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Trauma-informed insights, strategies and practices for decolonising research and research education

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Abstract

Purpose – Colonial traumas experienced by First Nations peoples influence research engagement through intergenerational, collective and individual experiences that continue to emerge in culturally responsive educative contexts. Indigenous Australian experiences of colonial trauma are diverse and often exacerbated by long-term exposure to the colonial education system in schools and higher education. Understandings of historical and intergenerational traumas steeped in paternalism and resistance lead to discussion of transformative change. Narrative accounts of deep-seated frustrations and traumas in research education are used to explore governance of ethics and the impacts of reliving trauma for Indigenous Australians in research. Ongoing systemic exposure to distress for First Nations peoples globally demands urgent attention to trauma-informed research and education to increase awareness, boost culturally responsive allyship in teaching and research institutions and apply what works in healthcare education and best practice. Transformative change requires willingness to acknowledge the systemic failures in education and research training and increase commitment to learning from First Nations expertise in a purposeful context of change. Trauma-informed research recognises the mainstream academy is steeped in a tradition of overlooking and excluding First Nations intellectual and cultural knowledges, and this is compounded by the prevalence of white privilege within the academy. The absence of authentic contributions regarding First Nations research practices, epistemologies, experiences of trauma and intellectual philosophies invisibilises or erases First Nations scholars, researchers and educators. This in turn reduces the opportunity for non-Indigenous researchers and professional practitioners to learn firsthand from their First Nations peers about the educative values and priorities held by First Nations researchers and clients. Our approach is to critically explore the typology of colonial traumas and how these are experienced, defined and responded to and how researchers and practitioners can respectfully acknowledge, recognise and learn from these spaces. This contribution is written with a purpose of honouring our commitment to uphold the status of multiple generations of Indigenous Australians who continue to have their knowledge and expertise subjugated by systemic racism and its associated practices. Our purpose is to challenge western conceptual frameworks that perpetuate erasure of sovereignties the many First Nations peoples (not people) of Australia have faced since colonial invasion began. We deliberately use the term "Country" (Nursey-Bray and Marsh, 2022) in reference to the lands, waters, skyways, and airspace, to respectfully recognise the cultural values of personhood attributed to Indigenous relationships with Country. Since colonisation the Country of Indigenous Australian peoples (not people) and the status of Indigenous knowledges and philosophies have become sources of contestation and contention, dominated by an imperialist mindset based on white privilege. This paper rejects the colonial view that humans have the right to exploit, extract, and degrade 'natural resources' at the expense of Country and First Nations peoples.

Design/methodology/approach – This paper respectfully refers to our "Elders" as an honourable title for their seniority and expertise, and their political, cultural, and intellectual truths and strengths. Historically our Elders were treated with disrespect, abhorrence, and exclusion within research. We therefore choose to elevate this term "Elder" as recognition of their worth, in a similar way some cultures might do so with leaders and experts who bear the title of Professor, or Doctor, or Archbishop. Narrative descriptions engage with evidence-based understandings and experiences both within and external to academia, exploring individual and collective mental health approaches and responses to traumas associated with lifelong experiences of research and education. Our intent is to critique postcolonising language, so as to facilitate greater critical self-reflection of all

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who are involved in utilising the English language in its spoken and written form in the context of Indigenous or Indigenist approaches in education and research.

Findings – This paper explored how colonial trauma manifests in research, is reproduced in ethics governance and research training, and the ongoing impacts of Indigenous intergenerational trauma on First Nations peoples, cultures and Country. Our narrative approach provided real-life accounts to ground discussion and authenticate critical analysis. This highlighted some lessons learned as well as ongoing challenges that require further structural and relational change to decolonise research structurally and relationally.

Practical implications – Authentic insights into the experiences and traumas faced by Indigenous researchers and scholars and finding ways to meet the growing demand for more consistent and culturally responsive training methods in research.

Social implications – Improved methods and approaches in research processes to minimise harm and maximise the chance of positive relationships between researcher, participants, and collaborators to improve the quality of information and meaning-making.

Originality/value – This paper offers valuable first hand insights and reflections on trauma-informed research from an Indigenous standpoint and practitioner standpoints.

Keywords Storytelling, Cultural responsiveness, Colonial trauma

Paper type Research article

Introduction

Evidence suggests that trauma within Indigenous-centred research exists and is triggered by dominant culture worldviews of researchers trained within the western academy, with an intent of co-opting First Nations research expertise in higher education and other mainstream professions. Colonial processes shape research analysis and findings in ways that subsequently inform the design and outcomes of research training (Ryder *et al*., 2020). This circular process generates and maintains outputs or products from research through substantial influence on professional understandings and practices in research and the preservation of colonialism and settler colonialism as a self-fulfilling entity. We focus this paper on colonial trauma in Indigenous research through acknowledging live experiences, privileging First Nations research methodologies (Atkinson, 2002), and critically reviewing ethical norms that reinforce data collection as a form of colonial extractivism. Theoretical concepts include intersectionality, narrative theory and standpoint theory to enable respectful and critical discussion on physical, mental, social and cultural systemic harms and provide deep understandings of the ongoing trajectory of colonialism and settler colonialism (Veracini, 2011).

We acknowledge Australia as a colonised state is currently challenged by the First Nations agenda for Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling (AHRC, 2023), which exposed again the level of racism and misunderstanding in the Australian community and governments (Anderson *et al*., 2023). Government-funded enterprises are being encouraged to engage with practices that address the ongoing impacts of colonisation, including the Close the Gap strategy, which targets systemic failings impacting the lives, aspirations and human rights of Indigenous peoples yet rhetorically continues to problematise Indigenous Australians rather than enact commitment to strength-based approaches for closing the gap in health outcomes for Indigenous Australians (Askew *et al*., 2020).

We emphasise trauma-informed approaches that champion storytelling as a highly effective method for valuing and respecting what works (Dudgeon *et al*., 2020, p. 11). Our aim is to find ways that speak back to or simply move beyond colonial undervaluing, outsourcing and erasure of First Nations peoples' experiential, cultural and intellectual perspectives. We examine overt and subtle experiences of colonial and racism-related trauma experienced by First Nations in tertiary education and research and highlights Indigenous epistemologies to model and recommend decolonised, culture-responsive and trauma-informed practices that can promote Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling safely.

