

Relationality: An Indigenous Approach to Housing Design

Lipon Saha
University of South Australia, School of Art, Architecture and Design
sahly001@mymail.unisa.edu.au

Ron Nicholls
Independent researcher
ron.nicholls@outlook.com

Alpana Sivam
University of South Australia, School of Art, Architecture and Design
Alpana.Sivam@unisa.edu.au

Sadasivam Karuppannan
University of South Australia, School of Art, Architecture and Design
Sadasivam.Karuppannan@unisa.edu.au

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Lipon Saha

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Sadasivam Karuppannan

University of South Australia, School of Art, Architecture and Design

Abstract: There have been several approaches regarding culturally appropriate housing design for Indigenous peoples in Australia with a number of communities advancing ethical guidelines for conducting research. The aim of this paper is to identify the gap between empirical research in comparison with indigenous ways of knowing, and the sharing of knowledge, i.e. a concept of respectful relationality. Relationality – meaning everything is interconnected, is the key to indigenous research and the development of knowledges about these significant areas. Thus, the indigenous approach to housing design is neither a culturally appropriate object nor a design process, but rather, it is a relationship with both human and non-human entities of Country. While the discussion is not necessarily an alternative approach to design in indigenous contexts, the paper concludes with a brief discussion on further possibilities for establishing respectful relationships with the Country and communities in order to gain an understanding of an epistemology of indigenous housing. The discussion briefly examines various indigenous research approaches, culturally appropriate housing design paradigms for Australian Indigenous communities, and develops an inquiry-based position regarding respect, relatedness, and reciprocity, while acquiring meaningful knowledges for different approaches. Four interconnecting entities: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and an axiology of Wilson's indigenous research framework will be employed to gain an understanding of relationality and relational accountability in indigenous research.

Key words: Aboriginal housing; Design approach; Indigenous epistemology; Relationality; Relational accountability

Introduction

Indigenous relationality, or an understanding of an interconnected epistemology, has the potential to gain more of an understanding of indigenous perspectives of housing and are key elements of the present discourses in contemporary indigenous research paradigms (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). Unfortunately, mainstream housing researchers in Australian Indigenous contexts have generally used the practices and methodologies of anthropology to study their evolutionary processes, knowledge systems and place attachments and also included the study of customary cultural and environmental behaviours of their various active spaces and places (Fantin, 2003; Greenop, 2018; Memmott, 2003, 2007, 2011; Memmott & Keys 2017; Memmott & Long, 2002; Rapoport, 1972). For example, the Aboriginal Environments Research Centre (AERC) at the University of Queensland has developed an Australian version of architectural anthropology by adopting Indigenous peoples' leadership, governance, and knowledges (Memmott & Keys, 2017, p. 13). Moreover, Australian Aboriginal Architecture has become the subject of non-indigenous architects and researchers but has been largely confined to the development of an architecture "...by, for or about Aboriginal people, place and concepts" (O'Brien, 2018, p. 24). This notion of Aboriginal architecture is largely limited to "an understanding of indigeneity and architecture to a domiciliary undertaking", but rarely implied in actual housing delivery (O'Brien, 2018, p. 25). In mainstream research, Australian Indigenous housing is mainly considered as a culturally appropriate product, or a process of involving Indigenous participants and knowledges in order to maintain the guidelines of ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities (Broffman, 2018; O'Brien, 2018).

More recently, Western research methodologies have been challenged to adopt indigenous ontologies in various disciplines such as planning, health, environment, education, and natural resource management

(Ngurra *et al.*, 2019; Peltier, 2018; Sinclair, 2019; Tecun *et al.*, 2018; Zubrzycki & Jones, 2017). Nevertheless, very few have been found in Indigenous housing research and are based on 20th century understandings of the role of dwellings for remote or regional Aboriginal communities. This paper has been developed based on discussions of indigenous research methodologies in order to undertake PhD research and is titled “Unfolding invisible architecture of Raukkan Ngarrindjeri community, South Australia”. The research is based on filling the gap within much of the architectural research on Indigenous perspectives and which have been largely based on Northern, Western and Central Australian Indigenous communities and very few from within South Australian contexts. As mentioned above, it is an epistemological, ontological, and axiological understanding of architecture through the lens of Ngarrindjeri worldviews (i.e. values, culture, and beliefs). Importantly, unfolding invisible architecture is a more than human-centric approach that includes architecture is a part of Country, but not separated from it. In Aboriginal English, ‘Country’ is a word that “goes beyond the physicality of land” (Ngurra *et al.*, 2019, p. 4), and is “not just the territorial, land-based notion of a homeland, but encompasses humans as well as waters, seas and all that is tangible and non-tangible and which become together in a mutually caring and multidirectional manner to create and nurture a homeland” (Suchet-Pearson, 2013, p. 186).

