madden, "Forced closures of Aboriginal communities in Australia", accessed March 8, 2019, <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/forced-closures-aboriginal-communities-australia-continue>

<sup>47</sup> Emma Partridge, "Caught in the same frame? The language of evidence based policy in debates about the Australian Government 'Intervention' into Northern Territory Aboriginal Communities", *Social Policy Administration*, 47, No. 4 (June 2013): 399-415; Ben Schokman, "Sorry about the Intervention: The Government's Intervention in Northern Territory Aboriginal Communities", *Alternative Law Journal*, 35, No. 1(210), 2-3.

<sup>48</sup> Connie Nungulla McDonald, *When you grow up*. (Broome, WA: Magabala Books Aboriginal Cooperation, 1996), 227.

Karen believes from a sociological perspective that the rural Anglican Church can take a leadership role in challenging contemporary colonisation by affirming and utilising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' gifts and talents, and by recognising the importance of Country. The church can be an active partner with Indigenous peoples in the renewal of God's beloved creation and in engaging with Indigenous peoples.

*Theme II: Challenging others for justice: Social work insights leading to engagement*

The Australian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics<sup>49</sup> and the International Federation of Social Workers' Global Definition knowledge section<sup>50</sup> aim to position social work so that it stands in solidarity with Indigenous peoples, challenges impositions on rural Indigenous communities and seeks to redress both historic and ongoing Western hegemony by honouring, listening to and learning from Indigenous peoples. Social workers are challenged by their profession and by colleagues to hear and respond to calls for justice for Indigenous peoples, as illustrated in the following examples. Karen is a social activist and through forums such as her writing of social work subjects at Charles Sturt University, she has been calling for justice for Indigenous communities. Karen also calls for rural Anglican church engagements to demonstrate social and economic justice. Similarly, Indigenous activist Brooke Prentis stated to Tanya Riches: "This land and our peoples, both black and white, need truth, need love and need justice....then our land can start to heal and we will be building God's kingdom here on earth."<sup>51</sup> Indigenous Pastor Ray Minniecon calls for churches to share the resources and economic advantage that they received through grants of stolen Indigenous peoples' land<sup>52</sup>. As a Christian and a social worker, Monica stands in solidarity with Karen, Minniecon, Prentice, Riches and others as they call for justice, and advocate that all Christian engagements are Christ-honouring, Holy Spirit led and person-loving.

During the inquiry, Karen built upon the conversation about justice in her stance that that justice needs to be understood from an Aboriginal perspective - one which has an emphasis on relationships. This raises the question of how justice in relationship can be achieved. One way proposed by Karen, is through economic redistribution in loving relationships. Both Monica and Karen had noted that over the last few decades several rural Anglican churches have been closed and sold. In response, Karen proposes the following strategy to the Anglican Church of Australia:

A portion of the funds obtained through the selling of church properties be put aside for Indigenous ministry ... It is about sharing what you have with your brothers and sisters. It is about sharing funds to support ministry.

This then raises the question as to whether there are other reasons to implement an economic redistribution strategy, as suggested by Karen. Many Indigenous peoples live outside cities. Non-urban churches

<sup>49</sup> Australian Association of Social Workers, *Code of Ethics*, (Canberra, ACT: AASW, 2010);

<sup>50</sup> "Global definition of social work," International Federation of Social Work, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/>

<sup>51</sup> Tanya Riches, "Redeeming Australia Day: How Aboriginal Christians are Challenging Australian Spiritually", accessed March 8, 2019, <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2016/01/25/4394002.htm>

<sup>52</sup> Kylie Beach, "Christians call to share land profits with Aboriginal people", Eternity News, accessed March 8, 2019, <https://www.eternitynews.com.au/australia/christians-call-to-share-land-profits-with-aboriginal-people/>

are vulnerable to social and rural isolation and rural poverty.<sup>53</sup> The Bible states that people are to be paid their wages (Deuteronomy 24:15; Leviticus 19:13, Jeremiah 22:13 and 1 Timothy 5:18), yet many rurally located Indigenous Christian leaders are not remunerated for their work with many dependent on welfare payments. Social commentators such as the Anglican minister, The Reverend Phillip Zamagias testify to this, ‘Sadly, Aboriginal Christians don’t have many paid ‘ministers’ to care for them. Even the large denominations rely on volunteers and retirees to run churches.’<sup>54</sup> Another example is Brook Prentis’ statement;

‘The churches continue to reduce funding to Aboriginal ministries, close down our churches, have us operating in derelict buildings, not fully employ Aboriginal pastors, Aboriginal youth pastors, Aboriginal prison chaplains, Aboriginal court chaplains, and not support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian Leadership development’.<sup>55</sup>

Karen’s conclusion about this lack of remuneration for the work conducted by Aboriginal peoples is that “many Indigenous peoples are not paid. The church needs to come to terms with this.”