This paper explores how cultural responsiveness in research training and education is linked to trauma-informed practise and potentially decreases trauma levels for Indigenous Australian researchers and community collaborators. It emphasises a need for greater liability and responsibility within the academy to reduce the burden of pressure on

Indigenous leaders and their allies and some ways to enhance systemic capacity building to grow the baseline of culturally responsive professionals. This extends to the peripheral spaces of research dissertion such as culturally responsive publishing opportunities, where there is a shared sense of responsibility on what needs to be decolonised and how this can and will be done. We highlight distinctions between formal and community-based ethics education and how knowledge and practice associated with ethical and moral conduct is validated and transferred.

Culturally responsive terminology – "Country" and other identity markers

This brief overview defines what it means to become culturally responsive as a professional, how this relates to being in a culturally safe space, and the importance of cultural safety when engaging with Indigenous Australians. In colonised nation states like Australia, people are socialised through school, family, work, and media in ways that privilege the dominant population of white European cultures. Australian history is documented, taught, learnt and reproduced through a bias that erases the First Nations peoples, cultures and sovereignties and replaces them with Eurocentric ideas steeped in colonialism and settler colonialism.

The first step requires a willingness to learn about the histories and ongoing impacts of colonisation through an Indigenous lens or standpoint, to reflect inwardly on what triggers our individual and collective beliefs, and to identify how systemic racism perpetuates colonialism in Australia. The next step requires a willingness to adopt the professional practice of critical self-reflection. This enables us to identify our implicit and explicit biases that shape who we are as individuals and to understand how we have internalised colonialism as the norm. Practicing critical self-reflection teaches us about how we are positioned in society based on our level of privilege.

In keeping with a culturally responsive practice, we acknowledge that terminology and language *per se* can reinforce dominant culture thinking and power and, in some cases, can also reinforce sovereign identities and empower people who have lived and survived the onslaught of colonial invasion. We highlight the imposition of racialised identity terms such as "Aboriginal" and "Indigenous" commonly used across society, alongside examples of First Nations peoples retaining aspects of self-determination through their First language.

Respectful terminology in reference to First Nations peoples throughout this paper include First Nations as an international term of reference for peoples who are subject to colonialism and settler colonialism. In the Australian context the term of reference is Indigenous Australian/s, and where appropriate Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or terms from local languages such as Yura as used by members of the Adnyamathanha Nation. Terminology in reference to settler colonial populations or persons include non-Indigenous or terms from local languages such as Udnyu as used by members of the Adnyamathanha Nation. We encourage a place-based approach that values the Indigenous Australian standpoint of sovereignty never ceded, frequently articulated in public forums as "always was, always will be, Aboriginal land".

The use of the term "Country" (Nursey-Bray and Marsh, 2022) refers to deep and varied interpretations of culturally significant and/or sovereign areas of land, water, and sky, including songlines and storylines. Indigenous Australians often refer to Country as their homeland or simply their safe space sometimes in their First language which may not be English.

Trauma-informed terminology

Trauma is a broad psychological term, and while this paper does not enter into the multiplicity of definitions currently in use, it does denote psychological distress and functional impacts of events that overwhelm the human nervous system and our ability to process through familiar associations to make coherent meaning of the event. When this

occurs, the brain and body respond with defensive and survival-focussed strategies to protect the mind-body from threat and dissonance, developing strong emotional learning to support ongoing use of these strategies when aspects of the traumatic event/s is triggered by subsequent experiences with some slight or strong similarity. In this way, intergenerational trauma/s (IGT) can be understood as the impacts on attachment and collective identity formation with subsequent generations who didn't attend the event. There is also evidence of epigenetic impacts of trauma being passed through activated gene expression in subsequent generations also. The impacts of trauma triggers are to have the mind-body in a state of hyper-arousal or sympathetic activation, which in turn decrease capacity for learning in that state, increase behavioural reactivity and drive long-term effects of stress in the body in the form of chronic physical and mental health conditions, including poor sleep and poor nutrient uptake.

Acknowledging and engaging with colonial trauma and the ongoing impacts of IGT is increasingly and explicitly linked to education and research. Intersectionality enables us to identify experiences of trauma; however, a deep understanding of colonial violence and systemic racism requires a culturally responsive framework that reveals rather than erases colonising practices in research and education. This suggests that learning about historic and current events of these types and exploring them deeply and analysing them for research purposes risks retraumatisation and vicarious traumatisation of participants and audiences.

Aim and limitations

This paper explores gaps associated with institutional research training, research practices and ethics governance that continue to exacerbate trauma in research and education. We explore theoretical understandings of colonialism and settler colonialism through a range of perspectives and standpoints. Our discussion draws distinctions between formal and community-based ethics education and how knowledge construction and transfer occurs.

Our discussion and experiences engage deeply to examine moral and ethical practices in research, critical self-reflection as a professional practice, and reflexive approaches associated with professional protocols. We explore how these relate to expectations of community collaborators and audiences, juxtaposed with the western academy and systemic governance of academic research. We identify how cultural responsiveness can decrease trauma levels for Indigenous Australian researchers and improve relationships between researchers and collaborators through culturally safe research spaces.

We advocate for greater liability and responsibility within the academy, and where this can and should rest for greater impact and highlight the potential for trauma-informed strategies that embed mitigating frameworks within research governance and training. These aims are, of course, limited by institutional as well as individual commitment to understand the need for systemic change and a genuine willingness to empower Indigenous people within the research academy to own and directly benefit from research.

Background

Awareness of and preparation for navigating historical, racist and IGT in the research training space are largely absent in Australian research institutions and perpetuates limited opportunity for transformative change. Instead, flawed approaches that privilege objective over subjective research continue to impact the research community and its participants. The opportunities to learn from historic traumas and heal the relationships between those who reproduce or represent oppression in research and those who are subjected to oppression and invisibility remain frontier territory that is open to interpretation and negotiation. Vulnerability exists on several levels, including researcher exploitation of IGT experienced by First Nations Elders and their families, to the exclusion of youth and children based on being designated as minors within a colonised framework in education.

Methodology

In constructing our methodology, we acknowledge the important work on First Nations research designs that centre on cultural knowledge, culturally endorsed processes and metaphors (Milroy *et al*., 2022). We value the emphasise on culturally responsive generation, transmission and protection of cultural knowledge as central to the ethical and moral process of storytelling (Dudgeon *et al*., 2020). Storytelling design was championed by Akinson (2002) as groundbreaking research that created a framework for a culturally responsive approach to learning and teaching of IGT and ways of healing. Atkinson's work created a methodology based on Dadirri (deep listening) and Trauma Trails as a culturally responsive way to acknowledge the stories of pain and suffering and engage in a healing process.

