EXPLORING WHAT COMMUNITY-LED IS – USING AN ABORIGINAL LENS

What do we mean by Community-Led?

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HISTORY
Research Approaches

Overview

Terra Nullius
Without permission, consultation or involvement.
The premise of most [western] research and analysis has been locked into the belief that Indigenous Australians are anachronisms and, in defiance of the laws of evolution, remain a curiosity of nature, and are ‘fair game’ for research. The overt and covert presumptions underwriting all [western] research and analysis into Indigenous Australian cultures is the inherent view of the superiority of Non-Indigenous society’s cultures. (Hart & Whatman, 1998, p. 3)

Conservative Approach
National development which diminished Indigenous stories, placing them at the bottom of social hierarchy, by social marginalisation due to cultural differences.

The Revisionist Re-Interpretation
Since late 1960’s to correct the conservative approach – to raise voices & aspects of hidden or excluded histories.

Indigenous Engagement & Participation
The 90’s opened up greater engagement & participation for Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Directives
2000’s - Indigenous people starting to direct and inform what Indigenous Studies should be and create new research paradigms.

Contact commenced 1788 – Sydney

The Moving Frontier – 1800’s-1930’s

The Protection Era – c.1860’s-1890’s

Coercive Segregation – late 1890’s into C20th

Assimilation – 1930’s-1960’s

Rights & Self-Determination – 1970’s-2000’s
HISTORY
Research Approaches

Overview

About research about Aboriginal people (unilateral)

With research with Aboriginal people (negotiated)

By research by Aboriginal people (empowered)

What do we mean by this?

Figure 4: Research and Aboriginal people (Driese & Mazurski, 2018, p. 14)
Overview

What do we need to consider?

1. What is Indigenous Research Methodologies? How does it differ from other areas of research?
2. What does privileging voices in research mean? How does this influence knowledge’s and teaching?
3. Is Indigenous Research Methodologies important? Why?
4. What does disrupting Western Research mean?
5. What does working with Indigenous communities mean?
6. How can we ensure Indigenous voices are included?
7. Why is ‘Decolonality’ important? What does it mean in research and knowledge’s transmission?
8. Indigenous Histories and Representation through Museums:
   - Consultative processes
   - Historiography: The need to understand actions in the past from the viewpoint of the participants (scientist, missionary, Aboriginal elder, etc)
   - Museums as sites for continued learning
   - What steps would you take in a museum when working with human remains; are there different considerations if the human remains are Aboriginal, Islander or European?
9. What impact does Nationhood, Statehood and Sovereignty have on us as Australians?
10. What is important about Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and how does it impact on Indigenous Research Methodologies?
11. What is the importance of Place, Space and Time Based Methodologies? What role does perspectives play in these?
ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

validity

STAGE 1
Precursor – Informal
What if ...?

STAGE 2
Grant Approval Advice
Ethics Process & Approval Advice
Precursor – Informal
Community Workshop
Narrative Interviews

STAGE 3
Formalising Research Process with Local Community
Community Workshop
Formal
Follow-up
Narrative Interviews
Formal
Follow-up

STAGE 4
Finalising The Research – Formal & Informal
Follow-up – Formal & Informal
Dissemination – Formal & Informal

WESTERN RESEARCH PROCESS

credentials

THE RESEARCH TEAM

GRANT APPLICATION

GRANT APPROVAL

UNDERTAKE RESEARCH

FINALISE RESEARCH

STAGE 1
Grant Application & Approval - Formal

STAGE 2
Ethics Application – Formal
Ethics Approval – Formal

STAGE 3
Commence Research – Formal
Establish – Advisory Committees
Aboriginal Community Engagement

STAGE 4
Finalise Research – Formal
Follow-up – Formal
Dissemination – Formal
Overview

Debates & Directions

Rights & Responsibilities (local)
- ALA Statement of Rights (1984)
- Wilkins (1992)
- Federation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages (2004)
- Board of Studies NSW (2008)

Community expectations & academic obligations
- What do communities (know they) want/need?
- What can researchers do (well)?
- Can a PhD ever be accessible?
- Time Frames

Authority & Authenticity
- Elders or archives?
- Language Recording & Revival - Speakers or linguists?
  - Who is a speaker?
- Expert rhetoric
  - Who is an expert?
- Discourses of death and sleep
- Plus can change…
- Language ‘engineering’
- Protocols, power & control
  - The benefits of gatekeeping
  - Sources, veracity and usefulness
- Access
  - Who can speak, learn and teach?
- Collaboration or competition?
- Collective responsibility
Question?