### *Theme III: Challenging the church: Theological insights leading to engagement*

Theology is the study of God and includes such fields as ecclesiology – which is the study of the church.<sup>56</sup> One aspect of ecclesiology is the formation for and the recognition of ministry. Formation was an affirming experience for Karen.

I was ordained in 2000 and was initially inspired by [Anglican] Bishop George Browning who had a passion for social justice and a love of Country. I recalled he did not shy from leading on these issues throughout the Diocese. Bishop George was proactive in recruiting and nurturing Aboriginal clergy, even though such strategies were outside the norm; outside the way things had ‘always been done’. I then had the privilege of working with [Anglican] Bishop Doug Stevens in the Riverina diocese. Both of these Bishops enabled my ministry and understood the importance of establishing trusting and supportive relationships with Aboriginal clergy.

Similar to Karen’s above commentary on the ordination of Indigenous clergy as being outside the norm, Murray Seiffert notes that the Anglican Church since 1788 has been slow to ‘identify and empower’ Indigenous Christian leadership.<sup>57</sup> For example, Seiffert states, ‘while there were Aboriginal Christians from the earliest days of the Roper River Mission, none were ordained for sixty five years...The Anglican church across Australia was

<sup>53</sup> Collins, “Four rural Anglican communities of faith: An ethnography of hope.”

<sup>54</sup> Philip Zamagias, “Indigenous Ministry: Now You See It; Now You Don’t”, The Gospel Coalition, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://australia.thegospelcoalition.org/article/indigenous-ministry>.

<sup>55</sup> Brooke Prentis, “A call to Australian churches”, Common Grace, accessed March 3, 2019, [https://www.commongrace.org.au/a\\_call\\_to\\_australian\\_churches](https://www.commongrace.org.au/a_call_to_australian_churches)

<sup>56</sup> Michael Bird, *Evangelical theology: A Biblical and systematic introduction* (Michigan: Zondervan, 2013).

<sup>57</sup> Murray Seiffert, *Gumbuli of Ngukurr: Aboriginal Elder of Arnhem Land* (Australia: Acorn Press, 2011), 217.

consistent in its refusal to promote Aboriginal leaders'.<sup>58</sup> This is also evidenced by the fact that Australia's first Torres Strait Islander Anglican priests were possibly The Reverend Joseph Lui and The Reverend Poey Passi who were ordained on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1921 and Australia's first ordained Anglican Aboriginal person was The Reverend James Noble ordained deacon in 1926.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, Karen points out that the church has often been neglectful in ensuring culturally safe pathways in ministry development. For example, significant Christian leaders like The Reverend Canon Michael Gumbuli Wurramara of Ngukurr (1935-2018), an Anglican minister who was the first Aboriginal priest in the Northern Territory, Australia's senior Aboriginal priest for more than forty years and the architect of the Kriol Bible translation project, was never made Archdeacon or a Bishop.<sup>60</sup>

Today, a small number of Indigenous Anglican leaders have been ordained in the Anglican Church. However, as Sharon Minniecon, states, 'there has been little progress in the mainstream churches in supporting and developing Indigenous leadership across our nation'.<sup>61</sup> Sharon Minniecon bases this observation on her experiences of advocating in various meetings with Anglican leaders over many years for opportunities for Indigenous Christians<sup>62</sup>.