Intentional storytelling is unrelated to the more casual use of storytelling and reflects informed choices about what is and is not told, to whom, when and for what purpose. The emergent analysis is grounded in relationally based "yarning" between the two authors, an intentional process of Indigenous inquiry (Westerman and Dear, 2023; Westerman, 2021). The approach used in this article relies on an emergent methodology that recognises the use of an immersive process for reviewing relevant literature, not unlike the immersive experience of hearing all voices that wish to speak and respectfully enabling those who do not or only wish to listen, to remain culturally safe whatever choices they make. As co-authors we come from very different professional and cultural backgrounds, yet have common experiences, values and beliefs that create a common intellectual space and culturally safe space. Our methodology values the importance of narrative in creating a restorative and reparative element of culturally safe engagement with past and ongoing traumas experienced by the authors and collaborators. We include several short narratives in this article for the purpose of acknowledging lived experiences of trauma in research and education and to enable a descriptive analysis through the positionality of each author.

This approach privileges the voices of intergenerational, collective and individual traumatic experiences that potentially heal or ease the burden of carrying trauma and, in some instances, speak back in an empowering way to the cyclic nature of colonial arrogance. Linguistic and practice-based metaphors experienced by Marsh offer unique insight into the organic nature of "yarning" and become organising principles for envisioning decolonised, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed research and education practices, empowering all First Nations to use First Nations epistemologies, and for both the methodology and argument to be acknowledged as valuable contributions to academia. In this way, when trauma is the focus of research, including in the construction of this article, cultural safety represented by appropriate cultural conceptualisation and language is central to a mitigating condition to diminish the risk of colonial re-traumatisation for First Nations participants.

We evaluate our own experiences of training and engagement in research and how our practitioner approaches have adapted based on contextual requirements, local protocols and how these align with our own ethical and moral expectations. Our reflections explore what influences and/or determines who may be best positioned to educate and train people in trauma-informed and culturally responsive research and how this knowledge is shared and learnt. To do this we critique relevant literature, including oral accounts and use a case study approach to share our insights and critically self-reflective moments on how to become culturally responsive, safe and credible in research and education.

Narrative 1: intergenerational traumas in research

The following oral account shared in confidence by an Indigenous researcher highlights some critical aspects of how research is experienced for First Nations persons. The storytelling is deliberately de-identified for cultural safety reasons and retold in my voice as an Indigenous Australian who not only hears and receives truth-telling but also amplifies it to others, with consent at this time.

The mother, who was at the time the Indigenous researcher in this story, starts the story:

> Nearly 20 years ago, a group of two young children, their mother, and two grandmothers, were making a visit to remote location in a part of our Country where the two grandmothers visited many times with their families as children. They walked around, looking at the old hut where they stayed during the times when their parents and oldest siblings did seasonal work, and they showed us the water trough where stock came to drink when other water sources were dry, and also the thick lignum bushes around it that thrived from the regular water source. Later we went back to our base camp and sat down to make tea, and one of the grandmothers dramatically rolled up the trouser leg of her loose pants to show the children a scar on her lower leg.
>
> What happened to you nana, how did you get that scar? the children asked.
>
> I got thrown in the lignum bushes near the trough by one of the older boys, she said. The grown-ups were away from our camp during the day to do some work, and it was just us kids there with the oldest ones looking after us young ones. We were down at the trough playing a game when we saw some men on horses coming our way, then we saw they were mounted police, and that two were Countrymen from another group.
>
> They were riding towards us and chasing us, we thought it was just a game. An older child picked me up because I was getting puffed and could not run very fast – I was very small, only about six years old. They threw me into the lignum bushes because they could see I was too tired to run fast enough to get away when I was being chased. Another one of the older children used their slingshot to hit the horses on the rump and the shoulder. Once the horses got hit with a stone from the slingshot, the horse would rear up, and then the horses galloped away. When I got chucked into the lignum, I cut my leg; it had a big gash from the sharp bits on the bush. The older ones cleaned me up and put a bandage on it to stop the bleeding.

The two grandchildren listening to the story responded angrily: “That wasn’t a game nana! Those men on horses were trying to catch you to steal you away!” The mother, who was also listening to the two Elders’ story was shocked and found it difficult to take in a family story she had never heard before and the realisation that her two Elders could have been at risk of being forcibly taken from their family as young children.

The grandmothers looked at each other and said slowly, “Yes, I guess so. We just thought they were playing a game with us. Lucky our two older siblings were there to look after us.” and the other grandmother reflected “That’s why those 2 old blokes never looked at us or spoke to as when we were older, even when we became adults”.

Later, other family members who had also grown up near that place during their childhood said that they always knew they had to have an escape plan to care for young children, and this was something their parents trained the older siblings to prepare for in case any strangers came along that might be a threat, e.g. trying to take them away.

My friend, sharing this story as an Indigenous researcher, felt the fear, shock and anger as they recalled the event. “That’s how close my family came to being part of the stolen generation”, she said. “We only got to hear this story because we happen to visit the site that triggered the memory of my Elders”. As a non-Indigenous person, I also felt the shock of what was being shared. I felt tightness in my chest as I listened. Then we discussed the possible experience of the five generations of First Australians who were affected by this event. The Countrymen on horseback, likely part of a native police group known as mounted police, who, out of shame, never looked those grandmothers in the eye as they grew into adults and Elders. The older children, who enacted resistance and grew up knowing it was their job to be protectors in their families. The grandmothers, who had lived with a sanitised understanding of their experience all these years to reduce the burden of trauma for their family members and their own young minds. The mother, shocked at having grown up not knowing this shocking event that could have changed the course of history for everyone involved at the time it occurred and for future generations. The two young girls were feeling angry that the human rights of their grandmothers and their family were so easily violated, that their grandmothers

thought it was just a game and that the experience was never spoken about for decades afterwards, until this visit on Country triggered their memory recall and subsequently a shared experience of IGT.