The project also aims to provide an understanding of relationality among humans, nonhumans, dwellings, and includes ‘Country as a living entity’. The research methodology has been proposed and developed based on an Ngarrindjeri ontology and Ngarrindjeri vision for Country as illustrated in the ‘Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarlular-Ruwe Plan’ (2007, p.5). In this research, Ngarrindjeri peoples, the Raukkan community, (and Country) will be invited to collaborate through discussion, observation, listening, sensing, and feeling as ways to recognise and develop a philosophical framework. For example, researcher/researchers will walk together with Ngarrindjeri Elder/Elders along Lake Alexandrina, the Coorong (in South Australia) as part of the necessary experiential understanding of the interconnectedness between Ngarrindjeri and Country. Similarly, it is also anticipated that the discussion developed in this paper will continue to offer a continuing and significant foundation for exploring Ngarrindjeri relational ontology and architecture, and an invitation to explore indigenous ontologies to inform indigenous housing design in both theory and practice.

It should be noted that Western empirical research has been developed based on an ontological notion of the reality of an object that we have perceived externally (Martin, 2017). In contrast, regarding indigenous research ontology, an object is not as important as one’s relationships to it (Wilson 2008, p. 73). Moreover, it could be argued that places, indigenous knowledges or indigenous participants are not research subjects or objects, but rather, provides a ‘relationality’ between spirituality and Country (Martin, 2017; Wilson, 2008). Thus, Indigenous ontologies are relational, and are based on the ways they establish and understand relationships between Country, dwellings, places, and worldviews (Wilson, 2008). This ‘relational epistemology’ is supported by a relational ontology of interconnectedness and interdependence with each other, and the great surroundings (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003, p. 206).

The paper also aims to discuss various indigenous scholars’ notions regarding contemporary discourses of indigenous research paradigms of relational epistemology and will be highlighted by valuing and respecting indigenous voices in developing research approaches. The discussion of relationality is necessary to explore how housing would be regard as more than anthropocentric, and thus expects relational accountability of housing design with the Country, communities, and indigenous peoples.

An indigenous relational epistemology

Indigenous scholars, academics and researchers from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, e.g. Daryle Rigney (2015, 2018), Karen Martin (2003, 2008), Lester-Irabinna Rigney (1999), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Margaret Kovach (2010), Sandie Suchet-Pearson (2013, 2019), Shawn Wilson (2008, 2003, 2001), Veronica Arbon (2007) have contributed to the development of an ontological, epistemological and axiological approach to indigenous research. This initiative began with Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s book *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) whereby she challenged Western ways of knowing and called for an indigenizing of the present Western methodologies used to research Aboriginal peoples (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). Smith (1999) also adds that decolonization does not mean the rejection of non-indigenous knowledge but rather the recognition of indigenous voices in research.

On behalf of Smith (1999), Eduardo Duran quotes in Lambert (2014, p. xii) that, “decolonizing research methods must begin with traditional epistemologies that are the root metaphors that have been the driving force behind indigenous research for millennia”. In the Australian context, Aboriginal Scholar Lester-Irabinna Rigney (1999) similarly suggests that research practices, epistemologies, and protocols should not be biased towards Western and Eurocentric cultural ideologies - rather indigenous research should be culturally safe and respected. Karen Martin (2003, p. 205) further expands upon Rigney’s principles in the following ways:

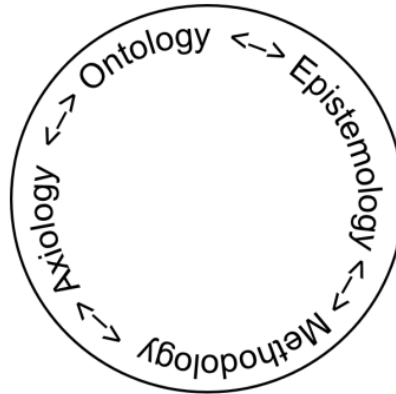
- “Recognition of our worldviews, our knowledges and our realities as distinctive and vital to our existence and survival;
- Honouring our social mores as essential processes through which we live, learn and situate ourselves as Aboriginal people in our own lands and when in the lands of other Aboriginal peoples;
- Emphasis of social, historical and political contexts which shape our experiences, lives, positions, and futures; and,
- Privileging the voices, experiences and lives of Aboriginal people, and Aboriginal lands”.