Alongside this, Indigenous people in rural Australia undertaking ordination face many cultural and social hurdles, such as the need to leave their Country and kin for studies, alongside the lack of Indigenous content in theological training, limited financial resources and few employment opportunities available once they graduate. Karen too, has jumped hurdles to minister. She outlines below an example of supportive engagement and its aid in helping her overcome these barriers;

Not only was it challenging to be a woman within the church, but being black makes it that much harder. Dealing with patriarchy and racism on a regular occurrence was managed in firstly believing God has led me to that place – and secondly, being given the opportunity to do so. Bishop George Browning and Bishop Doug Stevens [both non-Indigenous] had faith in my abilities as a priest and ensured they expressed that to me often, as they did with others. Their ministries were strongly enabling, based on the relationships they actively built with their clergy. For me, this included an occasional phone call – just to see how I was going; a visit to spend the night with my family or simply staying over on a Sunday afternoon to 'watch the cricket'.

Karen's statement above highlighted for Monica the importance of episcopal leadership being both Biblically informed about hospitality and relationships, (Luke 12: 12-14, Romans 12: 13-20, Matthew 25: 34-40), and Spirit-led in sharing love and time. Karen and Monica also contend that rural Anglican Church engagements with Indigenous peoples require culturally competent hospitality that has an authentic understanding of equality.

This then prompts the question, why 'authenticity' in understanding equality? This is because authenticity, as a contemporary moral ideal, can involve a 'picture of what a better or higher mode of life would

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 270.

<sup>61</sup> Sharon Minniecon, "Sharon Minniecon's testimony" in *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, sermons and Bible studies*, ed. Kathryn Naden, Francine Riches and Monica Short (Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017), 69-70.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 70.

be, where “better” and “higher” are defined not in terms of what we happen to desire or need, but offer a standard what we ought to desire’.<sup>63</sup> Authenticity is a complex concept and according to seminal thinker, Charles Taylor, involves ‘(i) creation and construction as well as discovery, (ii) originality, and frequently (iii) opposition to the rules of society and even potentially to what we recognize as morality’.<sup>64</sup> Authenticity, is self-referential.<sup>65</sup> However, the content of authenticity is not so necessarily self-referential because people through authenticity can find their fulfilment in God.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, Karen and Monica believe that God through His Holy Spirit can shape people so they can have an authentic understanding of equality.

Monica and Karen considered authenticity to be important for this conversation because as Charles Taylor argues, it is possible to pay lip service to equal recognition, but this does not necessarily translate to an understanding of equality.<sup>67</sup> For Monica, authentic contextualisation of Christian ministry and activities are not to be determined by colonisation, rather they are to be expressed as faith and deeds defined by Biblical concepts such as the fruit of the Spirit, the two greatest commandments and the parable of the Good Samaritan (Galatians 5:22-23, Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 10: 25-37).

Karen’s positive example of engagement described above contrasts with Indigenous Theologian Naden’s description of Indigenous frustrations with the church;

“What frustrates Aboriginal people is the that the churches of Australia are so quick to accept the cultures of other peoples’ groups of the world, but stand in defiance and judgement when it comes to the first nations peoples of this country...If we are to contextualise God’s word into our thinking, then the Bible itself has to be the final authority of things pertaining to the topic of Indigenous contextualisation. If we are to grapple with the Christian faith of Aboriginal people then it stands to reason that the issue of theology is of vital importance.”<sup>68</sup>

With the existence of stories like Karen’s and comments like Naden’s, Broughton’s claim that the Anglican church can be more engaging and hospitable by offering friendship to Indigenous people and overcoming ignorance and neglect of Indigenous issues, is timely.<sup>69</sup>

To reinforce her own personal point about positive engagements and hospitality, Karen shares a childhood story of how a priest showed her hospitality and in doing so, attracted her to Christianity;

I would visit the Catholic church every day, sometimes twice a day, on my way to and from school. My role model was Father John, who I remember as a man always in prayer, yet always made time for a curious kid at his presbytery door.

<sup>63</sup> Charles Taylor, *The ethics of authenticity* (London, England: Harvard University Press, 1991), 16.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 82.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>68</sup> Neville Naden, “Towards an Indigenous Theology” in *A celebration of God’s faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, sermons and Bible studies*, ed. Kathryn Naden, Francine Riches and Monica Short (Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017), 134.

<sup>69</sup> Broughton, *Restorative Christ: Jesus, Justice, and Discipleship*, 164.

As a child, the church for Karen was engaging, hospitable and culturally competent because it was welcoming and always open. In a world that is increasingly full of distractions, the peace found within an open church is a place of solace and time spent with God. In addition, Karen recommends that clergy and leaders are taught cultural competency skills of engagement as part of their ordination and training so that all ministers can have the confidence to both welcome and affirm Aboriginal cultures within their ministries.