Discussion

Marsh, as an Indigenous Australian, feels deeply for the many First Nations people who were subjected to the terrors of constant surveillance and the threat of removal of children. I (Jillian) have no direct experience of being forcibly removed from family; however, I appreciate first-hand experiences shared and the scale of ongoing traumas associated with this widespread practice framed as " . . . promoting the welfare of individual Aboriginal children . . . to take a normal part of European-Australian social life" (van Krieken, 1999, p. 208). As an Adnyamathanha person working in higher education and based on my own experiences of mainstream schooling in Australia, I experienced, and sometimes continue to experience, the legacy of internalised racism and systemic racism in the context of growing pressures in higher education to decolonise what is taught and learnt and how to teach in a transformative way that constitutes "decolonisation" in higher education. I find it challenging to decolonise pedagogical practices and curriculum content that is couched in continued subjugation processes associated with assimilation, such as the monolingual English-only education policy framework in Australia. Reference to the turbulent context of decolonisation in higher education is described by one author as a "conceptual jungle" (Maringe, 2023, p. 1) highlighting the disorderly state of how decolonisation remains in flux within higher education due to persistence of understandings of pre-colonisation and post-colonisation written and re-imagined through the lens of colonisers. Widespread use of English language terminology rooted in colonialism continue to problematise the decolonisation process in education; for example, terms such as Aboriginal and Indigenous are so often assumed to be culturally acceptable to the point that some educators and students assume these terms are uncontested, homogenous, and culturally safe. Such assumptions run so deep as to assume no contextualisation or definition is required, and terminology can be used interchangeably.

Research associated with language-in-education is prolific and central to debates on outsourcing and neoliberal globalisation (Tupas, 2020). This market-driven logic of outsourcing to maximise corporate control and profit on a global scale is juxtaposed with the historic colonial practices that so effectively impacted, and remain impactful in, the lives of First Nations people. The logic of elimination (Wolfe, 2006) exists as an historic feature of the trajectory of colonial invasion and ongoing dominance and also acts as a tool for distancing ourselves from past injustices. My standpoint as an Indigenous Australian is that this logic is underpinned by systemic racism and continues to be used to eliminate, erase, control and exploit First Nations people within the education system in Australia and elsewhere. The United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples endorses global recognition of the rights of Indigenous families and communities, the right to maintain and strengthen cultural and social institutions, the right to live free from forced assimilation and destruction of their culture and the right to revitalise cultural traditions and customs. Article 14 specifically references " . . . the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning" (Assembly, 2007, p. 5). The continuation of monolingual policies and practices for learning and teaching perpetuates harmful practices of assimilation and eradication of First Nations cultures and peoples. IGT associated with loss of language and identity and the continuous pressures to justify systemic outsourcing of colonial arrogance through English-only education strategies is ever-present as a form of continued subjugation of First Nations peoples. The systemic privileging of English language remains a process of othering Indigenous Australian and other First Nations peoples and cultures as exotic or invisible.

Spencer, as a psychologist specialising in trauma recovery and Narrative Therapy and having personal relationships with and knowledge of most of the people in this narrative, is alive to the impact on identity formation and heightened hypervigilance suggested by this narrative. As a non-Indigenous person listening to this story, I saw "survivance" (Panofsky *et al*., 2024): strategies for survival and resistance being played out by various people. Accommodation to the coercion to join native police forces to gain resources or protection for their own; fight/flight responses to scare away the horses and hide the little children; relanguaging the terrifying event as a "game" to avoid the trauma; shock followed by facing the reality of the potential severity of this previously unknown part of a mother's family history; and righteous anger asserting human rights. Even the decision by my friend to allow this story to be shared, but anonymously, indicates the ongoing vulnerability felt when "truth telling", to contemporary risks in a racist society and in frequent experiences of lateral violence as common in oppressed community dynamics.

This experience, and likely others, entered into the Yuras adaptive way of inhabiting this part of the Country: making sure children knew to have an escape plan. Without being able to attach the fear to a specific event, hypervigilance becomes a generalised response. Three generations later, the speed and strength of the arousal experienced by the grandchildren listening to the story suggests this generalised sensitivity to colonial threat remained a feature in this and likely many other families. This reminded me of the dimensions of IGT and associations between attachment and trauma (Westerman, cited in Indigenous Psychological Services, 2016). Jilya e-magazine, Issue 1, October 2016 Trauma and Attachment in Aboriginal people), where familial and collective responses to trauma impact the parenting and community practices, particularly in relation to avoiding potential threat or psychological pain, and recognising the relationship between attachment and trauma. It is reasonable to assume that in any education or research gathering in Australia, there will be First Nations people present for whom IGT effects are active or latent and readily triggered by reference points to historic (in their lifetime) and IGT. In this narrative, triggers included place, body markings, the presence of young children and for the younger generations, key images popularised in the depictions of the Stolen Generations experiences. Triggers may come in many forms, most of which the teacher or researcher will be unaware. This can be true for all present who live with the impacts of trauma, whether a First Nations person or not. The National Guidelines for Trauma-Aware Education (Howard *et al*., 2022) recommend that therapeutic services be available for those who show symptomology in the classroom but fail to recognise that the common educational process of passively absorbing information without processing its personal impact enhances the trauma experience. Educational design fails to include trauma-informed coregulation practices to enhance emotional safety and culturally responsive practices to give voice and empowerment to lived experiences of colonial trauma. These guidelines also describe teachers having "controlled empathy", a reduced empathic response to students trauma, akin to Tracy Westerman's description of the "empathy gap" (Westerman *et al*., 2024). Westerman has compellingly argued that a lack of shared identification with trauma victims exacerbates the vulnerability of the victim and inhibits restorative action to protect victims (Westerman, 2021).

In agreeing for this narrative to be part of a research article, my friend was "representing" (Westerman, 2021) the courage to tell the truth, not just about an historic event, but about her own "historic event" of learning another piece of the fragmented trauma story that formed her, her family and her community (Gaywish and Mordoch, 2018). Research for First Nations researchers is a constant process of uncovering pieces of the collective story, and the surprise and sometimes shock can be unsettling and traumatising at a personal level as First Nations identity is remade in the integration of the new information. What has been considered as "dropping out" of research or education by First Nations students might rather be supported as taking time to personally integrate the material learnt before publicly presenting the material through the academic process. Cultural responsiveness in the research sphere may incorporate or allow for this "titration" of trauma processing as part of the personal/public interface of

research as a First Nations person. Further, it is a common phenomena that many First Nations academics have been motivated in their accomplishments to "achieve something for my people" and take "opportunities my parents didnt have" (Gaywish and Mordoch, 2018), legacies of colonialism and racism and bearing an extra weight of meaning for their success in the academic endeavour. First Nations research is also a strategy for healing the wounds of IGT which restricted previous generations' academic opportunity.