Importantly, indigenous scholars such as Daryle Rigney (2018), Karen Martin (2003, 2008), Lester-Irabinna Rigney (1999), Shawn Wilson (2001, 2008) and Veronica Arbon (2007) have developed indigenous research frameworks based on the perspectives of their indigenous ontology. For example, Ngarrindjeri scholar (South Australia) Daryle Rigney’s (2015) research framework expresses the significance of Ngarrindjeri ontology of interconnectedness, as the Ngarrindjeri vision for Country illustrated in Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarlular-Ruwe Plan (2007, p. 5):

Our Lands, Our Waters, Our People, All Living Things are connected. We implore people to respect our Ruwe (Country) as it was created in Kaldowinyeri (the Creation). We long for sparkling, clean waters, healthy land, and people and all living things. We long for the Yarlular-Ruwe (Sea Country) of our ancestors. Our vision is all people Caring, Sharing, Knowing and Respecting the lands, the waters and all living things.

Thus, the community uses these ideas to express Ngarrindjeri voices in research processes for the protection of the Country and its wellbeing (Rigney, 2015). This Ngarrindjeri vision of Country is deeply rooted in their relationality to the land, water, and all living entities and maintains relational accountability that everything and everyone is interconnected and that all indigenous research should honour this relationship (Rigney, 2015). Thus, the Ngarrindjeri peoples invite all peoples to walk together and listen to them as they always talk to their “responsibilities and duty to care for the country” (Yarlular- Ruwe Plan 2007. p.16). Ngarrindjeri ontology is relational which is grounded in the concept of Ngarrindjeri ‘Country’ that is interconnectedness of the body, spirit, land, and all living things, as illustrated in the Yarlular- Ruwe Plan (2007. p.5).

Accordingly, in the development of an epistemological paradigm of indigenous research, researchers must recognise this relationship among all the entities of the world around them (Wilson, 2001, 2008; Martin, 2003). Shawn Wilson (2008, p. 80) who positions himself as a researcher from Opaskwayak Cree from Manitoba, Canada (now in Australia) also states: “Rather than viewing ourselves as being in relationship with other peoples or things, we are the relationships that we hold and are part of”. Moreover, he also (2008, p. 73) claims that relationships are fundamental to indigenous ways of living, thinking, and doing and this is more important than things themselves. These relationships also challenge Western views of the individually bounded person and the very concept of self (Wulff, 2010). Wilson (2008) therefore proposes an indigenous research framework (see Figure 1) that presents the non-linear nature of indigenous worldviews, thus challenging Western research approaches that seek to separate and compartmentalise (Martin, 2017; Wulff, 2010).

Figure 1. Four entities of indigenous research paradigm

Source: Wilson (2008, p. 70)

The diagram (Figure 1) has four interconnected concepts: Ontology – “the study of the nature of existence or the nature of reality”; Epistemology – “the study of the nature of thinking or knowing”; Methodology – “the theory of how knowledge is gained”; Axiology – “the ethics and morals that guide the search for knowledge” (Wilson, 2008, p. 33-34). Wilson (2008, p. 73) argues that in indigenous research paradigms, an ontology may have multiple realities like other constructivist qualitative research paradigms, but the difference is that in indigenous ontologies the reality is not a truth that one has seen outside of an object, but rather one’s relationship with the truth. Furthermore, Wilson (2008, p. 73) claims that indigenous ontologies are sets of relationships, whereby reality is not the truth of objects we are used to seeing externally or internally, but the processes of relationships between the truth and observers. However, as noted by many indigenous peoples, understanding may depend upon the epistemological framework of the observer. Thus, indigenous ontologies are not only intellectual knowledge but also a way that knowledge is understood and built-in the relationship between the knower and knowing - hence indigenous ontology is indigenous epistemology (Wilson, 1999, p. 3). Each part of the diagram is blended with the others and the shared aspect of ontology and epistemology is relationality. Similarly, in indigenous research paradigms, the methodology develops a basis for building respectful and reciprocal relationships between researchers, topic, participants, and country, and maintains this relationality while applying the result for the wellbeing of all entities of the country (Wilson, 2008, p. 77). Thus, the sharing aspect of methodology and axiology is relational accountability and as Wilson (2001, p. 176-177) notes:

An Indigenous paradigm comes from the fundamental belief that knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all creation. It is not just interpersonal relationships, not just with the research subjects I may be working with, but it is a relationship with all of the creation... As a researcher, you are answering to all your relations when you are doing.