Pastor Max Wright, who was part of the stolen generation, also advocates for cultural competency, such as in, for example, evangelistic materials containing comments and pictures of Indigenous people (not just non-Indigenous people) responding positively to the gospel.<sup>70</sup> Wright's and Karen's advocacy for cultural competency highlight that it is time to initiate new stories about engagement, where everyone is doing God's work together and where Indigenous people can be leaders throughout the church.<sup>71</sup>

### Last Comments

The themes outlined above reminded Monica of two quotes she had recently read. In regard to colonisation, power and justice, Monica thought of Bonhoeffer's statement, "Christianity stands or falls with its revolutionary protest against violence, arbitrariness and pride of power."<sup>72</sup> With reference to Indigenous theological discussions about church engagements, Monica draws upon Tjitayi's view, "Our next generation has to take the good news to the world about the Lord Jesus Christ. God has a good place for our generation to go".<sup>73</sup> These two quotes and the inquiry themes led Monica to consider how Karen engages with the rural Anglican church and vice-versa. In reply, Karen raised three points that together define her engagement, ministry and leadership in the rural Anglican church. First, theologically she strives for both faith and action (English Standard Version, 2016, James 2: 17). Second, Karen achieves faith and action through engagement with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in their community. She states;

For us, family and community are almost the same thing. In ministry, I was able to bring that to my work.

Third, the particular Biblical image that inspires Karen's faith and ministry is in the person of Jesus as the sower:

In my ministry the image of Jesus with a basket at his side spreading the seed is central. That is the heart of my ministry and what I am called to do.

<sup>70</sup> Max Wright, "Introducing: Reverend Max Wright" in *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, sermons and Bible studies*, ed. Kathryn Naden, Francine Riches and Monica Short (Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017), 88.

<sup>71</sup> Rosemary Dewerse, "Finding our soul, finding my soul: Walking the long journey of reconciliation in Australia" in *We are pilgrims: Mission from in and with the margins of our diverse world*, ed. Darren Cronshaw & Rosemary Dewerse (Victoria, Australia: UNOH Publishing, 2015), 63-64.

<sup>72</sup> Paul Marshall, Lela Gilbert, & Nina Shea, "Persecuted: The global assault on Christians" (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc, 2013), 306.

<sup>73</sup> Katrina Tjitayi's, "Katrina Tjitayi's Testimony" in *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, sermons and Bible studies*, ed. Kathryn Naden, Francine Riches and Monica Short (Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017), 75.

The parable of the sower, (Mark 4: 1-20) was told by Jesus to his disciples. It talks about the seed as the word about the Kingdom of God and how some will accept it and bear fruit.<sup>74</sup> One way Karen abides with Jesus as He spreads the seed, is through advocacy and facilitating the provision of spaces for Aboriginal people across all areas of the church.

### **Recommendations**

We make the following recommendations:

1. Christian leaders advocate alongside Indigenous Australians on issues of social justice.
2. Dioceses be proactive and develop pathways into ministry that build on the strengths of Aboriginal people.
3. Where an Aboriginal person feels called to mainstream (non-Indigenous) ministry, church leaders enable opportunities for this to occur.
4. The redistribution of resources, where Indigenous ministries within dioceses receive a portion of the funds from every Anglican property sold.

### **Conclusion**

This circular inquiry concludes where it started, with the question of how the Anglican church engages with Aboriginal peoples in rural, regional and remote Australia, Historical and prevailing colonising ideologies have impacted the church and have stunted engagement and enfeebled Indigenous Christians' gifts and opportunities within the church. The significance of this inquiry is that it presents the perceptions of two people - one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous - who together call for all rural Anglican Churches throughout Australia to role model just social and economic engagements. This involves the churches viewing ecclesiological praxis about formation, the distribution of resources and the episcopal polity through a Biblically informed, person-loving, Holy Spirit led, kin-focused and Christ-honouring lens. The researchers believe that such a lens would ensure that colonisation is not the dominate word for rural Indigenous ministry – rather that the final one is God's word about justice and relationship.

---

<sup>74</sup> Francis J. Moloney, *The gospel of Mark* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 92.