Narrative 2: traumatisation and transformation in the research process

My research grew out of my personal challenge to find an ethical way to "belong" in Australia as a non-Indigenous Australian of colonial settler origins. So I was curious when an Adnyamathanha man and cultural tourism operator, Cliff Coulthard, introduced me to two the graves of two whitefellas in this way:

> He was the first missionary with our people, said Cliff, his voice a soft nasal burr. Then he had turned to us. 'You, you're like Jim Page.' At right angles to James' grave was an oblong heap of dirt and gravel. 'Who's that?' I had asked. 'That's Rebecca, Rebecca Forbes. Old Mrs Forbes. She was a white lady who lived with our people.' A white woman, like me. Buried with a church worker, like me. How had they come to be here, buried near but not quite amongst the Adnyamathanha community they made their home? How did they come to belong here? How could I? (Spencer, Tracy White Lives in a Black Community: the Lives of Jim Page and Rebecca Forbes in the Adnyamathanha Community, PhD Flinders University, 2011, Section A Part 1)

My personal project to wrestle with coloniser guilt led me to academic research collecting oral histories by asking questions of members of the Adnyamathanha community. I was given consent from the Community Councils and families, who wanted to have stories from their history known and told – and to keep copyright within the community, as previous research had been published with a non-Indigenous person holding copyright. My consent forms tried to translate this into appropriate protocols. I started with questions about the deaths of the two people from the graves Cliff had shown me. The following excerpt occurred at Copley, where I had come to know the Yura community members through pastoral visits and many funerals, including those of a number of people who died by suicide.

> We were all together in Granny Dolly's house, huddled around the wood burner, and I asked them about Mr Page. Dark eyes squinted at the flames, remembering, and silver and black heads lowered a little. 'Nyanga, Mr Page. He was a good one'. The women looked away from each other to another time, and then Rosy said in her crackling voice: They cried for him when he passed away. My mother and father were working on the property up Blinman way. The boss come round and said 'Mr. Page died'. They cried, you can't make them stop their crying. I was just watching. We didn't know all about it. That was it. They ringed up and someone told the boss, 'He died,' and them—mothers and all—cried, on a Sunday . . .. My Dad and old Jackson the old man said, 'Oh, what does he want to do to himself?5 After a moment's quiet, Dolly added in her quiet clear voice: My family were at Beltana for the hospital when Jim died. They heard about it on their way back when they got to Patsy Springs and Mr Whyte told them: 'That missionary has killed himself.' And Dad said, 'No, that can't be right,' but it was. Mr Page killed himself on a Sunday morning and there was no church that day. Dolly's hands clasped and unclasped each other as she fell silent.

Ngaingga, they said – often – as they recounted what they remembered and what they had heard. "Ngaingga" was yura ngawarla [Adnyamathanha language] meaning the speaker feels "sorry" or "sad" that person is no longer with them. It prefaced remembrances of those who had passed on, and the tone in which it was said filled the small room with quiet, and we all looked at our laps for a time (Spencer, Tracy White Lives in a Black Community: the Lives of Jim Page and Rebecca Forbes in the Adnyamathanha Community, Ph.D., Flinders University, 2011, Section A, Part 1)

I was told that Jim Page's death was the first experience of suicide for the Adnyamathanha community.

Discussion

As the researcher and author, I (Spencer) read this excerpt and feel grief: All the people in that room have since passed away. Ngaingga. I also read it and reflected on the grief that my questions brought to the surface again: they expressed the collective grief for the death of Jim Page and did so through the words of their own family members, who also passed away. And the topic itself could not have been more painful or poignant: we were discussing the first suicide known to that community, at a time when these women had seen a handful of their grandchildren die from suicide in their small town. I did not think of these layers of grief at the time. I did not even feel sad for Jim Page, my research subject. I had not yet attached to him as a person, only as a symbol of whiteness that came to belong here. I had an "empathy gap": they did not.

In the final exegetical essay of my Ph.D., I wrote:

> Deborah Bird Rose (Rose, 2004) has described decolonization in Australia as 'healing colonial ruptures' through accountability through time and in place, and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. She described how 'I was no longer a stranger from far away. I had been protected and taught, brought into families and given names and skin. I had been claimed, and I was now bound by awareness of fidelity.'

The fidelity that binds non-Indigenous researchers seeking to decolonise their research requires both ethical and emotional ongoing engagement with research participants and with the subject. In my Ph.D., I argue that it transforms intersubjectivities leading to "something new" at the intersection of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships and identities. We might call it solidarity or empathy. It points to decolonisation of research and education as a process that builds relationships and shared stories, rather than collection, extraction or exchange of data or information. This is not new: the grave of the Presbyterian Doctor Duguid who worked with Anangu at Ernabella/Pukatja reads: "He called us and we became his. So we called him here to lie in the peace of our land".

Non-Indigenous researchers with Indigenous participants and subject matter are required to develop empathy and long term relationships, which in turn will transform their subjectivity, their standpoint and their identity. Much like Indigenous researchers taking time to integrate new cultural and personal knowledge, non-Indigenous researchers and students need time within the research and learning process for integration and personal transformation, as explored by Bennett and Gates (2024). Building this into tertiary healthcare education will require a scaffolded process with time for relationships to build and transformations to occur: not a one off subject taught to tick the cultural awareness box. Cultural responsiveness will be an ongoing process as lifelong learning occurs: I wish now that I had considered some grief processing strategies in that room at Granny Dolly's, further to our respectful silence. I wish I had asked "How will it be for you to think about Mr Page's suicide right now, or is there a better time?" I wish I'd realised that my assumptions that they considered Jim as simply an outsider or "other" to them were naive: he had been "claimed" and they felt the sadness of his loss. Panofsky *et al*. (2024) notes that the relationships between researcher and participants deepens over time, improving the quality of information and meaning making shared. Westerman has stated that "the effectiveness of cultural similarity in therapeutic relationships may also generalise to research . . . and improve access to research information." She gives the example of knowing that in her research, she would not be told about the secret and sacred information that could help interpret symptoms of culturally bound syndromes (Westerman, 2021).