Therefore, if we ask what an indigenous methodology is, Wilson (2001, p. 177) answers that “Indigenous methodology means talking about relational accountability”. It is the moral or the ethical measure of indigenous research whereby researchers are called for being accountable to show respect and established relationships with everything (Wilson, 2001, 2003, 2008). Martin (2008a, p. 69) advances this argument from within the concept of relatedness and she explains it as a ‘particular manner of connectedness’ and ‘relation between things’ and affirms:

In this research study relatedness is defined as the set of conditions, processes, and practices that occur amongst and between the Creators and Ancestors: the Spirits: the Filter and the Entities. This relatedness occurs across contexts and is maintained within conditions that are: physical, spiritual, political, geographical, intellectual, emotional, social, historical, sensory, instinctive and intuitive.

Martin (2003) also develops an indigenous research framework which that includes ‘ways of learning, ways of being and ways of doing’ and is centered on her Quandamooka (Aboriginal clan of South-eastern

Queensland) ontology. Through this framework (2003), she argues that the Quandamooka ways of knowing and being are inseparable from Quandamooka ways of doing and thus contribute to the enrichment of the ontological context. Consequently she emphasises a learning process that “entails Land, Animals, Plants, Waterways, Skies, Climate and the Spiritual System of Aboriginal groups” through the techniques of: “Listening, sensing, viewing, reviewing, reading, watching, waiting, observing, exchanging, sharing, conceptualizing, assessing, modelling, engaging, and applying” (Martin, 2003, p. 209). Accordingly, ‘ways of being’ refers to the rights that are to be earned by fulfilling relations to all the entities of Country and self (Martin 2003, p. 209). Finally, ‘ways of doing’ means the behavioural and moral expression of significant ways of knowing and the ways of being (Martin, 2003, p. 209). By centring this framework Martin (2008b) claims that Western research on indigenous context must acknowledge this relatedness, ways of recognising knowledges and the engaging of participants in research (Martin, 2017). Similarly, Arbon (2007) also points out that western qualitative research should be embodied and underlined within indigenous epistemologies and theories of knowledge.

Thus accordingly, indigenous worldviews and perspectives are based on an inseparable relationality whereby ways of being, knowing, and doing are interconnected, and thus inform their culture and activities (Martin, 2017; Martin, 2008a). Moreover, any approach toward indigenous research must be valued and respectful through recognising the inherent relatedness among indigenous communities, peoples, and Country.

Relational accountability in indigenous research

Regarding accountability, Smith (1999, p. 3) argues that indigenous peoples are the most researched peoples in the world and in relation to the accountability research by non-indigenous scholars many indigenous peoples have anxiety with this as it is inextricably linked to Western research ideologies. Therefore, researchers who wish to work with indigenous peoples are called on to establish a respectful relationship rather than regard themselves as natural objects or subjects of the research (Martin, 2008b, p. 130). In order to show respect Martin, (2008b, p. 130) proposes seven principles for research with indigenous context:

- Respect your Land: also encompassing respect for the Waterways, Climate, Animals, Plants, and Skies;
- Respect your Laws and give honour to the keepers of the Ancestral laws;
- Respect your Elders as the ultimate authority;
- Respect your Culture: as with respecting indigenous ways of knowing, ways of being and ways of doing;
- Respect your Community and acknowledging this form of relatedness amongst the indigenous agency;
- Respect your Families and the autonomy and authority of indigenous families; and,
- Respect your Futures and acknowledging relatedness of past and present for forming a future and thus accepting responsibility for this relatedness.

Moreover, Western research processes have been critically interrogated by Smith (1999) in order to recognise the importance of indigenous knowledges and voices and advocates the need to rethink Western methodologies that promote the axiological (i.e. moral or ethical) aspects of indigenous research. Wilson (2008) similarly advances Smith's discourse of a decolonizing research methodology through the concepts of relational accountability in order to manifest indigenous knowledges more meaningfully and accurately and ensure beneficial research outcomes for all relational entities of indigenous peoples and communities (Wilson, 2008, p. 177).