## References

- Anderson, Patricia, Muriel Bamblett, Dawn Bessarab, Leah Bromfield, Sharni Chan, Gabriel Maddock, Karen Menzies et al. "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and child sexual abuse in institutional contexts Report for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse." Telethon Kids Institute. Accessed March, 8, 2019. [https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/research\\_report\\_-\\_aboriginal\\_and\\_torres\\_strait\\_islander\\_children\\_and\\_child\\_sexual\\_abuse\\_in\\_institutional\\_contexts\\_-\\_causes.pdf](https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/research_report_-_aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_children_and_child_sexual_abuse_in_institutional_contexts_-_causes.pdf)
- "About us" Anglican Church of Australia. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.anglican.org.au/about-us>
- Atkinson, Judy. "The value of deep listening - The Aboriginal gift to the nation." *TedX*, June 2017. <https://tedxsydney.com/talk/the-value-of-deep-listening-the-aboriginal-gift-to-the-nation-judy-atkinson/>
- Australian Association of Social Workers. *Code of Ethics*. Canberra, ACT: AASW, 2010.
- "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population". Australian Bureau of Statistics. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20Population%20Data%20Summary~10>
- "The 2016 Census of population and housing." Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/1001.0~2016-17~Main%20Features~The%202016%20Census%20of%20Population%20and%20Housing~10009>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. "Prisoner characteristics Australia." Accessed March, 8, 2019. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4517.0~2017~Main%20Features~Prisoner%20characteristics.%20Australia~4>
- Australian Government, & Australian Institute of Family Studies. "The growing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care." Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/2018/05/07/growing-over-representation-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children-care>
- Australian Government National Health And Medical Research Council. "Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders." Accessed March, 8, 2019. file:///D:/Users/mshort07/Downloads/Indigenous-ethical-guidelines.pdf
- Australian Human Rights Commission. "Historical Context- The Stolen Generations." Bringing Them Home. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/timeline-history-separation-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children-their-families-text>
- Beach, Kylie. "Christians call to share land profits with Aboriginal people." Eternity News. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.eternitynews.com.au/australia/christians-call-to-share-land-profits-with-aboriginal-people/>
- Bessarab, Dawn and Bridget Ng'andu. "Yarning About Yarning as a Legitimate Method in Indigenous Research." *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 3, no. 1 (2010): 37-50.
- Bird, Michael. *Evangelical theology: A Biblical and systematic introduction*. Michigan: Zondervan, 2013)



- Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families. Sydney, NSW: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997.
- Brennan, Frank. *Sharing the Country: The Case for An Agreement between Black and White Australians*. Melbourne, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1991.
- Broughton, Geoff. *Restorative Christ: Jesus, justice and discipleship*. Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014.
- Buckley Peter, J., Malcolm Chapman, Jeremy Clegg and Hanna Gajewska-De Mattos. "A linguistic and philosophical analysis of emic and etic and their use in international business research." *Management International Review*, 54 no 3 (2014): 307-324.
- Catt, Peter and Noel Pearson. "Anglican Church enters Wild Riders debate." Interview by Melinda Howells. *ABC PM*, April 2010. <http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2010/s2885131.htm>
- Collins, James, A. "*Four rural Anglican communities of faith: An ethnography of hope*." PhD diss., University of Tasmania, 2010.
- Cruse, Ossie. "Introducing an AEF Founder: Pastor Ossie Cruse." In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, Testimonials, Indigenous Theology, Sermons and Bible studies*, edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches and Monica Short, 10-15. Highport City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- Darwin, Charles. *The descent of man, and selection in relation to sex*. New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1889.
- Davidson, Karl. "But is it church?" in *We are pilgrims: Mission from, in and with the margins of our diverse world*, edited by Darren Cronshaw & Rosemary Dewerse, 127-137. Dandenong, Victoria: UNOH Publishing, 2015.
- Denshire, Sally. "On autoethnography". *Current Sociology Review* 62, no. 620 (2014): 831-850.
- Dewerse, Rosemary. "Finding our soul, finding my soul: Walking the long journey of reconciliation in Australia." In *We are pilgrims: Mission from, in and with the margins of our diverse world*, edited by Darren Cronshaw & Rosemary Dewerse, 127-137. Dandenong, Victoria: UNOH Publishing, 2015.
- Dodson, Michael. "The End in the Beginning: Re(de)finding Aboriginality: Dodson (1994)." Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/news/speeches/end-beginning-redefining-aboriginality-dodson-1994>
- Dudley, James R. *Spirituality matters in social work*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016.
- English Standard Version. *Bible: Crossway Bibles*. 2016.
- Fanning, Katrina. Engaging with communities - Key success and learning. In *Social work: Engaging Indigenous communities*, edited by Bill Anscombe, Katie Murrell-Orgill, & Monica Short, 30-34. Wagga Wagga, NSW: CSU, 2005.
- Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977 by Michel Foucault*. Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd, 1980.
- Halgren, Emma. "Stan Grant - 'Christianity gave us a divine sense of our equality.'" Accessed March, 8, 2019. <http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news/stan-grant-190416>
- Heron, John. *Co-operative inquiry: Research into the human condition*. London, UK: Sage Publications, 1996.
- "Historical Context – The Stolen Generations." *Brining Them Home*. Accessed March 8, 2019, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/timeline-history-separation-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children-their-families-text>