The ethics approval process I underwent before entering that room at Granny Dolly's asked me to show that the community wanted the research, that harm would be minimised and benefit to the community maximised. It did not ask me for a risk analysis of triggering trauma or strategies to mitigate the emotional and psychological impact of the research process. Cultural responsiveness stopped after receiving consent from the community councils. Informally, I revisited the consent of families, including 13 years later when I was finally starting to publish the story they wanted me to tell. There had been no governance to hurry up

my delivery of a publicly available version of the stories they had shared and wanted known. Suggestions that the research process potentially offers healing and reparation of colonial oppressions (Panofsky *et al*., 2024) were not even mooted in the process for gaining ethics approval. My methodology was firmly based in storytelling, but not once was it described as an Indigenous technology for sharing knowledge: I cast the stories as parables, drawing on Western literary theory and Christian theology. So neither did I analyse the stories told to me through the lens of Indigenous education, even though I knew the way Dreaming (sic) Stories operated to educate at multiple levels. My level of cultural responsiveness at that time was not only significant but also limited. And I'm still developing!

Marsh, through her shared cultural lens with those women at Granny Dolly's, sees it differently: As an Adnyamathanha person I have lived experience of the consequences of encroachment of colonial industries such as pastoralism, the influence of the Church, and the forced displacement of Yura from their places and spaces. Published accounts of survival in our own land (Mattingley and Hampton, 1992) created a significant record for use in schools and universities that forever altered the historic narrative of an era where eradication, erasure, and assimilation were justified as widely acceptable practices for the betterment of First Nations peoples and cultures. The narrative of "settlement" and "birth of a nation" was increasingly challenged by terms such us "colonial occupation" and "invasion" and "frontier violence" enabling younger generations to more fully understand and critique the brutal experiences of their parents and grandparents.

Narrative 3: the academy at the campfire: indigenous researcher as contested territory

My entry into doctoral candidacy resulted from a series of possibilities and rejections prior to finding the "right fit" for myself as a cultural being, my topic as a way of knowing, and my way of doing what I felt was the right way to tell the story of land use contestations from a Yura standpoint. I entered this space with an awareness of paradigms of research and how positivism and post-positivism shapes the research design as an objective process that frequently leads to " . . . misappropriation of Indigenous peoples" identities, intellects and knowledge (Marsh, 2011, p. 20). I had no prior experience of navigating the boundaries and expectations of first-year candidacy, such as justifying your proposal, refining and narrowing the topic and doing a literature review, drafting a first chapter, applying for ethics approval and settling into a lengthy process of candidacy and supervision. As an Indigenous candidate within higher education, I felt both excited and at times slightly threatened by doing research governed by an institution that privileges whiteness and colonialism. Would candidacy change who I was, how I talked and how I thought and wrote? Would it change people's perception of me in a negative way?

I felt there were choices I needed to make as a doctoral candidate with a sophisticated level of understanding due largely to my own positionality as an Indigenous researcher and from an informed world view, and these included an appreciation of constructivist attitudes to social inquiry that validate " . . . different truths and realities – constructions – held by different individuals and groups" (Stringer, 1996, p. 41, cited in Marsh, 2011, p. 21). During this crucial period of candidacy, there was more than one confrontational episode that I encountered which made me question why I was doing this type of research and where it might lead to. I also reflected on the chances that my non-Indigenous peers were far less likely to encounter some of the challenges I was facing and concluded they would never be faced with some of what I had to deal with, simply due to their positionality of white privilege.

Back then I felt uncomfortable with speaking back to and resisting the pressure to conform within academia, now such experiences sit very comfortably within my mind as I continue to practice a form of resistance scholarship (Katona, 1999; Pearson, 2000; Plumwood, 2003; Coates, 2004). I also felt frustrated by the lack of preparedness within institutions to ensure a culturally safe supervision experience for First Nations candidates such as myself. During my second year of candidacy, the continuous contestations between supervisory members or with

myself as the candidate, added to my experience of feeling traumatised at not only having to manage my own understanding of what it meant to do research towards a Higher Degree by Research in academia but also having to manage the often tense relationship between my supervisors on several occasions, who came from very different cultural and intellectual backgrounds. I was labelled by one supervisor as the most demanding student they had ever supervised and by another as a candidate who was spending what they regarded as "excessive" amounts of time developing my ethics protocol for assessment by the Human Research Ethics Committee.

The ethics approval process raised a series of dilemmas which I felt were also challenging for my supervisors (both non-Indigenous). On many occasions we discussed my insistence on a philosophically informed and culturally responsive Indigenous research methodology. This insistence was underpinned by my determination to design an approach that primarily satisfied the ethical protocols of Adnyamathanha, and secondary to that was meeting the requirements stipulated by the university. This took time and patience, and occasionally some repeated explaining so that my supervisors were across the complexities of what it meant to do Indigenous research in a respectful way. At times I felt I was in a situation of having to "train the trainer" on how to effectively supervise my candidature and myself; thus, I reached a position of acceptance that there came a time for me to remove my second supervisor from my panel. This was met with surprise by the first supervisor, even after I provided them with ample reason as to why I made this choice and explained, "I cannot continue working with someone who insists the ethics process has nothing to do with culture, nothing to do with community, it's an academic process". Not long after this occurrence my first supervisor moved institutions and was not willing to continue as an external supervisor. In contrast to the first couple of years of candidacy, my latter years of supervision experience were in absolute contrast and emerged through my network with other Indigenous Australian researchers who supported me in seeking a replacement supervisor that "got it" on how to work respectfully with Indigenous doctoral candidates. Their approach was much more "hands off" on the assumption that I knew how I wanted to drive my candidacy, I just needed a supervisor to help steer the process and ensure I met all the institutional requirements to succeed.

Combined with an approach that privileges Indigenous perspectives, my knowledge and commitment to culturally safe research were both empowering, yet at the same time problematised during candidacy as a direct failing within western academia to acknowledge implicit and explicit biases that continue to deny knowledge frameworks of colonialism (Alegado *et al.*, 2023). As an Adnyamathanha person, an ethics protocol required appreciation of Nganggginyi Wiri Wiri [kinship structure and social relationships], conceptual understanding of reciprocity at community level, and doing research according to Anggumathanha Muda [camp law and lore]. A culturally responsive approach involved knowing the interrelatedness across community governance and respect for Elders and how community members were most likely to feel comfortable in contributing to my doctoral research. Reciprocity involves various forms of culturally based exchange, such as providing an Elder with fresh urdlu varlu [kangaroo meat] that I had sourced myself, sharing a freshly cooked homemade cake that was a favourite for one contributor, and providing opportunities to be out bush, out on Country, where ilda wanggaanggu [campfire talk] would flow freely and safely. Over time the concept of a campfire metaphor emerged in Australian literature (Connor and Napan, 2021), articulating an understanding of knowledge sharing around the campfire, as reflected and reinforced in my philosophical and practical approach to culturally respectful Indigenous research.