How do we, as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers, undertake Indigenous or Indigenous-focused research and meet the requirements of universities and the Aboriginal communities?
Methodologies

International Influences

Internationally - First Nations People in Canada, USA, Aotearoa - New Zealand influencing methodological reform.

Such as:

Bryan Brayboy  – Critical Tribal Race Theory & Learning on Country
Linda Tuhiwai Smith  – Decolonising Research & Culturally appropriate research
Graham Smith  – Maori Theorising & Indigenising Education
Fiona Cram  – Constructive Conversations
Jo-Anne Archibald  – Story Work
Margaret Kovach  – Relational Research
Suzanne SooHoo  – Culturally Responsive Research Methodologies
Mere Berryman  – Culturally Responsive Research Methodologies
Anne Nevin  – Culturally Responsive Research Methodologies
Shaun Wilson  – Research is Ceremony & Building Knowledges for Community
Gregory Cajete  – Ethobotany - Culturally Based Science / Indigenous Perspectives in Science
Methodologies

Australian Indigenous peoples

Martin Nakata
- Indigenous Standpoint Theory
Aileen Moreton-Robinson
- Indigenous Women’s Standpoint Theory
Tyson Yunkaporta
- 8 Ways & Protocols in Working with Community

Nerida Blair
- Lilyology
Karen Martin
- Booran Mirraboopa – Ways of Knowing, Being & Doing

Bronwyn Fredericks
- Indigenous Engagement in Research
Lester-Irabinna Rigney
- Reforming Indigenous Research - defined and Aboriginal people
controlled by

Dawn Bessarab
- Yarning
Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann
- Deep Listening
Mark Rose
- Practitioners Blindspot & Reflection
Wendy Baarda
- Cultural Difference

The University of Sydney

Methodologies

What's working?

– Indigenous Standpoint Theory
– Indigenous Feminist Standpoint Theory
– Yarning
– Narratives
– Community-Led projects
– Intersectionality
– Critical ethnography
– Culturally responsive research
– Critical Race Theory Methodology
– Decolonality
– Culturally informed research
Influences on IR?

Indigenous Studies Research Purposes

– Resistance as the emancipatory imperative in Indigenist research
– The political integrity of Indigenist research
– Privileging Indigenous voices in Indigenist research

(Rigney, 2003, p. 39)

Indigenous Research Teaching & Learning

- Build knowledge of pre-contact culture, colonial violence and intergenerational legacies
- De-mythicise pre-contact culture
- Equip IS participants to practice in more culturally sensitive, appropriate and safe ways for students
- Reduce ethnocentric and class-biases, accommodate to differing social and cultural backgrounds
- Change past representations of Aboriginality – based on stereotyping, racialised narratives & negative representation which sought to inferiorise Indigenous peoples and their cultures
- Contribute to a society inclusive of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people as equal citizens, without the requirement to abandon their cultural heritage
Ethics

Research & Working with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Communities

AIATSIS – Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies 2012

NHMRC – Values & Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Research
Communication, Consultation & Interaction

Ad hoc impact & change
Emphasis is on systems to effect change, they have cultural understanding

No impact
No change
Neither group has understanding

Sustained impact & change
All parties have an awareness of cultural & educational issues

Ad hoc impact & change
Emphasis is on community to effect change, they have understanding of systemic issues
Communication, Consultation & Interaction

**SEQUENCE OF STEPS**

**Pre-Triggering**
- Community selection
- Introductions & building rapport

**Triggering**
- Participatory profile analysis
- Ignition moment

**Post-triggering**
- Action planning by the community

**Scaling up and going beyond the project**

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Communication, Consultation & Interaction

Concerns

When is Community-Led considered important or necessary?
- Often as a result of on-going crisis's in the community and government now ‘give up’ trying to restore order or control the situation.

Depends on:
- Attitudes and behaviours of facilitators – “combination of boldness, empathy, humour and fun … to enable people to confront their unpalatable realities” (Kar & Chambers, 2008, p. 9)
- Sensitive support of institutions – consistent and flexible (Kar & Chambers, 2008, p. 9)

What do we see our role is as academics in Community-Led research?
- What is the purpose?
- Where will the research leave community?
Key References