- Hughes, Philip, Alan Black, Peter Kaldor, John Bellamy, and Keith Castle. *Building stronger communities*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press, 2007.
- “Chapter 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice.” In *Annual Report 1998-1999*, edited by Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 59-61. Sydney, NSW: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1999.
- “Global definition of social work.” International Federation of Social Work. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/>
- Kime, Karen. *Time for change: Inequality in the church*. Paper presented at the Surrender Conference, Belgrave Heights, Melbourne, 23-25 March 2018.
- Knapp, Maxine. “A story of hope, struggle and achievement: Laying the foundations of the AEF, 1960-1970.” In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, Sermons and Bible studies* edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches, & Monica Short, 15-38. Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- Ladner, Joyce A. “Introduction.” In *The death of white sociology: Essays on race and culture* edited by Joyce A. Ladner, xix-xxix. Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1973.
- Leigh, Andrew. *Disconnected*. Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 2010.
- Local Community Services Association. “Brisbane Declaration.” Paper presented at the International Conference on Engaging Communities. Brisbane, QLD, 2005.
- Madden, Cass. “Forced closures of Aboriginal communities in Australia.” Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/forced-closures-aboriginal-communities-australia-continue>
- Magowan, Fiona, & Carolyn Schwarz. *Christianity, conflict and renewal in Australia and the Pacific*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2016.
- Marshall, Paul, Lela Gilbert, & Nina Shea. *Persecuted: The global assault on Christians*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc, 2013.
- McCrimdle Research. *Faith and belief in Australia: A national study on religion, spirituality and worldview trends*. Baulkham Hills: McCrimdle Research Pty Ltd, 2017.
- McDonald, Connie Nungulla. *When you grow up*. Broome, WA: Magabala Books Aboriginal Cooperation, 1996.
- Minniecon, Sharon. “Sharon Minniecon's testimony.” In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, Sermons and Bible studies*, edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches, & Monica Short, 69-70. Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- Moloney, Francis J., *The gospel of Mark*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002.
- Naden, Neville. “Towards an Indigenous Theology.” In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, Sermons and Bible studies*, edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches, & Monica Short, 129-134. Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- New International Version. Holy Bible: Biblica Inc, 2011.
- Nungumajbarr, Yulki, Peter Gundu, Keith Hart, Kerry McLean, Joy Sandefur, and Greg Thompson. “Yulki: Arnhem Land Priest.” Interview by Geraldine Doogue. *Compass*, November 7, 2010. <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/watch/compass/yulki-arnhem-land-priest/10141134>
- Ospina, Sonia, Waad El Hadidy and Amparo Hoffmann-Pinilla. “Co-operative inquiry for learning and connectedness,” *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 5, no. 2 (2008): 13-147.