Discussion

In retrospect, my experiences of doctoral candidacy was my gateway to navigating how to challenge western epistemologies, or ways of knowing, through a colonial lens, to undo the trajectory of power distribution for the researcher as expert and, by default, the supervisor as

ultimate expert, and how to position lived experiences as central to a paradigm based on self-reflection and self-critique and to shape the ontological realities and axiological ways of doing research (Alegado *et al.*, 2023).

Maintaining self-agency throughout the vulnerable first year of doctoral candidature came through an awareness that my mind, body and soul had entered a foreign space and place, and my first method was to find a way to survive and thrive in this academic space and place, which was in some ways akin to being in a jungle. I found learning about candidacy to be at times predictable and at other times contradictory and confronting. Predictability emerged in the competing pressures of what it means to do research that was deemed "credible" from a euro-centric academy and its multitude of foreign epistemologies, feeling obligated to please everyone within the academy, yet also trying to make a stand on what really mattered to me. My self-perceived positionality pre-candidacy and post-candidacy seemed of little importance within this jungle, and ethical processes supposedly in place to mitigate harm were oblivious to my positionality. I now see this entry process into candidacy requires scaffolding self-worth and trust into the lead up to candidacy, to maximise one's chances of being confident and competent in recognising when compromise is ethical and moral and in recognising when a compromised position sacrifices ethical and moral standing in research.

My doctoral research *with* Yura and Yarta [people and land] is distinct from research *about* people and places, situates ancient Indigenous ontology and pre-contact ways of living as a central component to being ethical and moral when working with community. My positionality remains intersectional and contributes to a multi-faceted critique of objectivity in research. My ontological positioning required a moral protocol that demanded of myself an adherence to a culturally responsive process during the design phase while out on Country with people as part of a commitment to continued engagement and endorsement throughout the doctoral experience and beyond.

This protocol highlights an ongoing process of consent, rather than a focus on securing initial endorsement and no measure of accountability thereafter. As soon as I had secured an enrolment into a doctoral programme, I was immediately consulting with a range of people for guidance and advice on what I should focus on and how best to frame a topic for investigation. This early-stage implementation of what I regard as a culturally respectful methodology privileged the priorities and values from within the Adnyamathanha community and maximised my sense of well-being on what I anticipated to be a challenging candidacy. My focus on analysing processes, relationships and structures relevant to the case study was central to working in a critical way and was consistent to the approach I had used in designing a suitable methodology. Writing myself into the research process was not only one of the most relieving and empowering experiences but also one of the most challenging aspects of balancing my commitments to family, to culture and to Country with the actual experiences I and many Adnyamathanha and other First Nations peoples encounter throughout our lifetimes.

Ancient traditions and ethical modernities

What I now recognise as a metaphoric resource for learning and teaching emerged from my reflections on cultural uses of fire and how these translate into campfire lore and laws. This emerged from lifelong lived experiences of what reciprocity means in our everyday lives and how this may translate into a culturally safe framework for Indigenous-centred research. Through existing knowledge and subsequent experiences, I cultivated a reciprocal relationship between myself as the researcher and the range of contributors and interest groups that proved to be mutually respectful, culturally safe and enduring. My sharing of campfire metaphor is based on knowing the history of women's technological expertise in cooking and how this enabled me to visualise reciprocity from a cultural perspective and inform my critique of how reciprocity is romanticised in Indigenous research. The process of co-authoring this article has reignited my intention of continuing to develop an emergent research methodology based on ilda wanggaanggu (Campfire talk) as

a method of inquiry, Yura Muda [Adnyamathanha ways of knowing, being and doing], translating these into a teaching and learning tool or campfire metaphor, and ultimately creating an emergent research methodology.

Reflecting on my experiences and understandings of reciprocity within research enables me to think critically about the values and risks associated with reciprocity. This research enhanced my ongoing interest in the use of metaphor involving campfire culture, which began during my doctoral candidacy. At a conference held in Sydney during the latter stages of candidacy, I presented a paper that focused on understanding and application of ethical protocols to facilitate culturally safe research using a metaphor based on campfire culture. This enabled me to share with the audience, who were predominantly non-Indigenous, a way of working with people who had a history of growing up around a campfire as a central part of their lives. I referred to my own experiences of being part of family that valued Annggumathanha [camp law mob] and camp lore culture. Knowing how a campfire is created and for what purposes, understanding and respecting its own agency of fire, appreciating social and cultural rules for interacting with a campfire and caring for the campfire as a part of Annggumathanha are essential to creating and maintaining a culturally safe space for interaction and a culturally significant place for descendants of Annggumathanha.

Creating spaces for indigenous conceptual understandings

Speaking back to colonialism and settler colonialism in the context of land use contestations demands critical understanding and risk-taking. This is essential in challenging linear understandings of time and space in research, navigating the divisions across and within players and interest groups and overcoming my continuous fear of reprise from academia, community and industry, which proved to be tiring and time-consuming. Returning to my experience of doctoral candidacy, there was a very personal experience of trauma due to my long-standing connections and relationships with every aspect of the case study and the historical significance of my candidature. I am thought to be the first Adnyamathanha person to have graduated from a Ph.D. programme, and this knowledge and my commitment to honour the APA and CRC scholarship funding I had received was incredibly self-determining but also a burden to bear. This was further complicated by my choice to study as a remote candidate, to create a degree of distance both physical and intellectual from academia and to enable a continuation of cultural immersion that had earlier led me to seek candidacy. The wider context of colonial land use contestations, disproportionately low levels of Ph.D. awards for Indigenous Australians, and my own commitment to honouring the voices and experiences from community and creating an Adnyamathanha standpoint in academia where previously there was none.