Therefore, from an indigenous scholars' perspective, non-indigenous researchers need to understand this relational epistemology rather than the documenting of indigenous knowledges to examine presumed research hypotheses and satisfying research objectives (Martin, 2008a). It is also imperative to consider that the choice of indigenous research topics should be respectively based on indigenous epistemologies that centre relatedness and relational accountability (Martin, 2008b; Wilson, 2008). From this discussion, it must also be noted that while thinking of indigenous peoples' participation in research (as informants), they should not be treated as sources of data, but rather to involve them from the choice of research to the result (Wilson, 2008). For instance, Sandie Suchet-Pearson (2013) explored the Yolngu ontology of co-becoming to inform natural resource management theory and practice, and maintained relational accountability by acknowledging Bawaka Country as a co-author of the research output. Yolngu or Yolngu Indigenous peoples are living in Bawaka homeland of north-eastern Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia. It is important to recognise that the Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarlular – Ruwe Plan (2007) was developed by the community rather than individual authors. Thus, indigenous research is more than that of a participatory approach and seeks culturally appropriate results for communities as a part of the Country and not separated from it.

Culturally appropriate design paradigms

In the first decade of the 21st Century, three design paradigms have been identified by researchers and architects as 'cultural design, environmental health, and housing as processes' and are the foundation of an indigenous community participatory design approach in the context of housing for remote Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Go-Sam, 2008a). Since 1970, researchers have analysed the domiciliary behaviour of Aboriginal self-constructed shelters in order to understand their customary lifestyles, thus establishing an initial 'cultural design paradigm' (Go-Sam, 2008a). This model was largely based on an anthropological approach that uses ethno-sensitive techniques of consultation and observation to collect distinct cultural behavioural data from traditional Aboriginal dwelling places and translate it into the design context (Broffman, 2015). The model was aimed at delivering housing that suited distinctive Aboriginal cultural responses, behaviour, and needs and developed from an understanding of the diversity of lifestyle, culture, climatic and place in order to create a range of culturally appropriate design principles and guidelines (Memmott, 2007). Furthermore, as an early foundation of designing with Aboriginal clients the model has been adopted and developed by various Aboriginal institutes, councils, researchers and architects (Broffman, 2015; Fantin, 2003; Go-Sam, 2008a; Go-Sam & Keys, 2018; Habibis *et al.*, 2013; Keys, 2003; Long, Memmott & Seelig, 2007; Memmott, 2007; Memmott & Keys, 2017; Moran *et al.*, 2016). For example, the 'Land Use Structure Plan Raukkan Community' (2008, p. 62) has the goal "to provide culturally appropriate and effective quality housing that meets their needs within 5-10 years" and the objective "to continue to improve the housing standards and increase the number of available dwellings". Thus, the objective for future housing development at Raukkan (Ngarrindjeri community, South Australia) deliberately reflects culturally appropriate design paradigms.

A second design paradigm 'environmental health design' developed by design practitioners in collaborations with some professional doctors, suggested a range of principles for healthy living practices in domiciliary environments (Broffman, 2015, p. 111) and encompassed the subject of 'poor housing', and improvisation of design specifications, construction techniques and healthy and sanitation facilities (Broffman, 2015; Go-Sam, 2008). This model is recognised as 'Fixing Housing for Better Health (FHBH)' and had been applied across Australia for surveying and fixing indigenous housing (Broffman, 2015; Go-Sam, 2008b, p. 56). However, the model has been criticised by researchers for its overriding perspectives of cultural assumptions as Indigenous epistemologies of health and sanitation are not taken into account (Go-Sam, 2008a, p. 66).

'Housing as a process model' is a third paradigm and focused more on a design process rather than the physical outcomes. It aimed to provide a framework that is broadly encompassed by "planning goals, cultural practices, socio-economic structure and development, housing management capacities, and locally sustainable technologies of Indigenous communities" (Go-Sam, 2008a, p. 56). Barker (2003, p. 100-101) divided this process into three levels such as project development (level 1); establishing a relationship to the community through specific protocols (level 2) and finally, developing the design issues (level 3). Similarly, Fien *et al.* (2007) advanced similar frameworks and proposed *Flexible guidelines for the design of remote Aboriginal communities* to develop a 'design system' through maximising the consultation and

participation of Indigenous communities to gain an understanding of appropriate cultural needs and functions.