- Partridge, Emma. "Caught in the same frame? The language of evidence based policy in debates about the Australian Government 'Intervention' into Northern Territory Aboriginal Communities." *Social Policy Administration*, 47, no.4, (2011): 399-415.
- Philips, Jean. "Jean Philips' Testimony". In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, Sermons and Bible studies* edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches, & Monica Short, 50. Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- Phillips, Donna. "Resisting contradictions: Non-Indigenous pre-service teacher responses to critical Indigenous studies." PhD diss., Queensland University of Technology, 2011.
- Pickard, Stephen. *Spiritual life on the Anglican verandah*. Barton: St Mark's National Theological Centre, 2003.
- Prentis, Brooke. "A call to Australian churches." Common Grace. Accessed March, 8, 2019. [https://www.commongrace.org.au/a\\_call\\_to\\_australian\\_churches](https://www.commongrace.org.au/a_call_to_australian_churches)
- Rademaker, Laura M. "Language and the mission: Talking and translating on Groote Eylandt 1943-1973." PhD diss., Australian National University, Canberra, 2014.
- Reason, Peter, and Hilary Bradbury. *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research*. London: Sage, 2006.
- Reason, Peter and Hilary Bradbury. "Introduction". In *The SAGE handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice* 2nd edition, edited by Peter Reason & Hilary Bradbury, 1-10. London: Sage, 2008.
- Reason, Peter and John Heron, "A short guide to co-operative inquiry." *South Pacific Centre for Human Inquiry*. Accessed March, 8, 2019. [www.human-inquiry.com/cishortg.htm](http://www.human-inquiry.com/cishortg.htm)
- Reid, Isabell, & Katie Murrell-Orgill. "Isabell Reid". In *Social work: Engaging Indigenous communities*, edited by Bill Anscombe, Katie Murrell-Orgill, & Monica Short, 15-23. Wagga Wagga, NSW: CSU, 2005.
- Reynolds, Henry. *Dispossession : Black Australians and white invaders / compiled by Henry Reynolds*. Sydney, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1996.
- Riches, Tanya. "Redeeming Australia Day: How Aboriginal Christians are Challenging Australian Spiritually." ABC Religion. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2016/01/25/4394002.htm>
- Rowley, Charles Dunford. *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society*. Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970.
- Schokman, Ben. "Sorry about the Intervention: The Government's Intervention in Northern Territory Aboriginal Communities". *Alternative Law Journal*, 35, no.1 (2010), 2-3.
- Seiffert, Murray. *Refuge on the Roper: The origins of Roper River Mission Ngukurr*. Brunswick East, Victoria: Acorn Press Ltd, 2008.
- Seiffert, Murray. *Gumbuli of Ngukurr: Aboriginal Elder of Arnhem Land*. Australia: Acorn Press, 2011.
- Seiffert Murray, "Pioneer pastor leaves a rich legacy." Eternity News. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://www.eternitynews.com.au/australia/pioneer-pastor-leaves-a-rich-legacy/>
- Short, Monica. *Anglican Churches engaging with people living with disabilities*. Sydney, Australia: The Bush Church Aid Society, CBM Australia - Luke 14 Program, 2018.
- Short, Monica, and John Healy. "Writing 'with' not 'about': Examples in Co-operative Inquiry." In *Sharing Qualitative Research: Showing Lived Experience and Community Narratives*, edited by Susan Gair & Ariella Van Luyun, 188-203. London: Routledge, 2017.

- Swantz, M. L. "Participatory action research as practice." In *The sage handbook of action research: Participatory inquiry and practice*, edited by P. Reason & H. Bradbury, Second Edition, 31-48. London, UK: Sage Publications, 2008.
- Taylor, Charles. *The ethics of authenticity*. London, England: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- Laycock, Alison, Diane Walker, Nea Harrison, and Jenny Brands. "Researching Indigenous health: A practical guide for researchers," *The Lowitja Institute*, Carlton South, Victoria: The Lowitja Institute, 2011.
- Tjitayi, Katrina. "Katrina Tjitayi's Testimony." In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, Sermons and Bible studies* edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches, & Monica Short, 75. Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- Weber, Max. *Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. New York, NY: Routledge Classics, 2001.
- Weir, Jessica. *Murray River Country: An ecological dialogue with traditional owners*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2009.
- Wright, Max. "Introducing: Reverend Max Wright; Reverend Max Wrights message - The broad path and the narrow path". In *A celebration of God's faithfulness: AEF history, testimonials, Indigenous theology, Sermons and Bible studies*, edited by Kathryn Naden, Michelle Wighton, Francine Riches, & Monica Short, 15-38. Highpoint City, Victoria: AEF, 2017.
- Zamagias, Phillip. "Indigenous Ministry: Now You See It; Now You Don't". The Gospel Coalition. Accessed March, 8, 2019. <https://australia.thegospelcoalition.org/article/indigenous-ministry>