Critical discussion – inviting the western academy to the campfire

Awareness of trauma and otherness, with no explicit reference to these aspects of human research in the Human Research Ethics Committee application for ethical approval process. Ethics is not only missing these parts but also the need to recognise and critically reflect on one's own positionality as a researcher and the reflexive nature of being culturally responsive. Ongoing consent is also highly important to counter the assumption that consent is a once-off process at the beginning of fieldwork. Ethical and moral responsibility – hermeneutic perceptions and experiences are good reason to assume that the dynamics with research relationships require an ongoing process of consent. Family relationships sometimes referred to as kinship, and reciprocity or mutually respectful arrangements of exchange and friendship, connect with other understandings from a western science perspective, such as mirror neurons and that lovely quote, "People are People through other People". Brokering relationships takes time and patience that is not often valued and prioritised in mainstream research, often due to

the time constraints placed on researchers and the broader academy, despite the critical influence this can have on the future dynamics of collaboration.

Campfire metaphor actively responds to the historic loss of agency for community people in the research environment, reclaims and maintains agency for me as Indigenous researcher; this offers a culturally responsive approach akin to Kapati methodology (Ober, 2017), championed as a method and methodology that can be employed to create a relaxing and culturally safe space for people to yarn. Becoming competent and confident in research as a candidate, without compromise, depends on the ability to identify ways of working that maximise people's sense of belonging to the research process in the absence of having to challenge the researcher/s or the process.

Conclusion

Bring the cut of Urdlu varlu. Cook up the favourite cake. Someone is out carting some more wood for the ilda [open fireplace for warmth and cooking], someone else is getting it ready for a cook up. One fella leaning on the shovel, digging out the ilda, later I will be stirring the coals to stoke up the fire. There's a billy hissing, tea-sugar-flour ready to mix for a hot drink and a scone. There might be chairs, or a log, or a patch of ground to sit on. It might be a little fire or a deep ground oven, burning for hours or sometimes for days before the coals are right. People coming and going, spending a bit of time, settling, moving off, returning, knowing who is where and each knowing their own place around the ilda, and based on their position within the family. Each person has a place and a voice. None of this is scripted or taught: the invisible forces of culture arrange it all, just so.

The emergent nature of this article reflects the agency of each part of the research landscape: the chattering voices of the field in the literature, the carefully chosen teaching stories, and the intentional inquiry that might be called yarning but is here called ilda wanggaanggu, [Campfire talk] and which proceeds through story instead of questioning, similar to the methodology developed by Ober (2017) known as Kapati, shifting with each configuration around the table or the campfire. There is no domination, but there is order to the flow of kinship-based relationality that is governing these experiences. Until the tea is poured from the billy, or the meat served on its eucalypt leaves, the process is provisional. And even then, the meal is not the end, there are other stories that can be told at other campfires. The coals might be carried to other fires or covered or stoked up for greater warmth. Rubbish would never be burned in this fire: the fire that cooks and feeds is respected for its purpose as a site of cleanliness and respect. How can you say the fire, or the food, belongs to one participant? When the story is told of that time with that fire, who can authorise it? Within this dynamic process are cultural practices that allow and demand, fluidly shifting between structure and adaption to ensure safety as changing conditions are met: the time, the environment, the people, the times and people past, the ones still to come. Extracting a part of this experience makes no sense; and it cannot be hurried or categorised. Binary oppositions resolve into complex kinship that keeps the conversations circular and evolving, until there it is: the tea is brewed, the meat is cooked and the damper has risen.

Where is the Academy? Hanging back, waiting to be invited? Excluded from the party? When a space is made, coming forward and listening, poking the fire from time to time, being told its moiety and positionality, its way of relating in this place, until it knows how to speak, in yura ngawala, at least a little. Decolonising research takes its time, to acknowledge ongoing traumas, to wait until the mistrust is repaired in the relationship, and the discomfort and loss is felt as keenly by the newcomer as they ever were for all of those at the campfire living with the trauma of colonisation in their own ways. These days, no campfire is complete. This one, and that one, and that one, are gone, taken away, moved away or died too soon, generation after generation. There is no space here for an empathy gap: grief is always present. As is survivance. Which is why every child and fire and bush and Country and Aunt and Uncle assert their agency in the research and education process, choosing how they will tell their truth and claim their rights through the Voice academia can amplify rather than erase.

Retraumatisation and IGT can be avoided when research and education insists on a paradigm shift from academically driven design to a First Nations needs-based response and a philosophical positioning underpinned by Indigenous ways of working and knowing. The campfire metaphor suggests a First Nations protocol and procedure for creating a culturally safe and trauma–resistant approach in research.

Conclusive remarks

This paper explored how colonial trauma manifests in research, is reproduced in ethics governance and research training, can re-emerge in publishing processes based on colonial protocols, and is ever-present in the ongoing impacts of IGT for First Nations peoples, cultures and Country. Our narrative approach provided real-life accounts to ground discussion and authenticate critical analysis.

These culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches enable us to identify and engage with literature in ways that facilitate deconstruction of experiences across Australia and to critically explore the juxtaposed state of First Nations knowledge and dominant culture knowledge systems. We endorse a trauma-informed approach to engaging with literature generated by First Nations authors who share their experiences of navigating academic research, highlighting lessons learnt as well as ongoing challenges that require further structural and relational change to decolonise the way research is constructed and deconstructed. Our comparison across First Nations peoples of Australia also extends to other colonised states to draw attention to the entrenched level of systemic racism and colonialism within higher education institutions and the perceptions that exist regarding First Nations knowledge and its juxtaposition within and outside of the academy.

About the authors

Jillian K. Marsh, Adnyamathanha Yuraartu [Indigenous Australian woman from the northern Flinders Ranges region] PhD., Research Active and Tertiary Educator, reflects on Indigenous experiences of working in academia teaching and researching and building scholarship in Indigenous research and evaluation. Her passion for working with the community and for the community stems from personal experience of traumas associated with schooling, tertiary education and research training. She leads the discussion on research and engagement challenges of working within a dominant culture academy and tensions this creates juxtaposed to Indigenous Australian ways of knowing, being and doing.

Tracy Spencer, Udnyu Artu [White Woman], non-Indigenous past PhD. Researcher into intercultural de/colonial relationships in the Adnyamathanha community; currently Registered Psychologist specialising in trauma therapy with children, adolescents and adults. Tracy has worked for over 30 years in the not-for-profit community services sector, in rural and remote Victoria, NSW, South Australia, the NT and Tasmania. She leads the discussion on working in a specialised field of cross-cultural and intercultural trauma, reflecting on her own journey of becoming culturally responsive in research and in facilitating healing of interpersonal and collective trauma.

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