These three Indigenous housing design paradigms are typically user-centered and product-oriented; thus its design research processes have largely been biased to closing the gap between the product, user and culture. Hence, it can be argued that the participation of indigenous epistemologies (i.e. the ways they understand the Country) is still absent in the Western hypothesis of indigenous housing. As mentioned above, these paradigms are mainly applied to housing design for remote Indigenous communities, and has largely ignored that the majority of Indigenous peoples are living in urban areas (Go-Sam & Keys, 2018; Greenop, 2018; O'Rourke, 2018). It is also important to note that, in comparison to remote housing, regardless of the urban indigenous population, there is less attention to Indigenous housing in Australian cities (O'Rourke, 2018, p. 50). Only 18.6% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are living in remote and very remote areas, where 79.4% are living in the major cities, inner regional and outer regional areas (*EoAaTSA*, 2016). Furthermore, it can be argued that the participation of Australian Indigenous peoples in housing research and design has been largely limited to non-Indigenous understandings of Aboriginal perspectives.

Indigenous housing perspectives

There have been new visions in design industries since the early Twenty-First Century and are based around a sustainable design paradigm that emphasises the design hypotheses of, 'Open-sourced design', 'User-centered design', 'Service design', 'Metadesign', 'Experience design', 'Empathetic design', 'Inclusive/universal design', 'Codesign', 'Collaborative/participatory design' and 'Slow design' (See at Fuad-Luke, 2007, pp. 29–31). The aims of these approaches, while similar in some respects have been developed to ensure individual, social, environmental, and economic wellbeing based on a methodology of users and community participation. These objectives have also been utilised to maximise participation, ensuring collaboration for creative outputs, and 'closing the gap' between communities and the designers (Fuad-Luke, 2007). Some housing designers have adopted some of these Western examples in order to design with indigenous communities, but have been reframed to incorporate the adoption of indigenous research methodologies (Broffman, 2015). The major research focus in contemporary indigenous architectural and housing is to seek a culturally appropriate perspective and place for indigenous dwellings (Grant *et al.*, 2018; Habibis *et al.*, 2013; Memmott, 2003; Moran *et al.*, 2016).

Nevertheless, it could be argued by indigenous researchers that it is hard to show dignity and respect through the largely present designing of affordable and culturally appropriate housing. Moreover, it continues to be difficult to provide thoughtful and significant dwellings that reflect indigenous perspectives if it does not fit within non-indigenous communities where housing has been placed. It is also important to add that urban systems of Australian cities have largely been governed by Western worldviews and technologies (Martin, 2017; Smith, 1999) and non-Indigenous worldviews and housing conditionality's largely clash with Indigenous worldviews, beliefs, values, and customs (Moran *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, indigenous researchers have continued to argue that the success of any research should not only be limited to the documentation and production of knowledges on indigenous cultures and places by non-indigenous research (Chilisa, 2011; Kovach, 2010; Martin, 2008a; Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). Similarly, Wilson (1999, p. 2) claims that Indigenous knowledges are more than the intellectual properties of indigenous people, but rather an understanding and building of the relationality of all entities of the community. Martin (2017) also affirms that an Indigenous Australian approach to research is grounded in an epistemology of relationality and underpins an interconnected research approach.

Hence, based on the discussion of indigenous research methodologies in this paper, the following leverage points may help to understand this epistemology as well as indigenous perspectives of housing and a range of unique protocols for research with indigenous peoples and communities.

- Understand indigenous worldviews (i.e. cultures, beliefs, customs, and Country);
- Respect epistemologies and the interconnectedness of people, Country, and place; and,

- Adopt relational ways of knowing, being and doing.

The above points represent a brief indigenous relational epistemology, not as an alternative to indigenous housing, but an acknowledgement of the importance of relational ethics and the significance of the wellbeing of both humans and non-humans in cities, but also across the Australian continent. Regarding the various indigenous approaches discussed in the earlier sections of this paper, it is suggested that research must establish a respectful relationship with the various indigenous communities and acknowledge the key aspects of relatedness explored in the above paper and enable researchers to understand the underlying principles of the indigenous epistemology of the interconnectedness with the country. An understanding of indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing can help researchers to maintain relational accountability in an understanding, development, and application of appropriate housing principles.

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